2023

Strategy Implemented for Intentional Intergeneration Interaction at the Lacey Seventh-day Adventist Church

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ABSTRACT

STRATEGY IMPLEMENTED FOR INTENTIONAL
INTERGENERATIONAL INTERACTION AT THE
LACEY SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH

by

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ABSTRACT OF GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH

Professional Dissertation

Andrews University

Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

Title: STRATEGY IMPLEMENTED FOR INTENTIONAL INTERGENERATIONAL INTERACTION AT THE LACEY SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH

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Date completed: July 2023

Problem

Like many other churches, ongoing tension between generations resulting in conflict or segregation in the Lacey Seventh-day Adventist Church necessitated further research to develop a strategy to foster maximum congregational buy-in that would reverse these natural tendencies and aid in developing a desire to be intentionally intergenerational. With minimal denominational research extant, an approach that aided members in seeing evidence from within their own congregation was necessary. Additionally, a biblical foundation that included an eschatological framework within the traditional paradigms and a historicist view that placed intentional intergenerational methods as needed in the last days was also needed to garner buy-in from the older

generations.

Method

A mixed methods approach that leaned heavily on the Participatory Action Research (PAR) model was utilized. Because there was a need to garner buy-in from all generations, participation from all generations throughout the decision-making process was necessary. To track progress in increased intergenerationality, traditional research-based surveys were taken before, during, and after all project implementation stages. Ultimately, this data did not give a clear indication that would quantify the results as statistically significant independently.

The success, or lack thereof, weighed primarily on the PAR. The direct verbal feedback from those who participated in the intergenerational worship committee and those who gave unsolicited feedback became primary evidence indicating success. Additionally, long-term changes in how the church leadership and members planned services and activities to be intentionally intergeneration were markers of success.

Results

The collective research and implementation results showed a noticeable difference in generational interaction being more positive and a move towards a desire or culture of generational inclusion in most services and activities. This came from a theological and personal experience blend of information and activities implemented.

Conclusions

In conclusion, the research implementations at the Lacey Seventh-day Adventist Church showed reasonable success in harnessing generational buy-in to develop an

intentionally intergenerational church culture. The generational conflict was diminished as members experienced transformational learning regarding generational inclusion. As a result, services and activities have become more generationally inclusive and promotes a healthier model of church that improves spiritual growth.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In light of the increasing amount of research on the benefits of the intentional integration of people from all generations, the following research was conducted to increase the overall intentionality and desire of the Lacey Seventh-day Adventist Christian Church to be intergenerational. An ongoing tension between generations resulting in conflict or segregation necessitated further research to develop a strategy to foster maximum congregational buy-in to reverse these natural tendencies.

Description of the Ministry Context

The context of the project is in a mid-sized, traditionally oriented, Seventh-day Adventist Christian Church located in Lacey/Olympia Washington area. The population of Lacey, Washington, was 54,178, according to the last official US Census in 2020. The Census racial breakdown is 71.4% White, 12.5% Hispanic, 6.2% Black, and 8.6% of Asian descent. One of the largest regional employers is the US Military, with the Joint Base Lewis McChord. Much of the military force is in continuous flux, and many retired military personnel live there.

The church averaged about 180 in attendance, prior to the Covid-19 Pandemic limitations, with an internationally diverse membership with members from Germany 1%, Samoa 10%, Mexico 1%, Kenya 4%, Japan 2%, Korea 1%, Vietnam 1%, and the

United States 80%. I previously served as the local church pastor of this single-church district for about five years. Prior to my arrival, this church was divided due to the abrupt and unhappy departure of the previous pastor. Many of the divisions lessened or healed after my arrival, yet divisions and differences among members remain.

Statement of the Problem

Differing views, opinions, and preferences among the various generations within the Lacey Seventh-day Adventist Church create conflicts and divisions. As the pastor, my observations indicate that the generations do not consistently see things in the same light and do not intentionally attempt to understand or tolerate the other's views. The negative perceptions and poor communication result in generational divisions and disunity within the membership. These generational divisions can inhibit intentional intergenerational dynamics that can aid in optimized church spiritual health.

Statement of the Task

The task of this project is to develop, implement, and evaluate a strategy to address intergenerational conflict and promote openness to adopting a pervasive intergenerational culture in the Lacey Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Delimitations of the Project

The scope of this project was limited in several ways. First, while still considering the broader theory and practice of intentional intergenerationality, the project itself was framed within a Christian worldview and conducted within a Seventh-day Adventist Church context. Second, participation in this project was limited to the actively attending members and guests of the Lacey Seventh-day Adventist Church. Third, while the local

congregation includes people from various countries and cultures, it was researched and conducted within the North American context, which may not be consistently true in all other cultural contexts. Finally, although the research conducted may have other applications, it is limited to the context of congregations that desire to become intentionally intergenerational.

Description of the Project Process

The project process began by establishing a theological foundation and then reviewing recent literature. This was followed by developing and implementing an intervention and then evaluating and reporting the results within an established research methodology and protocol.

Theological Reflection

Given that the term "intergenerational" is not used in the Bible, overarching themes of inclusion and the nature of a triune God served as a foundational theological underpinning. A survey of some of the generational conflicts and differences of opinions between biblical characters within a given narrative surmises the conflicts that can exist in a modern context. The story of King Rehoboam (1 Kings chapter 12) is an example of intergenerational conflict. This one Biblical conflict ultimately resulted in the division of the kingdom, which serves as a warning to the people of God if intergenerational conflicts are not healthfully addressed.

The apostle Paul's analogy of the various parts of the body each being unique yet part of a dynamically integrated whole is also seen as a parallel to unique generations needing to come together to reflect the wholeness of "Christ's body." The result of not

3

aiding the generations to work together is like dismembering and weakening the effectiveness of the body.

Specific attention was given to the scriptural desire of turning "the hearts of the fathers to the children and the hearts of the children to the fathers" as found in Malachi 4:6. This portrayal of changing how the older and younger generations view each other is then seen in the light of the final "Elijah message" just prior to the "great and dreadful day of the Lord" described in Malachi 4:5. This concept is further reinforced through the parallels between the ministry of Elijah in 1st Kings chapter 17 through 2nd Kings chapter 2, and the work of the remnant of God's people found in the book of Revelation.

Review of Literature

Beginning with Mannheim's theory of generations through Strauss and Howe's foundational books on *Generations* and *The Fourth Turning* the evolution of generational theory, as it applies to our current society, is laid out. This section traces the history and development of generational theory from its inception in 1923 to 2021. Focus is given to the generations with the most significant influence in society at the time of writing. There is an outline and a brief sketch of the developmental processes and events that have birthed each generation, and unique generational cultures will be traced.

A review of the literature to answer the question of why an organization or church would desire to be intergenerational is addressed. Then we look at what that implies when considering the obstacles related to a generational conflict. The challenge of generational conflict is then reviewed, including common areas of conflict. Common models for conflict resolution, as well as the underlining communication models used, are examined. This leads to Mezirow's theory of Transformative Learning and the various

steps needed to facilitate a transformation of the thoughts and actions of adults necessary

to transition individuals into a new paradigm and culture that seeks intentional

intergenerational dynamics.

The purpose of all this is to investigate how published literature can inform how a

church, such as the Lacey SDA Church, can develop a strategy to move a group of

believers through a transformative learning process that results in a culture that is

intentionally intergenerational, and avoids conflict or segregation of the generations in

order to promote spiritual growth.

Development of the Strategy for Implementation

The development of the strategy for implementation grew to a great extent from

my personal experience. As I learned about the biblical foundation and the benefits of

being intentionally intergenerational, I began to desire to change my own perspectives

and actions. I realized more than ever before the negative views I had of generations

other than my own. As I learned "why" each generation believed and acted as they do, I

naturally became more understanding, and my heart towards them was transformed. This

led me to believe that a similar approach could be effective within a broader context,

specifically within a church setting. Later on, in my research, I came to the realization

that I had experienced the Transformative Learning process. This realization then gave

me the framework and necessary steps to frame the implementation strategy.

A mixed methods research approach that included traditional research through

surveys and multiple elements of participatory action research (PAR) was utilized to

gather statistical data and data throughout the research process from those most directly

affected by the research. The goal of the traditional research surveys was to establish

initial baseline data as well as a point midway through the research and finally a post

research data to determine if any significant statistical change had occurred. More

critically, the PAR method was utilized to determine if those directly impacted by the

research were personally and corporately impacted by the implemented strategy. Because

participants were able to work together with the researcher in regard to what they liked,

disliked, and or wanted to do or not do moving forward based on the information

received throughout the process, they were more invested in an outcome that was

advantageous to them. This was done by design to facilitate the greatest level of impact

on the congregation as a whole.

<p style="text-align: center">Structure of the Intervention</p>

The structure of the intervention sought to lead the congregation through a

transformative learning experience similar to my own transformation. Because the

context was in a church among Bible-believing Seventh-day Adventist Christians, the

first step was establishing the biblical foundations of being intentionally

intergenerational. This series also integrated a basic understanding of the generations and

how they were formed. Knowing some of the greatest resistance to any change was likely

to come from some of the older generations, special attention was given to the prophetic

role of God's end-time people as it relates to the topic of intergenerational healing and

dynamics. At the same time, faith transmission from one generation to another was

addressed as it pertains to the younger families seeking to pass their faith onto their own

children.

The next step was bringing the generations together in a seminar-style

environment to intentionally interact and learn about each other. This facilitated bringing

<p style="text-align: center">6</p>

the congregation into an intentionally intergenerational dynamic as well as a means of collecting generational data from the specific context. Participants were placed in two rows of chairs facing each other with each participant wearing a sticker indicating their generation. They were then given questions to ask the person sitting across from them and indicate their generation and response. One side moved to change up the partners every 1-2 minutes. The data was collected, tallied, and then shared with the church as means of reinforcing concepts previously shared.

The next step was forming an intergenerational worship committee that would meet several times to collectively try to implement intergenerational dynamics into the church worship service and then analyze the effectiveness of each modification. This was repeated over the course of four weeks. The ultimate goal was to establish an ongoing practice of integrating intergenerational dynamics into the worship service to better minister to all generations and glean the benefits of intergenerational inclusion. All of this was structured in a Logical Framework Matrix as a means of clear evaluation.

Summary

This introduction provides a basic overview of the strategy implemented to bring about a desire to become more intentional intergenerationality, within the church culture, for one specific Seventh-day Adventist Church in Lacey, Washington. The interpretive analysis of this case study is intended to offer insights for other congregations seeking a strategy to move towards an intentionally intergenerational culture with minimal conflict and increased buy-in. It is my hope that it will encourage others who are pursuing or considering the pursuit of similar work.

CHAPTER 2

BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS OF INTERGENERATIONALITY

AND GENERATIONAL CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Introduction

Within the biblical timeline, there is no indication that the age divisions parallel

our current generational cohort framework. This creates a challenge in presenting a direct

correlation between biblical times and our current times. However, there are principles

and parallels between how the young and old interacted. These similarities, along with

God's stated ideals in Scripture, will form the theological framework in this chapter.

Throughout the biblical narrative, we see God's desire is for His people to

assemble and work together as a united whole regularly. This united whole should be

inclusive and diverse in nature, including every age throughout the lifecycle of all

generations. The community of generations, when gathered and treated by one another in

mutually respective and loving ways, is an expression of who God is, an expression of

His church, and a process that is integral to spiritual growth and development.

There are, however, instances where generational cultures clash, and generational

conflict ensues. Such conflict is often avoided by segregating generations, frequently

resulting in generations looking negatively at other generations. Although there isn't a

direct biblical parallel for intergenerational conflict resolution as found in modern

society, principles of interpersonal conflict are found in Scripture that apply to this area.

Biblical Foundations of Intergenerational Unity

Beginning with the Creation account of Genesis, we see the triune nature of God at work. God the Father creates through His Word (see John 1:1-5 NKJV) through the agency of the Holy Spirit, depicted as hovering over the waters in Gen 1:2. This same concept is further expanded in Gen 1:26-27, where the Godhead agrees among themselves to make mankind male and female in "the image of God."

Since according to Mainline Christian theology, God is a co-eternal single unity of three divine entities and is described as "love" (see 1 John 4:8), and not merely loving, God desires to establish united communities of love like Himself. The *imago deii* forms the underlining reason why God desires His people to be a diverse yet unified entity, a people in His image and likeness. From the beginning of Creation, this community was fully inclusive. Jesus ratified this concept when He prayed for all those who would believe in Him through his disciples' teaching, "that they may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us" (John 17:21). The community that God desires His people to be a part of comes from "every nation, tribe, tongue and people" (Rev 14:6, 5:9), must include every generation. When the various generations are warring with each, there will not be the unity that God desires the church to have.

Throughout the biblical narrative, we find God creating communities He desires to use to reflect who He is. God's community that is "called out" are described as His covenant people that belong to Him (see Exod 19:5-6, 1 Kgs 8:16, 2 Chr 6:5-6, Isa 43:20, Jer 33:24, Rev 18:4). We find in the New Testament that the Greek word for church is *ekklesia*, which comes from the verb meaning "to call out." These "called out" people, God's church, come out of darkness (1 Pet 2:9) and the world (John 17:6) with God's

desire that they "be one" (John 17:21). The church of God is meant to be a united (Acts 2:1), self-denying people (Matt 16:24), living in mutual love and respect for one another (Phil 2:3-4, Rom 12:3).

Mountstephen and Martin argue that the imperative for Christian community being intergenerational "is rooted both in the Story of Scripture and in the character of the God revealed in Scripture… a community of love is at the heart of God. It is what he is. And of course, what he is, his people are to be, that his character might be formed in them (2004, 5)." Here lies the link between God's inherent unity within the three persons of the Godhead and the type of unity He seeks within His people.

The apostle Paul used the analogy of the church being a "body" of many parts that all work together (see 1 Cor 12:12-30). From an intergenerational perspective, it can be seen as a biblical mandate that the various generations, like the various body parts, work best when they all work together as a united whole. If any generation is not integrated into the body of Christ, it is like a human limb amputated, leaving the body weaker and with diminished functionality and effectiveness. Thus, only when the church is all-age inclusive does it truly reflect God's design.

One purpose in God's design for His people to be of all generations is faith transmission from one generation to the next. This can be seen in the call for God's people to declare what they have seen and experienced to the children in the *Shema* (Deut 6:4-9; repeated in 11:18-21). Such ideas are repeated in Joel 1:3: "Tell your children about it, *Let* your children *tell* their children, And their children another generation." This process was critical given biblical history was in part an "oral transmission" of key concepts and ideas (Culley, 1976).

Biblical Examples of Generational Conflict

The biblical narrative is littered with examples of interpersonal, interfamilial, and cultural conflict. However, there are limited examples in Scripture that clearly parallel modern generational conflicts. This can be explained in part by changes in cultural and societal norms. For example, Deut 21:18-21 delineates how a "stubborn" or "rebellious" child that refused to accept correction could be brought before the elders and stoned to death as a punishment. This is not an advisable method of conflict resolution for our times. Yet, such severe penalties would likely have limited the younger generations from disrespecting the elder generations.

Familial Generational Conflicts

Because families make up the larger body of Christ, we can learn from many of the biblical illustrations what to do and what to avoid to prevent and resolve conflicts. Familial conflicts between siblings and between parents and their children are frequent in the biblical narrative.

Old Testament Examples

The first family from Creation exhibits a conflict between Cain and Abel that leads to death and division within the family (Gen 4). A few chapters later, Noah cursed his grandson Canaan, declaring he would serve his brethren after he saw Noah's nakedness (Gen 9:20-27).

Others, such as Abram, made self-sacrificing efforts to avoid familial conflicts. When Abram's clan and his nephew Lot's clan outgrew the land where they could reasonably live together, Abram let Lot choose his preferred area to live in so as to

"avoid strife" (Gen 13:8-11). Yet, only a few chapters later we find Abram entangled in a conflict between Sarah and Hagar over the sons he had with each. Although Abram was "very displeased" (Gen 21:11), this familial conflict led to further family divisions. This division between Abraham's children still divides people today. Islam sees Ishmael as the chosen child, while Jew's and Christians alike see Isaac as the chosen child. Often, conflicts grow much more in magnitude than those directly involved are ever aware of.

Another example of far-reaching consequences can be seen in the conflicts that started between Jacob and Esau. Although there was a form of reconciliation between the brothers (Gen 33), the conflict continued through their offspring for generations to come, evident in the book of Obadiah. Countless people died in wars between the two nations that derived from these brothers. This shows how individual conflicts, even if resolved, have profound impacts on those surrounding the conflict.

The story of Joseph and the ongoing conflict between him and his brothers, originating from paternal favoritism (Gen 37:3), covers the span of Gen 37 thru Gen 45. The older brother's envy and hatred led them to try to kill their brother (Gen 37:20). God miraculously led Joseph into a position that saved God's chosen people, as well as others, from death by famine. If God had not intervened, this generational conflict between Joseph and his brothers, had the potential to annihilate much of the world at that time. This story illustrates a positive example in how the younger generation set an example to the older generation.

Familial conflict was something David dealt with from his youth to his old age. When the prophet Samuel went to Jesse's house to anoint the king God had chosen, Jesse had all his older sons' parade before the prophet while leaving David to keep the sheep.

The narrative leads the reader to believe that Jesse saw David as unqualified and therefore unnecessary to attend the gathering with Samuel. A similar theme is seen when David takes supplies to his three eldest brothers who had followed Saul to war, and spoke to the unwillingness for anyone to challenge Goliath. Eliab, his eldest brother, asks David "why did you come down here?" (1 Sam 17:28).

Years later, after David became king, his son Absalom ordered the murder of his half-brother Amnon (2 Sam 13:28) as revenge for his raping Absalom's sister Tamar (2 Sam 13:10-14) and then abruptly kicked her out of his home (2 Sam 13:15). After this, Absalom commits treason (2 Sam 15) and seeks to take the kingdom from David.

<div align="center">New Testament Examples</div>

In the New Testament, we also see familial conflict between Mary and Martha (Luke 10:39-42). According to one scholar, "The narrative seems to suggest the home belonged to Martha and being older than Mary and Lazarus, she carried out the responsibility of all connected with household affairs…" (Lockyer 1996, 87). Here we can see an example of "looking down" on the younger generation for perceived laziness or lack of willingness to help.

An interpersonal conflict between ministry leaders is seen in Acts 15:36-41 when the apostle Paul and Barnabas disagree over bringing John Mark with them.

> Then after some days, Paul said to Barnabas, "Let us now go back and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord, and see how they are doing." Now Barnabas was determined to take with them John called Mark. But Paul insisted that they should not take with them the one who had departed from them in Pamphylia, and had not gone with them to the work. Then the contention became so sharp that they parted from one another. And so, Barnabas took Mark and sailed to Cyprus; but Paul chose Silas and departed, being commended by the brethren to the grace of God. And he went through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches.

The wording in this passage highlights the level of conflict. Note that Barnabas was "determined" to have John Mark join them. Paul "insisted" that he didn't. Then the "contention became so sharp that they parted" ways. The Greek word παροξυσμός (*paroxysmos*), translated as a "sharp disagreement" (NASB), is explained as "a state of intense, emotional turmoil; especially expressed in words" (Brannan, 2020). In Acts 13:13 we find the back story to why Paul insisted John Mark not join them. It reads, "Now when Paul and his party set sail from Paphos, they came to Perga in Pamphylia; and John [Mark], departing from them, returned to Jerusalem."

Barnabas appears to be giving John Mark another chance to "redeem" himself, while Paul appears to see him as unfit for the work. Paul appears to eventually reconcile to some extent with John Mark. Colossians 4:10 admonishes them to welcome "Mark the cousin of Barnabas" if or when he visits them. Then in 2 Tim 4:11, Paul's final remarks to the young minister Timothy is to "[g]et Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful to me for ministry." Although the details of how, when, or where this reconciliation occurred are not mentioned, we can see that even experienced leaders can grow in forgiveness and stop allowing conflicts to diminish ministry potential.

In some senses, it is natural and should be expected to have differences and even divisions amongst groups of people. Jesus indicated that his teachings would cause divisions: "For from now on five in one house will be divided: three against two, and two against three. Father will be divided against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law." (Luke 12:52-53)

This is not to be used as an excuse for the church. The familial types of conflicts and divisions that Jesus is describing have more to do with those who chose to follow his teachings and those who reject them within households. This is a natural consequence of becoming a disciple of Christ, particularly when one's family is not. But once an individual accepts Christ and his teachings, they should love even those who may be deemed enemies to them (Matt 5:44).

The Intergenerational Reconciliatory Work
of God's Remnant People

The last two verses of the Old Testament in Malachi 4:6 gives a promise of an Elijah type prophet that "will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers." This promise is coupled with a consequence if the message isn't received and practiced, in that God will "strike the earth with a curse." Jesus points to John the Baptist as a type of fulfillment for this prophecy in Matt 17:10-13 and Luke 1:16-17.

> [10] And His disciples asked Him, saying, "Why then do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?" [11] Jesus answered and said to them, "Indeed, Elijah is coming first and will restore all things. [12] But I say to you that Elijah has come already, and they did not know him but did to him whatever they wished. Likewise the Son of Man is also about to suffer at their hands." [13] Then the disciples understood that He spoke to them of John the Baptist."
> And he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God. [17] He will also go before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, 'to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children,' and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."

John clearly came to prepare the way for Christ's first Advent by turning the hearts of many Israelites away from the legalism that existed at that time and into a place of repentance and commitment through baptism. There is evidence in the Bible that there

15

will be a similar message at the end of time that takes on the "spirit and power of Elijah" and prepares God's people for the Second Advent.

Essentially, you have the historical and literal Elijah, John the Baptist as the 2nd Elijah, and finally a 3rd Elijah in the Remnant of God's people described in the book of Revelation according to the historical interpretation method. The focus here will be on the 3rd Elijah as it relates to the final Great Advent Movement.

The majority of the historical account of Elijah is found in the book of 1 Kings. From the authors opinion, the narratives in this book parallel the metanarrative in Scripture encompassed in the Great Controversy between good and evil as seen in Figure 1.
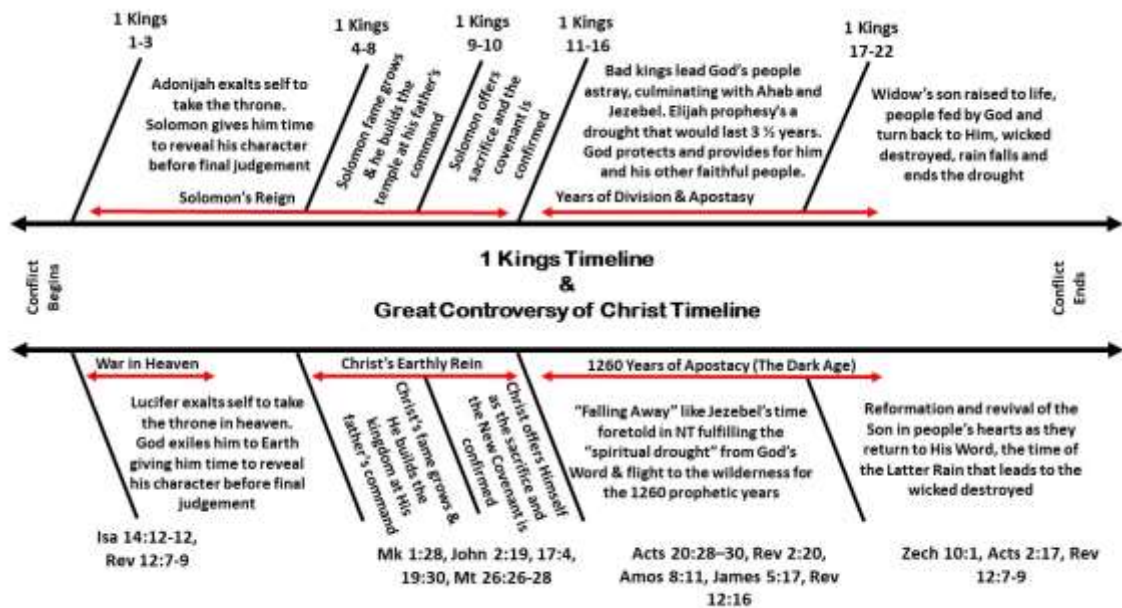
Figure 1. 1 Kings timeline and great controversy of Christ.

When Elijah enters the scene in 1 Kings 17, he confronts the threefold enemy of Ahab, Jezebel, and the false prophets of Baal by announcing a drought (v.1) that lasted

16

three and half years (Jas 5:17). Elijah then fled to the wilderness to the Brook Cherith.

This story parallels the Remnant of Revelation having the "spirit and power of Elijah"

(Luke 1:17) fleeing to the wilderness for three and a half prophetic years or 1260 years

through the Dark Ages. This was a drought or famine from the Word of God (Amos

8:11). At the end of this time, there was in both cases a cry from God through a

messenger to return to Him in both beliefs and actions. The literal Elijah did this at

Mount Carmel (1 Kgs 18:20) in the Valley of Meggido; the 3rd Elijah, or Remnant,

proclaim the Three Angel's Messages (Rev 14:6-12) in preparation for God's 2nd Advent

and the battle of Armageddon (literally Mount Meggido). Both battle against a political

king figure (Ahab/Beast and its Image – Rev 13) that is controlled by a harlot figure

(Jezebel/Mother of Harlots – Rev 17:4-5) with false prophets (prophets of

Baal/Daughters of the Great Harlot – Rev 16:13; 17:5). God calls down fire from heaven

in both cases (1 Kgs 18:38-40, Rev 20:9) to cleanse His people from false teachings.

Given all the textual evidence, it is clear that God's end-time Remnant people are

called to proclaim an Elijah message by God's Spirit and power. Thus Malachi (literally

My Messenger or Messenger of Yahweh) gives God's people at the end of time a

message of intergenerational reconciliation. This is a part of the ministry Paul tells us we

are to do in 2 Cor 5:18-21. This establishes the biblical foundation not only to be

intergenerational but to do it in such a way that reconciliation rather than conflict results.

Negative Perceptions of "Other" Generations

Throughout known history, the differences that define the various stages of life

that separate the young from the old have led to a negative perception of those not of

one's own stage of life or generation. The negative views of children throughout

Scripture, which often lead to generational conflict, are prominently displayed in the gospels through Jesus' rebuke of attempts to dismiss the children (see Matt 18:3,19:4; Mark 10:13-16). As previously mentioned, the final verses of the Old Testament speak of a need to "turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to the fathers" (Mal 4:6), illustrating the tensions between the generations that can cause the hearts to harden against each other. Multiple passages give instruction that is specifically aimed at children (Eph 6:1; Col 3:20), showing God's pointed interest in the children.

God also called children and young people throughout the Old Testament to fulfill high callings. Isaac, who submitted to being sacrificed, if necessary, to God's will, serves as a type of Christ. Some of the parallels between Isaac and Christ are: Isaac was the son of the covenant (Gen 17, 21:4), and Jesus is the Son of God that fulfilled the covenant (Heb 9-10). God refers to him as the "only son" (Gen 22:2) the same description given of Jesus in John 3:16. Isaac carries wood to the place where he will be sacrificed (Gen 22:6), just as Jesus carried the wooden cross on the way to His crucifixion (John 9:17-18). Isaac also submitted to being a sacrificial "lamb" at his father's request (Gen 22:8-12).

Joseph received visions from God at seventeen (Gen 37:2) and was used to save God's people and many from surrounding countries from starvation (Gen 42:55-57). Moses was rescued as a baby (Exod 21-10) and called to lead God's people when he was 80 years old (Exod 7:7). Samuel was called to be a prophet when he was a child (1 Sam 3). David was only a young boy when he killed Goliath (1 Sam 17). Jehoash was 7 years old when his reign began, and he reigned for 40 years (2 Kgs 12:1, 2 Chr 24:1). Josiah became king at 8 years of age and reigned for 31 years (2 Kgs 22:1). The prophet Jeremiah was only a youth (Jer 1:6) when God called him. In Jeremiah's case, there was

great timidity to speak for God, presumably because he was inexperienced and younger than those he would be speaking to. This could be because society didn't hold youth in such a high regard.

Regardless of individual views towards them, children were always to have a place within the community of believers. One scholar that speaks to a theology of childhood in Scripture states that:

> "The religion of the Old Testament is not an individual adult affair to which a child's relationship is uncertain, but a communal and corporate life of faith and obedience to Yahweh in which the child has his own rightful and unquestioned place." (Pridmore, 1977, 28-29)

Although less prominent, care for the elderly is another area that is expressed throughout Scripture. Many references point out the need to care for widows. One challenge lies in the reality that widows are not always elderly. Take for example, Ruth and her sister Orpah who were still young enough to remarry (Ruth 1:4-5, 11-13), while Naomi was "too old to have [another] husband" (Ruth 1:12).

One reason why fewer instances of negative views of the aged are recorded in scripture may be due to the required respect for one's elders and parents in scripture. Proverbs 23:22 ESV says, "Listen to your father who gave you life, and do not despise your mother when she is old." Within the Ten Commandments we read, "Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the LORD your God is giving you" (Exod 20:12). The consequences for not showing proper respect to the elderly came with grave consequences. Prov 30:17 says, "The eye *that* mocks *his* father, And scorns obedience to *his* mother, The ravens of the valley will pick it out, And the young eagles will eat it." Jesus reiterates this when He said, "For God commanded,

saying, 'Honor your father and your mother' and, 'He who curses father or mother, let him be put to death'" (Matt 15:4).

Such consequences are reinforced in stories such as the one in which the youth insulted the prophet, Elisha.

> "Then he went up from there to Bethel; and as he was going up the road, some youths came from the city and mocked him, and said to him, "Go up, you baldhead! Go up, you baldhead!" So he turned around and looked at them, and pronounced a curse on them in the name of the LORD. And two female bears came out of the woods and mauled forty-two of the youths." (2 Kgs 2:23-24)

In the New Testament, we find the appointing of the first deacons in Acts 6 rises partly due to the need for care for the elderly. The apostle Paul speaks to Timothy and Titus, both young ministers, about caring for and working with the young and the aged. The elderly and widows in particular are to be cared for with compassion. For these reasons, we can conclude that God desires all ages to be kind and respectful toward each other. Even though the negative views of children are more prominent in Scripture than that of the elderly, any negative views of other generations are not God's desire.

Specific Intergenerational Conflict in Scripture

The clearest intergenerational conflict in Scripture took place during the reign of King Rehoboam and is found in 1 Kings 12 and repeated in 2 Chronicles 10. In the 1 Kings account of this story, Jeroboam comes before Rehoboam with the assembly of Israel (v. 3) with a complaint that Rehoboam's father, Solomon, had placed a heavy yoke and burden on the people. Jeroboam was "a mighty man of valor," (1 Kgs 11:28) that had fled for his life to Egypt from King Solomon (1 Kgs 11:40, 2 Chron 10:2). During Solomon's reign the prophet Ahijah the Shilonite had prophesied to Jeroboam that God would divide the kingdom after the death of Solomon, due to the unfaithfulness of His

people, and the resulting ten tribes would be given to Jeroboam (1 Kgs 11:29-39). This prophecy resulted in Solomon seeking his life, as Solomon desired the kingdom to go to Rehoboam.

When Rehoboam went to Shechem to be made king is when Jeroboam came out of exile to approach him. Presumably influenced by Jeroboam, the people offered to serve Rehoboam if he would lighten the burden (v. 4). The new king consulted the "elders who stood before his father Solomon," asking for their advice. The reference here to 'elders' doesn't necessarily refer to age but likely experience. Scholars, such as Simon DeVries in the Word Bible Commentary Volume 12, have chosen to refer to these elders as 'veterans' (2003). Their advice was for the new king to "be a servant to these people today… speak good words to them, then they will be your servants forever" (v. 7). The next verse indicates that Rehoboam rejected this advice.

The young king proceeded with his inquiries "and consulted the young men who had grown up with him." The Word Bible Commentary following the same line of thinking refers to these young men as 'newcomers.' Here, we are told that these younger or less experienced men were of the same generation as Rehoboam, as they grew up together. These generational companions advise the king to do just the opposite of the elders and to increase the "yoke" on the people and to enforce it with might. Ellen White says the young king was "flattered by the prospect of exercising supreme authority, Rehoboam determined to disregard the counsel of the older men" (White 2005, 91). This single generational conflict ultimately led to a split in the nation of Israel (vs 16-20).

We are then told that Rehoboam reigned over Judah and sent a man named Adoram to collect the heavy taxation that his generational companions had suggested.

We are told that "all Israel stoned him with stones, and he died" (1 Kgs 12:18). Hearing the news of his servant's death, Rehoboam fled Jerusalem in a chariot. This was the beginning of the revolt against Rehoboam and David's house.

This example shows the gravity of consequences when generational conflict is handled poorly. In this scenario, the wisdom that comes from elders' experience and knowledge of the people should have been given greater consideration. The prophecy given to Jeroboam should have also been considered, as it gives the will of God in the situation. Yet, pride and self-seeking prevailed.

This doesn't mean that the elders are always right either. Prov 14:12 clearly states, "There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end *is* the way of death." Because "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Rom 3:23) human wisdom will always have its limitations. The wise will acknowledge this, yet seek counsel from God first and then those with more experience.

Principles for Preventing and Resolving Intergenerational Conflict

Scripture makes it clear that God desires His people to be kind, tenderhearted, loving, and unified, without divisions (Ps 33:1; Acts 4:32; Rom 12:4-5 and 16, 14:19, 15:5-6; 1 Cor 12:12; 2 Cor 13:11; Gal 3:28; Eph 4:1-6 and 13; Phil 1:27, 2:2; Col 3:14; 1 Pet 3:8). This would include our general attitudes and perceptions of others, regardless of our differences. Churches must develop and nurture a culture of acceptance and inclusivity with diversity.

One principle is seen in how God's people are to be "bridge builders," given the goal is to help every human know "the good news" of who God really is. We are not

being called to build walls of division but rather to tear down the walls that divide us. If generational differences are dividing a congregation, then they must seek to build bridges to connect and tear down the walls that divide.

Avoiding conflict through preventative measures should always be sought first. At times, negative perceptions of others are systemic in nature. Although God's people were not to intermarry or take upon the customs of the surrounding nations (1 Kgs 11:2), they were called to be a light to them (Isa 49:6). Yet, the stories of the Judges and elsewhere repeatedly indicate that the people forgot about God and took on the forbidden practices and beliefs of the surrounding nations (Judg 2:11; 3:7, 12; 4:1; 6:2; 10:6). God has "other sheep" that were not in the "fold" of the Jewish nation (John 10:16). From the call of Abram and the beginning of a "called apart" people for God, the plan was always to be a witness of a better way of living so that "all the families of the earth" (Gen 12:3) would be blessed. People that "were not My [God's] people" were to become His people (Hos 2:23, Rom 9:24-26). Yet, God's post-exilic people made harsh rules to avoid any contact with the surrounding nations and took on very negative perceptions of the surrounding nations. In a similar fashion, God's people can be guilty of systemically looking negatively upon other generations and not allowing them to truly be a part of the body of Christ.

The gospels reveal that Jesus sought to change people's negative perceptions of the surrounding nations through teachings and actions. Perhaps the most well know teaching is the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37), embedded in a dialogue between Jesus and a lawyer. First, Jesus tells him that in order to inherit eternal life, we must love God and our neighbor. In response, the lawyer asks, "Who is my neighbor?"

Then the parable clearly points out the Samaritan, not the expected Jewish religious leaders in the story, as the "good" neighbor to the man who fell among thieves (vs 36). The lawyer responds in verse 37 by avoiding saying "the Samaritan," by merely indicating it was "He who showed mercy on him."

Jesus also went out of His way to minister to people with different views and beliefs than the Jews. In John 4 we find Jesus going out of the way, geographically, to meet an unclean Samaritan woman at a well to minister to her and through her to the neighboring towns. Jesus also went out of His way and crossed the sea to the region of Gadarenes, where they kept swine – an unclean animal to Jews, to heal the demon-possessed man (Mark 5:1-20; Luke 8:26-39).

The principle here is that Christ's followers must go out of their way to break down generational prejudices and negative perceptions as Jesus did. Failure to do so allows these perceptions to divide people and diminish the effectiveness of fulfilling God's calling to "the light of the world" (Matt 5:4).

Another principle to avoid conflict that is frequently neglected involves humbly remaining silent on one's personal preferences. The example of Abram allowing his nephew Lot to choose which land he would prefer (Gen 13:8-11) is a good example. Abram was the elder and therefore should have had the first choice. Rather than selecting his preference and informing Lot, Abram chose to be silent in regard to his preference. In this way, a potential generational conflict was avoided.

Another additional principle can also be found in this story; allowing room for perceived failure. In this instance, Lot chose the richer land in plain of Jordon near Sodom and Gomorra. The next chapter informs the reader that this choice led to Lot

being captured and all his possessions taken (Gen 14:12). When Abram hears of the situation he promptly coordinated and implements a successful rescue mission (Gen 14:13-16). At this juncture many may be tempted to say, "I told you so," or a similar form or rebuke for Lot's selection of preferred land to live in. Here again, we find Abram silent and without rebuke. Abram essentially allowed Lot to make mistakes. In Genesis 19, we find Lot still living in Sodom, only this time God sends angels to Lot's rescue shortly before the city was destroyed. His failure to learn from the capture and imprisonment in chapter 14 leads to the loss of his wife in chapter 19.

We also see Jesus replicating both of these principles with His disciples. Jesus told His disciples, "I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear *them* now" (John 16:12). This indicates that Jesus refrained from saying some things to His disciples for their benefit. Jesus also allowed them to fail. On one occasion a boy who had an evil spirit that would cause the boy to hurt himself was brought to the disciple for healing, which they failed to do (Mark 9:14-29). Upon Jesus' arrest in Gethsemane, one of the disciples cuts off a guard's ear (Matt 26:51; Mark 14:47; Luke 22:50; John 18:10). Jesus promptly heals the man, indicating it wasn't His will. Failure is often a necessary component of learning.

Cross-generational mentoring relationships are another principle that can also assist in preventing generational conflict. When a more experienced member or leader invests time and resources to develop and teach less experienced and generally younger members in a mutually open relationship, those dynamics benefit both individuals as well as those to whom they minister. Many Biblical examples give credence to this concept. Moses mentored Joshua, Elijah mentored Elisha, Jesus mentored the disciples, and Paul

mentored Timothy and Titus, to name a few. This dynamic allows faith to be transmitted to the next generation to fulfill God's desire expressed in Shema and Joel 1:3.

When conflict does arise, despite our best efforts, we must then follow the biblical guidelines for conflict resolution. Utilizing the Matthew 18 principle of going to the person with whom we have a difference and lovingly trying to settle the difference directly with the other person. Only when that fails do others come into the equation.

One challenge, likely the greatest one, is in recognizing when a conflict is a generational difference versus another type of conflict. This requires some basic generational knowledge that churches may need to be made aware of through some instruction.

In a situation of generational conflict, the individuals who vary in view need to hear each other out and attempt to understand why the other person is acting in a way that incurs offense. For this reason, the church, leaders in particular, should acquaint themselves with the generations. When we understand what each generation's strengths and weaknesses are we can better minister to them and help them avoid conflict or resolve conflicts more peaceably.

Conclusion

It is clear in scripture that there are principles that can be applied to prevent and work through generational conflict. Ultimately, God cares for everyone regardless of age, gender, or nationality. Because God cares, it is His desire that communities of believers are not only diverse and inclusive but that they love and nurture each other in their unique journeys with God. Although conflict may arise when all the generations are intentionally and consistently brought together, the cost of not doing so is too great. The community of

believers must learn how to see all other generations as a gift and blessing that can help

them in their spiritual journey. Critical mindsets and language towards other generations

that often pit them against each other must be removed and replaced with an attitude

posture towards all people that reflects God's.

CHAPTER 3

LITERATURE RELATED TO INTERGENERATIONAL

THEORY AND GENERATIONAL CONFLICT

Introduction

This chapter traces the history and development of generational theory from its

inception in 1923 to 2021. The focus will be given to the generations with the most

significant influence in society at the time of writing. I will outline a brief sketch of the

developmental processes and events that have birthed each generation and trace unique

generational cultures. Then, we will look at why an organization or church would desire

to be intergenerational and what that implies when we consider the obstacles that relate to

a generational conflict that will be identified. The challenge of generational conflict will

be reviewed, including common areas of conflict. Models for conflict resolution, as well

as the underlining communication models used, will be examined. All this is done to

investigate how published literature can inform how a church, such as the Lacey SDA

Church, can develop and implement an intergenerational conflict resolution model to

promote spiritual growth.

A Brief History of Generational Theory

The sociological theory of generations can be traced back to an essay written by

Karl Mannheim in 1923 entitled "Das Problem der Generationen." It was translated into

English 29 years later (Mannheim, 1952). Mannheim's theory viewed people as generations outside the traditional family roles, such as grandparents, parents, and children. His theory looked at generations as people groupings due to influences by the socio-historical environment and shared experience. Some modern sociologists still see Mannheim's essay as "the most systematic and fully developed" and go so far as to say it is "the seminal theoretical treatment of generations as a sociological phenomenon" (Pilcher, 1994). Others see his essay "as a basis for social scientific research [as] highly contested" (McCourt, 2012). This is often the case due to the generalizations of a large people group, which has its limitations in accuracy.

Mannheim's generational theory was further developed by Howe and Strauss and applied to the people living in America. Their work entitled "Generations: The History of America's Future, 1584 to 2069" outlined four generations living at that time. Those born between 1901-1924 were defined as the G.I. generation; those born between 1925-1942 were defined as the Silent generation; those born between 1943-1960 were defined as the Boomer generation; and those born between 1961-1981 were defined as the 13ER generation (Howe and Strauss 1991, 8). They believed that these generations would cycle through a repetitive process. This cycle is seen throughout history in Table 1.

Table 1

A Critique of Strauss/Howe Generational Theory

Generation	Generation Archetype	Generation Year Span	Entered Childhood in a	Turning Year Span
Late Medieval Saeculum				
Arthurian Generation	Hero (Civic)	1433–1460 (27)	3rd Turning: Unraveling: Retreat from France	1435-1459 (24)
Humanist Generation	Artist (Adaptive)	1461–1482 (21)	4th Turning: Crisis: War of the Roses	1459-1487 (28)
Reformation Saeculum (107)				
Reformation Generation	Prophet (Idealist)	1483–1511 (28)	1st Turning: High: Tudor Renaissance	1487-1517 (30)
Reprisal Generation	Nomad (Reactive)	1512–1540 (28)	2nd Turning: Awakening: Protestant Reformation	1517-1542 (25)
Elizabethan Generation	Hero (Civic)	1541–1565 (24)	3rd Turning: Unraveling: Intolerance and Martyrdom	1542-1569 (27)
Parliamentary Generation	Artist (Adaptive)	1566–1587 (21)	4th Turning: Crisis: Armada Crisis	1569-1594 (25)
New World Saeculum (110)				
Puritan Generation	Prophet (Idealist)	1588–1617 (29)	1st Turning: High: Merrie England	1594-1621 (27)
Cavalier Generation	Nomad (Reactive)	1618–1647 (29)	2nd Turning: Awakening: Puritan Awakening	1621-1649 (28)
Glorious Generation	Hero (Civic)	1648–1673 (25)	3rd Turing: Unraveling: Reaction and Restoration	1649-1675 (26)
Enlightenment Generation	Artist (Adaptive)	1674–1700 (26)	4th Turning: Crisis: Salem Witch Trials/King Philip's War/ Glorious Revolution/War of the Spanish Succession	1675-1704 (29)
Revolutionary Saeculum (90)				
Awakening Generation	Prophet (Idealist)	1701–1723 (22)	1st Turning: High: Augustan Age of Empire	1704-1727 (23)
Liberty Generation	Nomad (Reactive)	1724–1741 (17)	2nd Turning: Awakening: Great Awakening	1727-1746 (19)
Republican Generation	Hero (Civic)	1742–1766 (24)	3rd Turning: Unraveling: French and Indian War	1746-1773 (27)
Compromise Generation	Artist (Adaptive)	1767–1791 (24)	4th Turning: Crisis: American Revolution	1773-1794 (21)
Civil War Saeculum (71)				
Transcendental Generation	Prophet (Idealist)	1792–1821 (29)	1st Turning: High: Era of Good Feeling	1794-1822 (28)
Gilded Generation	Nomad (Reactive)	1822–1842 (20)	2nd Turning: Awakening: Transcendental Awakening	1822-1844 (22)
	Hero (Civic)[b]		3rd Turning: Unraveling: Mexican War and Sectionalism	1844-1860 (16)
Progressive Generation	Artist (Adaptive)	1843–1859 (16)	4th Turning: Crisis: American Civil War	1860-1865 (5)
Great Power Saeculum (81)				
Missionary Generation	Prophet (Idealist)	1860–1882 (22)	1st Turning: High: Reconstruction/Gilded Age	1865-1886 (21)
Lost Generation	Nomad (Reactive)	1883–1900 (17)	2nd Turning: Awakening: Missionary Awakening	1886-1908 (22)
G.I. Generation	Hero (Civic)	1901–1924 (23)	3rd Turning: Unraveling: World War I/Prohibition	1908-1929 (21)
Silent Generation	Artist (Adaptive)	1925–1942 (17)	4th Turning: Crisis: Great Depression/World War II	1929-1946 (17)
Millennial Saeculum (age 71)				
Baby Boom Generation	Prophet (Idealist)	1943–1960 (17)[58]	1st Turning: High: Superpower America	1946-1964 (18)
13th Generation (Generation X)[1]	Nomad (Reactive)	1961–1981 (20)	2nd Turning: Awakening: Consciousness Revolution	1964-1984 (20)
Millennial Generation (Generation Y)[2]	Hero (Civic)	1982–2004 (22)	3rd Turning: Unraveling: Culture Wars, Postmodernism	1984-2008 (24)
Homeland Generation (Generation Z)[3,4]	Artist (Adaptive)	2005–present (age 12)	4th Turning: Crisis: Great Recession/War on Terror	2008-

They believed that there would be a dominant, inner-fixated Idealist Generation, followed by a recessive Reactive Generation, followed by a chief, outer-fixated Civic Generation, followed by a recessive Adaptive Generation (Howe and Strauss 1991, 74). Six years after publishing, *Generations* Howe and Strauss (1997) published "*The Fourth Turning: An American Prophecy,*" which further elaborated on the turnings or cycles that generations go through and what it could mean for the future of generations in America.

The previous works serve as a foundation for understanding generations and how they work, or conflict, together in society.

Limiting Factors

Generational theory and the cycle of generations are founded on general assumptions that lead to broad stereotyping that does not fit every individual within a given age. Hence the theory and all its implications are limited. Howe and Strauss (1991, 63) describe the "peer personality" of a generation which is "a caricature of its prototypical member." A result of a group of people all growing up and experiencing the same cultural constructs and world events together is that they often have "collective attitudes about family life, sex roles, institutions, politics, religion, lifestyle, and the future" (Howe and Strauss 1991, 63).

The unique experiences of ethnic and cultural groups also add dimension. Because the US has from its inception been comprised of people from varied backgrounds, some ethnic groups have very different lived experiences even if they lived at the same time and in the exact location. For example, an enslaved person and a slave owner from the same era and location may be from the same generation but hold very different views and experiences. Many immigrants also held onto their culture of origins within small communities, leading them to a different experience than those of the larger community.

Scholars have varied opinions on generational theory due to how they view a social construct's impact on the individual compared to biological age's role (Field and Syrett, 2015). Other factors, such as the stages of development outlined by Eric Erickson and other developmental models, are not necessarily brought into the generational

31

descriptions. For Example, a Boomer in their 20s is likely a very different person in their 60s due to life experiences and development. However, since others within their generation would have experienced similar growth and experiences, they will still have many commonalities as a generational cohort. This factor makes it critical for generations to be continuously redefined to maintain accuracy.

Many social scientists believe that "true age" is a better indicator of age than just an individual's biological age (Whitbourne, 2012). True age combines a person's physical, psychological, and social age. The generational theory does not include psychological age but includes a person's biological age, social construct influences, and common expectations. This tends to make generational theory accurate on a broad scale but will not be accurate in every individual situation. One example is seen in those who are born on or near the generational dividing lines. These individuals, referred to as "cuspers" (Zimmer, 2021), may lean more toward one generation but are often an amalgamation of both.

Current Generations in Society

Various authors and sources have defined and named the generations in different ways. One challenge is that older references often don't include the most recent generations. The current references focus on the c generations and say little about the oldest generations. As I go through the various generations, the references will include older and newer resources to reflect this reality. For continuity and clarity, I have chosen the following groupings by date but listed the various common, yet not exhaustive, names to avoid any confusion from a specific reference. (See Table 2).

Table 2

Table of Generations Beginning and End Dates

Generation	Beginning Date	Ending Date
Lost Generation	1883	1900
Greatest or G.I. Generation	1901	1923
Traditionalist, Builder, or Silent	1922	1945
Baby Boomers or Boomers	1946	1960
Generation X, or Xers	1961	1980
Millennials or Gen Y	1981	1996
Generation Z or Gen Z	1997	2012
Generation Alpha	2013	Unknown

The younger a generation is, the less reliable the data that defines and describes them is. There are also limited people living amongst the oldest generations. For these reasons, the research described hereafter will focus on the Traditionalists, Boomers, GenX, Millennials, and GenZ. These five core generations comprise the majority of church attendees in America and represent either current leadership or those who will soon become leaders and influencers (Stetzer, 2020).

Generational Composition

The basic process that formed each generation happened because each "took for granted the good, reacted against the bad, and responded within their own historical context" (Sbanotto and Blomberg 2016, 20). Various authors use differing paradigms in which they start and end generations, sometimes impacting the generational composition. For example, authors such as Strauss and Howe determined "the turning" or start and end dates not on the generational birth year span but when the prior generation enters adulthood. For them, a generation "coming of age" is signaled by a "triggering event" that marks the turning point, the ending of one turning, and the beginning of the new.

Sociologists have developed more complex matrixes that identify the mechanism of generational change, triggers, and processes (Hart-Brinson, 2018). Still, the simple explanation above will suffice for the understanding needed in this research.

Once a generation has taken for granted "the good, reacted against the bad, and responded within their own historical context," the generation then takes on a varied and unique set of values, beliefs, and worldviews. This composition produces "each generation as a separate culture" (Sbanotto and Blomberg 2016, xiv).

A Brief Description of Each Generation's Culture

Traditionalist or Silent Generation

The Traditionalists or Silent Generation are called such because they "seemed resigned (if not content) to follow in the G.I.'s shadow" (Marby 2013, 40). They fall within the cycle of generations that Howe and Strauss outlined as an Adaptive Generation (Howe and Strauss 1991, 74). This generation lived through World War II, the Korean War, and the Cold War. They experienced the hardship of recessions, inflationary periods, and the rise of the Space Age (Jackson 2016, 26). Hayden Shaw said Traditionalists "learned not to complain and often think younger people get upset about trivial things" (Shaw 2015, 28). This is attributed to how they compare modern trials to the hardships they lived through.

This generation brings the benefits of extensive experiential history and a knowledge base that can assist the younger generations. Additionally, they are the most financially generous generation towards churches and missions and are more trusting and faithful to organizations (Shaw 2015, 35-36). They often struggle with and resist changes, especially when they are rapid and have associated technological aspects (Hefner 2017).

34

Shaw also notes that this generation frequently communicates through lectures. This can be seen as a challenge when noting that younger generations, such as Millennials, Xers, and Gen Z, struggle with lecture-style communication (Shaw 2015, 42).

<div align="center">Baby Boomer Generation</div>

The Baby Boomer Generation gets its name from the skyrocketing birth rates, or Baby Boom, that occurred just after World War II (Marby 2013, 74). They fall within the cycle of generations that Howe and Strauss outlined as an Idealist Generation (Howe and Strauss 1991, 74). Nicknamed the "me generation," this generation is known for being "loud, proud, and in charge!" (Sbanotto and Blomberg 2016, 1) Their "free thinking" style is seen in events such as the Civil Rights Movement that marked their time in history. Along with their parent's generation, many Boomers lived through the Vietnam War and the Cold War (Jackson 2016, 26).

The Boomers "appeared to reject all the accomplishments the previous generation had worked so hard for successful businesses, the triumph of democracy, the emergence of the United States as a world superpower, confidence in Protestant Christianity, the epic fight against Communism" (Shaw 2015, 44). Shaw goes on to say that Boomers "have four prominent ideas and images that shaped their lives, behaviors, and mindset: The Baby Boom, affluence, television, and the shift from sacrifice to self" (2015, 45). The results of these ideas can be seen in the cultural shift towards hyper-individualism and psychology over theology. Boomers are "more demanding, more informed, more confrontational, and more questioning of authority figures" than other generations (Thornhill and Martin, 2019).

The Boomers, for many years, were the largest generation, only recently surpassed by Millennials (Fry, 2020). Some have even divided this generation into early or first-half Boomers and late or second-half Boomers (Zemke, Raines, and Filipczak 2013, p 69-78). Within this understanding, the first-half Boomers are seen as economic achievers, and the late Boomers are more laid back and cynical (Zemke, Raines, and Filipczak 2013, 69-78).

The Boomers, like the Traditionalists, bring the benefits of sizeable experiential history and knowledge base that can assist the younger generations. The Boomer's self-confidence and optimistic attitude that stood up to powers and carved out a place for themselves in the world could benefit later generations. Yet, these same attributes can make them challenging to work with when they take on a "know it all" attitude. According to a 2014 Gallup survey, Boomers also "struggle to retire or hand off responsibilities to others who may be more qualified, better suited, or simply less busy" (Harter and Agrawal, 2014). This can also bring tension and conflict into work or ministry environments.

Generation X

Douglas Coupland's Generation X popularized Generation X's name*: Tales for an Accelerated Culture*, published in 1991 and recognized by Howe and Strauss in *The Fourth Turning: An American Prophecy* (1997, 17). Some see the name as a "non-label" function to communicate the generation's desire to be undefined and society's lack of understanding of who they are (Sbanotto and Blomberg 2016, 80). GenXers often struggle to understand "their generational persona" (Taylor and Gao, 2014). This generation "lived through the Energy Crisis, dual income families, Y2K, and corporate

downsizing…the first generation of latch-key kids" (Jackson 2016, 26). The introduction of birth control pills and women's liberation caused this generation to be left at home and often seen as unwanted.

They fall within the cycle of generations that Howe and Strauss outlined as a Reactive Generation (Howe and Strauss 1991, 74). Although GenXers typically get along well with other generations, except Boomers are "the most demonized generation alive" (Marby 2013, 114-115). This demonization has led many GenXers to become apathetic and cynical. This generation is the first to be seen as "fully internalizing a post-modern worldview" (Marby 2013, 117). Often seen as "survivalists," this generation has to work extra hard to carve out their place in the workplace and the world (Zemke, Raines, and Filipczak 2013, p 90-99).

Having lived through the birth of the internet age, Xers were the first generation "to gain access to what was going on behind the scenes…gain[ing] access to information beyond the news" (Shaw 2015, 67). Reacting to the Boomers, the GenXers "moved the focus from the individual back to the community" (Shaw 2015, 69). Xers began the movement away from the traditional Christian values many were raised with.

<center>Millennials or Generation Y</center>

Millennials get their name because the oldest members of this generation graduated high school in 2000, and the world was focused on the end of the millennium (Thompson, 2018). The alternate name of Generation Y comes from the logical idea that they came after Generation X. They fall within the cycle of generations that Howe and Strauss outlined as a Civic Generation, restarting the process that began with the G.I. Generation (Howe and Strauss 1991, 74). This generation grew up with digital media,

AIDS, September 11 Crisis, school shootings, and divorced-ridden homes (Jackson 2016, 26).

Millennials are the second largest generation, with nearly eighty million strong (Rainer and Rainer 2011, 8); they are 21% larger than the Boomer Generation (Greenberg and Weber 2008, 20). One striking difference between Millennials vs. Boomers was their perception of their parents. Nearly half of Millennials "pick[ed] their parents as role models and heroes over celebrities or political leaders" (Shaw 2015, 83). In contrast, 40% of Boomers told Gallup in 1974 "that they would be better off without their parents (Shaw 2015, 83). Millennials' parents and influencers helped them believe they were special and could do great things. One survey indicated that 96% of Millennials agreed or somewhat agreed with the statement, "I can do something great" (Rainer and Rainer 2011, 16).

David Kinnaman and Aly Hawkins found that 61% of Protestants in this generation admitted to dropping out of attending church (2011, 24). Millennials and the GenZs are among the alarming number of people in America now claiming "none" as a religious preference (White 2014, 21-22). This generation has pent-up frustrations with "the church" that they are now being described as "post-church Christians" (Nyquist and Nyquist 2013, 12). Interestingly, "Jesus is popular among Xers and Millennials outside the church, even if they don't like Christians or churches" (Shaw 2015, 74). Christian Smith and Melinda Denton coined the term "Moralistic, Therapeutic, Deism" as the commonly held beliefs of Millennials and GenZs (Smith and Denton 2005, 162–163). The term was derived from the fundamental beliefs that: They believe God exists (Deism), God wants people to be good, friendly, and fair to each other (Moralistic), and

the central goal of life is to be happy and to feel good about oneself (Therapeutic). Two different vital beliefs Smith discovered were that they believe God does not need to be mainly involved in one's life except when God is required to resolve a problem, and good people go to heaven when they die.

Kinnaman found that many Millennials have felt "persecuted" and "misunderstood" and even other negative repercussions of living one's faith in today's society, "getting hit from all sides" (Kinnaman 2016, 52). Reasons why Millennials, in particular, seem to struggle are very diverse. One author suggests that it may be because "In many senses, Millennials are more conservative than their grandparents were at the same age…" (Deist et al. 2018).

Regardless of the reasons why they feel "persecuted," Millennials are "hopeful, optimistic, and largely happy" (Marby 2013, 150). This can be a welcomed change from the apathetic and cynical demeanor of the Xers. They are often seen as digital natives and tech-savvy. One survey indicated that 94% of Millennials greatly respect older generations (Rainer and Rainer 2011, 59). These two facts give hope for intergenerational mentoring possibilities.

<center>Generation Z</center>

Generation Z as a name is the natural alphabetic name following GenX and GenY. The name currently serves as a type of placeholder that may or may not stick, given the name change from GenY to Millennial. Some social scientists refer to this generation as a younger cohort of Millennials. They fall within the cycle of generations that Howe and Strauss outlined as an Adaptive Generation, the same as the Traditionalists or the Silent Generation (Howe and Strauss 1991, 74).

Generation Z now constitutes "25.9% of the US population" (White 2017, 37), making them the largest generation. They are also the most "racially diverse of any generation to date" (White 2017, 46). Further, a poll taken by Northeastern University indicated that acceptance of same-sex marriage (73%), as well as equal rights for transgender people (74%), is an identifying characteristic of GenZ (2014). One website correlates this wide acceptance partly to the fact that "no generation has had as much exposure to pornography at such a young age as Generation Z" (2017). Like the Millennials that came before them, the departure from churches and disenfranchisement from religion continues with GenZs as they take on a culture not widely accepted within Christendom.

More than just digital natives, this generation grew up on tablets and smartphones. An article on kasasa.com reports that the "average Gen Zer received their first mobile phone at age 10.3 years" (2020). Although still in the process of defining themselves, many attributes are beginning to be revealed. Starting in 2020, "roughly 24 million [GenZs] will have the opportunity to cast a ballot" (Parker and Igielnik, 2020). However, this generation is also said to be "politically disengaged" (Jackson 2016, 26). They are believed to be "non-traditional in terms of education, delaying college or going part-time" (Jackson 2016, 26).

In March of 2020, when the Covid-19 pandemic hit the world, GenZ was hit the hardest economically, with "half of the oldest GenZers (ages 18 to 23) reported that they or someone in their household had lost a job or taken a cut in pay because of the outbreak" (Parker and Igielnik 2020). There is little question that the pandemic will significantly impact this generation, but the details are not yet fully known.

From Generational to Intergenerational

Definition of Intentional Intergenerationality

It is essential to understand what is meant by the term intergenerational. Most organizations, sacred or secular, have people from more than one generation in one place. However, if one generation tends to dominate all others, which is often the case with the older generations holding leadership roles, that would make it mono-generational. Sometimes mono-generational organizations may attempt to establish bridges with younger generations through mentoring. This would be an example of cross-generational. Companies like Insala promote the benefits of such relationships (2019). Larger institutions often have people of all ages but function as sub-sets that are usually segregated by age with minimal interaction outside of one's generation. This would make it multi-generational but not intergenerational.

For a group to be considered intergenerational, there should be intentional, regular, and friendly interaction with three or more generations to grow in knowledge and experience that is beneficial to all or for a united purpose. Within a Christian church context, Allen and Ross defined it: "intergenerational ministry occurs when a congregation intentionally combines the generations in mutual serving, sharing, or learning within the core activities of the church to live out being the body of Christ to each other and the greater community" (Allen and Ross 2012, 17). To obtain true intergenerationality in this way, an organization or church must intentionally pursue it, as it doesn't accidentally happen.

Benefits of Intentional Intergenerationality

Published literature reviews on intergenerational programs have shown it to

promote satisfaction and quality of life in all the parties involved (Kuehne, 2003).

Research specifically related to churches has demonstrated that the efforts to make

congregations more intergenerational have profound positive impacts on individuals and

communities (Allen and Ross 2012, 47-63). An Australian study discovered that

"intergenerationality positively influenced both wellbeing and discipleship" (Azzopardi

2019, 7). Intergenerational churches also play an important role in neurological

development when early childhood ministries partner with other ministries (Allen 2018,

166-170).

Not only is intergenerationality beneficial, the alternatives of segregating age

groupings include unintended consequences such as generational fragmentation, silo

mentality, and more (Allen and Ross 2012, 30). For years, people have noted and studied

the cost of not intentionally integrating and discipling our youth (Ham, Ken, et al. 2009,

22-25). Barna Research, the Pew Forum, and others continue to report that the younger

generations view churches as irrelevant and extreme (Kinnaman and Lyons 2016, 42). An

increasing percentage of the younger generations are trending towards claiming no

religious identity (White 2017, 21-27).

Things haven't always been this way. For many earlier societies, there were often

only three generations living together at any given time; the elders or grandparents, the

parents, and the children (Shaw 2015, 13). Each generation represented a phase of life in

which they knew the expectations and privileges that came with it. Societal changes were

often prolonged. Today, however, we find as many as six generations living together

(Friesner 2019 et al.). As already shown, today's generations have strikingly different

views, values, and experiences in which they view the world and events.

One typical response can be seen in the segregation of generations in churches. This is a form of avoidance that denies our differences, resulting in the diminished growth of all. Each generation has unique strengths that can benefit the whole. When generational segregation occurs in churches, the members "are not free to be the persons and communities God created us to be if we deny our diversity and don't fully use the gifts we all bring" (Schrock-Shenk and Ressler 1999, 50). The benefits outweigh the challenges when we learn how to utilize the conflicts as strengths.

<center>The Scope of the Problem of Generational Conflict</center>

Generational conflict is "the result of differences that produce tension" (Porter 2010, 13) between two or more generations. Because each generation develops a unique culture from mutually-lived experiences, this can also be seen as a conflict of cultures. Because it happens between individual persons, it can also be seen as interpersonal conflict. This can lead to overlooking and not seeing a conflict as generational. The more we understand the unique views and cultures of the generations, the more one can see its pervasiveness.

The conflicts and challenges of having multiple generations together are evident in varying ethnic communities in the United States and beyond. A few of the church communities that have already reported on such conflicts include Chinese Americans (ChenFeng et al. 2015), Korean Americans (Lee 2004), and Rural Black Americans (Bland 2019) residing in the US. Oversees similar problems have been documented in Africa (Reynolds et al. 2008), England (Deist et al. 2018), and other European countries (Szydlik, 2018).

Given the fact that the church may be "the only agency in Western civilization

<center>43</center>

which has all the members of the family as part of its clientele…through the complete life cycle from birth to death" (Sawin 1979, 22); the church is inevitably going to encounter intergenerational conflicts. These conflicts are likely to get worse, not better, unless churches begin to account for, prepare, and strategize methods to deal with the generational differences.

People, regardless of generation, can have negative experiences due to perceptions others may feel, even if not based on facts. An Oxford-based study found that "conflict or tension can be generated as a result of perceptions of generational differences in values and behaviors, even before any interactions occur" (Urick et al. 2016, 166).

Beyond the churches, the business world in America and abroad have taken countermeasures to deal with the adverse effects. One author noted the challenges his country is facing in England, stating, "cultural, economic, fiscal, and political fault lines in America today all bode ill for harmony between younger and older generations" (Deist et al. l 2018). Vera Jackson gives many examples of the types of generational conflict escalation through demoralizing words and actions among intergenerational teams (Jackson 2016, p 79-84, 97-100, 111-116). One example is how GenZs have coined the term 'Ok Boomer' to criticize and dismiss Boomers (Lorenz 2019). Other such comments regarding ages as too old or too young tend to pit generations against each other.

Consulting firms, such as Generational Edge, have sprung up to help the business sector meet the growing challenges. Given the eternal consequences for churches, it is much more critical that we learn how to develop ministries to address these ever-increasing needs.

The Conflicts

Due to the changes in culture, technology, and society, each generation approaches life from a different perspective. When people from different generations are tasked to work together towards completing a common goal, they often view the process or methods through different lenses that result in conflict. Some generational conflicts are simple and efficiently worked through, while others can cripple organizations' growth and effectiveness toward the desired goal.

One bi-generationally authored book outlines conflicts from the author's generations within churches. The older generation discusses evangelism vs. social justice causes, reaffirmation of truth vs. postmodernism relativism, marital faithfulness vs. sexual openness, loving yet forbidding homosexual actions vs. endorsing homosexuality. The younger generation tends to discuss: living like Jesus vs. talking about Jesus, political advocacy vs. political avoidance or force, reconciling internal divisions vs. internal divisions and critical spirits, and care for creation vs. environmental indifference (Sider 2016). While both authors in this book tend to agree with each other, it is because they choose to listen to each other's views intentionally.

Another study performed within the Assembly of God context found three primary areas of conflict: money, music, staging, and production (Wilkerson 2019, 63-66). That privy to church giving records would most likely see a significant variance in what the generations fund and to what extent. Older generations tend to be the primary funding source for many congregations, while younger generations fund projects rather than organizations selectively. Music, staging, and service production is an ever-evolving industry in which each generation is exposed to new and different styles within the

American culture. This also leads to preferential differences that often divide the generations.

The problems go beyond the mainstream American culture and into sub-cultures in the United States and worldwide. A study of Korean American adolescents focused on the adverse effects that have developed in Korean American adolescents. It highlighted some of the consequences of not dealing with intergenerational conflicts. These problems included depression, ethnic identity, and behavior problems (Lee 2004, iv).

The challenge of generational conflict amongst families who have immigrated is evident in the published literature. Most instances occur in the differences between second and third generations. First-generation immigrants commonly maintain the cultural norms and practices of the country of origin (Foner 2009, 4). Depending on an individual's age upon immigrating, sometimes referred to as 1.5-generation adolescence (Turjanmaa and Jasinskaja-Lahti, 2020), they may hold onto some of the countries of origin as well adopt some of the new nations of residence's cultural norms. Those born in a new country will most likely blend the two cultures. By the third generation, the children often have adapted to the new country of residence culture. When a family of immigrants lives under one roof, with various cultural adaptations coupled with generational differences, the likelihood of generational tension and conflict is nearly unavoidable.

Areas in which immigrant families often conflict are broad depending on the country of origin. Areas such as sexual relations, particularly with daughters, are a significant area of contention when the immigrant family comes from a culture where young women are not permitted to date (Foner 2009, 5). This is further developed when a

child is pressured to marry within the ethnic group of origin and does not want to do so. Another tension is often seen in the expectation for family members to move abroad and send large amounts of money back to the family. Such obligations are magnified in the family's separation for prolonged periods. These and other parental expectations that vary among their children can create high levels of conflict.

Given the international and intergeneration makeup of many churches, such as the Lacey SDA Church, understanding what types of stress and conflict this can have on individuals and families is an important variable. Familial conflicts can be some of the most challenging and painful to work through because of the relational dynamics.

Haydn Shaw, a leading consultant in intergenerational challenges, listed a total of twelve areas that the generations come apart when trying to work together. His list includes communication, decision making, dress code, feedback, fun at work, knowledge transfer, loyalty, meetings, policies, respect, training, and work ethic (Shaw 2013, p 111-226). This list, while broad in scope, is not exhaustive. Any area that can be viewed differently by generations is an area of potential conflict. Authors such as Lancaster and Stillman note many different regions where generations collide in the workplace (2002, p 3-42). Many conflicts must be addressed, or the consequences of leaving them trotter may threaten any organization's mission, morals, and effectiveness.

Conflict Resolution Models

Every conflict does not need to be seen as a negative. As one author puts it, "It is not the presence of conflict that causes chaos and disaster, but the harmful and ineffective way it is managed. It is the lack of skills in managing conflict that leads to problems. When conflicts are skillfully managed, they are of value" (Johnson 1991, 247). Within

this understanding, conflict management skills must be nurtured in any organization's

leadershi However, the real goal would be to prevent conflict by fostering a culture of

openness and accepting differences. Since such a culture is not likely to contain all

conflict, we must familiarize ourselves with what to do when it occurs.

According to the Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument, there are five

major styles of conflict management—collaborating, competing, avoiding,

accommodating, and compromising. These five models, along with their goals, levels of

cooperation, and assertiveness involved, are illustrated in Figure 2.
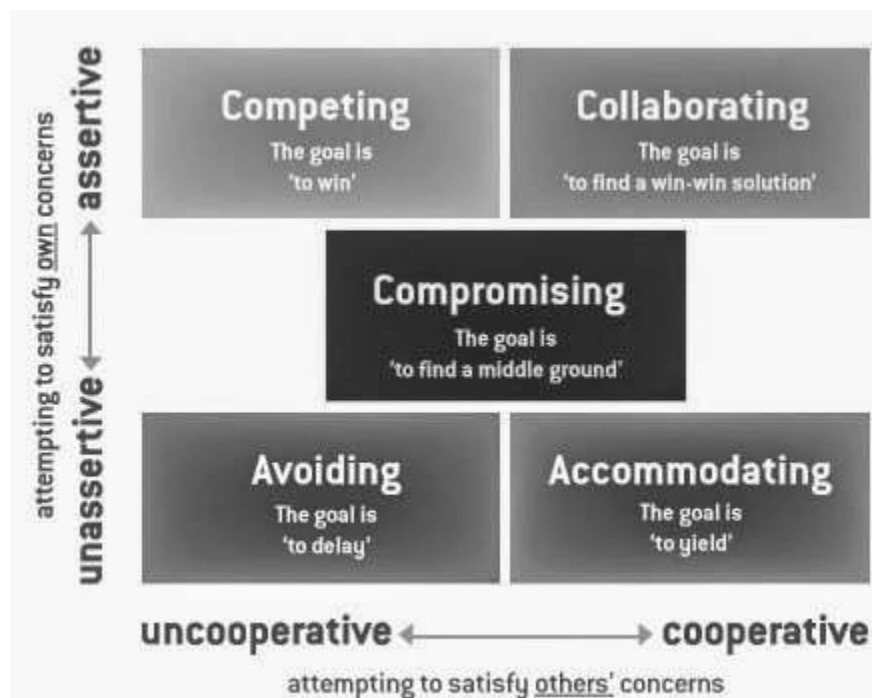
Figure 2. Attempting to satisfy concerns diagram (Jay, 2019).

One of the more comprehensive and practical resources to gain familiarity with

the field of study is Gary T. Furlong's book *The Conflict Resolution Toolbox*. Furlong

outlines nine different models, in contrast to theories, along with case studies to make the

models easier to understand (2020, p 17-22). Without question, "There is no magic formula that resolves all disputes" (Furlong 2020, 9). Therefore, there isn't a straightforward model to learn. However, principles can be seen in nearly all models that one can apply. One thing nearly all conflict resolution models have is that avoiding the inevitable conflict is not a solution. Generationally speaking, this means that the generations can't simply silo themselves off from other generations but rather intentionally come together in an attitude of seeking to understand and get along with those differing from us. In these encounters between the generations, tools such as clear communication, active listening, mirrored speech, and informed leadership aid in the proactive treatment of generational differences.

Within Christendom, various models have been suggested that tend to involve a more grace-oriented model. One such model is seen in the Redeeming Church Conflict model, which is defined as: "intentional dependence on the humbling and heart-changing grace of Christ's Holy Spirit by turning relational crisis in the church into compassionate care as you take every thought and deed captive to him" (Barthel and Edling 2012, 218). Such models seek God's will as understood in Scripture to override any individuals' feelings or preferences.

Another Christian model is John Paul Lederach's Acts15 model. Based on the biblical chapter describing one of the earliest significant conflicts within the newly emerged Christian Church, often referred to as the Jerusalem Council. This model gives a six-step approach to handling conflict (Lederach 1999, p 111-117). The pages following the six steps highlight the skill of active listening in communication. In the Christian realm, this would include listening to others and God through the Bible and as guided by

the Holy Spirit in prayer. Listening, in general, is one of the principles we find in nearly every model.

Role of Communication in Intergenerational Conflict Resolution

Both verbal and nonverbal communication plays a critical role in conflict resolution. Miscommunication or hostile communication is frequently a cause of conflict. One source went so far as to say that "the greatest threat to the church today is the same as it has been in every generation since the New Testament was written: quarreling" (Muehlhoff and Langer 2020, 17). The reason quarreling, a hostile communication, is believed to be a threat is that it "kills from within." The differences between generations and individuals can strengthen the whole, but only when we can communicate them accurately and in non-hostile ways.

There are three primary categories of communication models: Linear, Interactive, and Transactional (Drew 2020). The various models within each category then attempt to explain the nuances of how communication is transmitted. A central component of each model revolves around the barriers or challenges associated with accurately communicating to others. Seth Pierce notes four barriers to seeking an understanding: intercultural apprehension, stereotypes, assuming similarity, and ethnocentrism (Pierce 2020, p 75-81). All of these barriers play a role in the misunderstandings that frequently escalate into conflict between generations.

One common type of communication that often leads to conflict is triangulation. Triangulation occurs when an individual or group chooses to avoid direct contact by involving a third party. Triangulation often becomes unhealthy when it "causes undue stress on the third party and when it prevents, rather than invites, resolution of the dyad's

conflict" (King 2017). When a leader, such as a pastor, is unnecessarily triangulated in a

conflict, they often experience undue anxiety (Bixby 2016, 4-6). Triangulation can take

place on both an individual level as well as a generational level. At the generational level,

those of a particular generation can try to influence those in power to implement change

according to their preference and intentionally not communicate with those outside their

generation. This is often the case when there is a known difference in opinion. This puts

the leader in the position of either choosing to deal with the difference of views or

choosing one generational preference over another.

Another challenge is the medium in which people choose to communicate.

Generational differences exist in preferred information practices, communication

methods, learning styles, and social networking practices (Biden and Evans 2018). A new

dynamic has emerged with the dawn of social media and application-based

communication. Researchers have found that younger generations acquire knowledge

differently from their older counterparts (Biden and Evans 2018). The younger the

generation, the more likely they prefer fully digital communications. For example, studies

have found that GenXers spend more time on Facebook than other generations

("Boomers, Gen X, Gen Y, and Gen Z Explained." 2020). At the same time, older

generations prefer in-person or even handwritten communication styles. This difference

can lead to miscommunication and conflict if accommodations are not made that are fully

inclusive.

Although communication styles and skills often vary by generation, the

communication culture should be dictated and communicated by the organization or

church leadershi An intergenerational culture of communication requires a flexible and

open-minded approach if all generations are to be able to have a voice. An organizational

culture that hears, values, and weighs the communication style and approach of all

generations gives the best opportunity for mutual respect. Without mutual respect,

organizations will not get buy-in from younger generations and will likely face ongoing

generational conflict (Myers and Sadaghiani, 2010).

Establishing a code of conduct for any given committee, such as a church board,

is one way of preempting challenges (Ennis 2016, p 121-123). A culture of accountability

is established by establishing acceptable and unacceptable conduct at the inception of any

committee. When committee members know the expectations and are aware that they

have committed to abiding by such, there is a lower likelihood of hostile communication

or misunderstanding.

Regularly restating and emphasizing the mission or objectives of the organization

is also essential (Gangel and Canine 2002, 39). Suppose suggestions or conversations

move in a direction that does not align with the organization's mission. In that case, the

leadership should stop and redirect the discussion to align with the mission. Similarly,

organizations should know what they do well and stick to it. If ideas are brought up that

don't work within the DNA of who or what the church or organization is all about, they

should be named and avoided.

As previously noted, communication is not only what we say or even non-

verbally communicate but also how we listen. Active listening, genuinely trying to

understand others' perspectives, is essential to healthy communication. The model of

"Ask, Mirror, Paraphrase, or Prime (AMPP)" (Patterson 2012, p 162-167) is a simple

way of assuring such healthy communication. To help others know you are listening and

understanding correctly is by rephrasing what was said in a question format starting with "I hear you say that…". Once the question is asked, the other can clarify if they were understood correctly or misunderstood.

Another critical aspect of conflict resolution communication is identifying and clearly communicating the proper communication channels (Gangel and Canine 2002, p 39-40). Individuals must know who to approach and feel comfortable doing so, or communication will break down or turn to gossi Coupled with this concept is the recognition of tonal levels of communication. The tones used in touch can significantly impact effectiveness. As Gangel and Canine express, "Constant intensity in communication creates tension for the communicants, whether lovers or leaders" (2002, 40).

The Role of Leadership

Leadership plays a critical role in any organization, especially when conflict comes into play. The most effective leaders understand that conflict resolution begins with knowing what competition is, how to manage it, and when to do so (Voegtlinet al., 2012; Yuan, 2010). Regarding intergenerational conflict, leaders must be familiar with the unique cultures each generation functions within and how to work with them. Nearly every book on the conflict in organizations lists leaders' specific roles in escalating or deescalating conflicts.

There are at least eight different leadership styles, each having varied strengths and weaknesses (Boogaard 2021). Many Christian resources advocate a servant leadership model. While it is true that pastors should play the role of a servant, they must not allow the strongest voice or deepest pockets to win. The servant position should be

seen in such cases as serving them best by helping them learn to work together as a united body of believers from all generations.

In building an intentionally intergenerational church, it is essential to practice the principle of "work on me first, us second" (Patterson 2012, 35). The starting point for any organization or church to effectively incorporate the generations needs to be for the leadership to educate themselves in the field.

Research also points to the effects of emotional intelligence in the identification and resolution between generations. When an institution provides "training and education, and the introduction of emotional intelligence (EI) for both leaders and staff, generational conflict can be identified and addressed before it becomes a negative cost to the organization" (Annear 2020, Abstract). Responding to conflict with a low emotional intelligence further complicates and adds to the conflict, while a response with high EI promotes a greater likelihood of diffusion and resolution.

Transformative Learning Applications to be Intentionally Intergenerational

In 1978, Jack Mezirow revolutionized adult education when he developed what is now known as transformative learning theory (Levine, 2014). Over time, this theory has evolved "into a comprehensive and complex description of how learners construe, validate, and reformulate the meaning of their experience" (Cranton, 2006). The theory can be divided into two primary areas, instrumental and communicative learning. Instrumental learning is centered on task-oriented problem-solving evaluation of cause-and-effect relationships, while communicative learning is centered on how people communicate their feelings, needs, and desires. Both of these types of learning are

essential when challenging an individual's previous knowledge or perspectives given the logical and emotional undergirding of a person's understanding.

From a generational perspective this would relate to how someone healthfully address a negative stereotype and means of interaction and feelings towards coming from a different generation's cultural perspective. This transformation takes place through a series of steps. Depending on how detailed one wants to see the process, there are between seven and ten phases in Mezirow's theory (see Figure 3). The process begins when an individual or group of individuals face new information that challenges a previously help belief. This is the disorienting dilemma phase. This point in the transformative learning process can be seen as an "a-ha" moment where the individual hears or considers something they may not have understood before. This disorienting dilemma can be uncomfortable or challenging for some people. Generationally, this could be realizing what or why a different generation thinks or does differently.
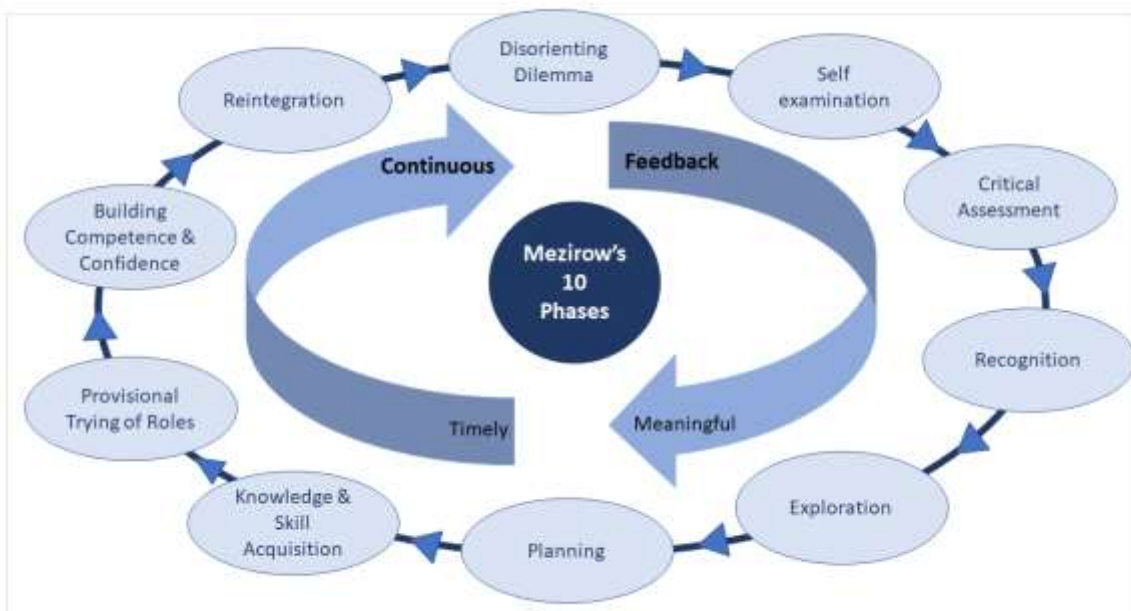
Figure 3. Mezirow's 10 phases (Desmarais, 2021).

The next step leads to a process of self-examination of their understanding and beliefs. They will think about their past experiences and how they connect to this disorienting dilemma. This can facilitate a change in perspective, where they begin to understand that their perspective may not be the only perspective. This naturally segways to a more comprehensive look at their previously held beliefs from a critical perspective.

Once somebody recognizes their previous position may have been flawed or wrong, they then begin exploring and planning a way forward with the newly gained insight. People often begin to consider what kinds of learning they need to understand a problem or situation more fully. They should then be able to create a strategy for acquiring any additional insight or knowledge need and proceed with in their newly formed strategy. In transformative learning, exploring and understanding changes beyond just learning details about something, and actively work to understand and experience new things for one's self. This exploration should lead to self-efficacy, or being able to make our own decisions and have our own beliefs. If the process is unsuccessful, the process essentially starts over.

Mezirow's transformative learning theory steps provides a structured means for facilitating last change in people's thinking, attitude, and actions. When one seeks to change an environment rich in cultural (generational) conflict this provides a map towards that change.

Conclusion

The literature confirms that the generational theory has evolved and has been generally received as valid. It is also evident that the generations can and often conflict due to the diverse generations' varied cultures, views, and beliefs. Further, it is clear that

56

each generation has various areas in which they excelled and others where they have struggled. Due to the conflicts between the generations, many organizations fail to reach the full benefits of intentional intergenerationality.

Since churches stand as a unique organization in Western civilization, "which has all the members of the family as part of its clientele…[and] is the only organized group which reaches persons through the complete life cycle from birth to death" (Sawin 1979, 22), it is paramount that churches learn not to let differences divide the generations but learn to utilize our unique differences to strengthen each other. If church leaders know how to resolve the conflicts peacefully through healthy communication, spiritual growth and strength will result. The published literature reviewed here provides leaders with the insights to evaluate and proceed in transitioning a congregation into a culture that is intentionally intergenerational.

CHAPTER 4

A STRATEGY FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF INTENTIONAL
INTERGENERATIONAL INTERACTION AT THE
LACEY SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH

Introduction

The Lacey Seventh-day Adventist Church, like many churches, has struggled with

intergenerational conflict. Such conflicts often cause divisions and weaken the

effectiveness in ministry. If a church desires to minister to all generations consistently, a

strategy must be implemented. Given the vast array of benefits that come from intentional

intergenerational interaction the objective is to combat the conflict and cultivate a

pervasive intergenerational culture within the church.

The Action Research model provides the frame for the field research potion of

this project. In this way, all participants benefit along with the researcher as we journey

through the project together. Because Action Research is cyclical by design, the process

of finding ways to reduce intergenerational conflict and improve intergenerational

relationships through intentional interaction will continue beyond the scope of this

research. Both church board and individual consent were obtained in accordance to

research standards and ethics with approval from the Andrews University Institutional

Review Board.

Developing the Strategy

With the primary goal of implementing intentionally intergenerational interactions in the Lacey Seventh-day Adventist Church, I have outlined five strategic steps. Each step will be measured, verified, and take the implied assumptions into consideration. I have developed a Logical Framework Matrix to organize and visually outline what will be undertaken in order to reach my project's purpose and goals. The Logical Framework Matrix organizes the planning and managing of a project in a through the following processes:

1. It assists in summarizing in a standard format what the project is going to achieve

2. It outlines what activities will be carried out to achieve its outputs and purpose

3. Looks at the resources required

4. Predicts potential problems which could affect the success of the project

5. Provides the process of verification and how the ultimate success of the project will be measured and verified (Maier, 2007).

The following pages will discuss in detail the different components of the Logical Framework Matrix (Table 3).

Table 3

Logical Framework Matrix

Objectives	Measurable Indicators	Means of Verification	Important Assumptions
GOAL: The Lacey Seventh-day Adventist Church implements intentionally intergenerational interactions	Acknowledgement of positive attributes of other's generation and a desire to continuously engage in intergenerational interactions in worship and ministries	Surveys, personal interviews, and focus group responses following the implementation of the strategy	Being intentionally intergenerational will enrichen the worship service and relationship between the members and the varied generations
PURPOSE: Increase in intergenerational interaction and reduction of intergenerational conflict	A decrease in negative generational perspectives and an increased appreciation for other generations and how we can minister to each other more effectively	Training is done, intergenerational conflict diminished, and attitudes and desires towards other generations improves	Members willing to be involved in intergenerational worship and interaction
OUTPUTS: 1. Sermon series on the theological foundations of intergenerational church 2. Seminar on the benefits of intergenerational dynamics and the unique culture and strengths of the generations 3. Focus group and one-on-one interviews to discover how each generation can work together 4. Implementation of intergenerational dynamics to worship service for four consecutive weeks 5. Focus Groups, surveys, and individual interviews to evaluate efficacy	1. Multipart sermon series responses from focus groups 2. Self-evaluation of individuals before and after seminar to reflect any change in perception 3. Ideas and concepts derived from the group discussions and interviews on ways to work together towards an intergenerational culture 4. Survey results indicating members reactions to the introduction on of intergenerational dynamics to the worship service for four weeks	1. Seminar materials on file. 2. Seminar evaluation report 3. Focus group discussion records 4. Individual interview records 5. Three surveys administered by an external evaluator (One survey before introduction of intergenerational worship dynamics, one after, and one three months later to check longevity of acceptance)	1. Church board approval 2. Members willing to respond to surveys 3. Members willing to take part in seminars 4. Members give feedback and ideas on how to work together 5. Member's willingness to move towards implementation of intergenerational dynamics in worship service 6. Selected members accept to be interviewed

Logical Framework Matrix

Purpose

The purpose of this project is to increase intergenerational interaction and reduce intergenerational conflict. This purpose will be achieved when church members understand the biblical foundation of being intentionally intergenerational, are educated on each generation's benefit to the Body of Christ, and experience first-hand intergenerational worship dynamics. This will involve identifying the various ways in which each generation is best ministered to, and how we can mutually minster to those needs together. I postulate that the result of such work will create healthier generational perspectives, generational relationships, and church culture.

Output Strategies

This project relies on five primary strategies as listed in the Logical Framework Matrix: a sermon series on the foundations of being intentionally intergenerational, generational awareness seminar, generational focus groups and personal interviews, implementation of intergenerational dynamics into the worship service, and monitoring and evaluating project activities. Each of the five strategies in this project seeks to achieve the goal and purposes of the project as previously listed.

Objectives

Beyond the immediate purpose of the project, additional objectives would include creating a model for reaching all generations within the confines of a traditionally oriented Seventh-day Adventist Church. When all generations are intentionally ministered to, the natural outworking would likely be healthier church relationships,

spiritual growth, church growth, and reduced generational conflict. To some extent, this strategy may also be applicable in other churches.

Additional objectives would include participants from every generation gaining the ability to understand other generations strengths and how they can mutually grow and excel when they intentionally work together. This would include an understanding of derogatory language and negative perceptions towards other generations and why we must avoid it.

Another objective would be to obtain greater congregational buy-in to shift church culture to a more intergenerational model. I postulate that this will also result in greater harmony amongst generations in the church.

Measurable Indicators

The measurable indicators in this project to validate success include: 1. An acknowledgement of positive attributes of other's generation and a desire to continuously engage in intergenerational interactions in worship and ministries. 2. A decrease in negative generational perspectives and an increased appreciation for other generations and how we can minister to each other more effectively. 3. Other measurements will be gathered from the sermon series, responses from focus groups, and self-evaluation of individuals before and after seminar to reflect any change in perception. The ideas and concepts derived from the group discussions and interviews will also be utilized in ways to work together towards an intergenerational culture. Finally, survey results indicating members' reactions to the introduction of intergenerational dynamics to the worship service for four weeks will be used as a measurable indicator.

Means of Verification

In order to verify and validate the measurable indicators, this research will utilize surveys, personal interviews, and focus group responses following the implementation of the strategy. Education of the varied generations and their positive contributions will be accomplished though the sermons and seminar. This education is postulated to have direct impacts on intergenerational conflict reduction as it corrects common negative generational perspectives and attitudes towards other generations. The seminar materials will be kept on file as well as the seminar evaluation report. Transcriptions of focus group discussion and individual interview records will be maintained to reflect changes in perspectives.

In conjunction with the intergenerational dynamics being introduced to the worship service, three surveys will be administered by an external evaluator. There will be one survey before introduction of intergenerational worship dynamics, one after, and one three months later to check longevity of acceptance. The announcements asking for members to respond to the survey as well as the collection and mailing of the surveys will be done by a neutral party in order to minimalize power broker persuasions that could affect the results.

Important Assumptions

There are multiple assumptions made in the planning phase that will determine or hinder successful outcomes. The initial assumption is that the local church board will approve to be involved in this research and selected members accept to be interviewed. It also assumes that members willing to be involved in intergenerational worship and interaction, that they will be willing to respond to surveys, to take part in the seminar,

give feedback and ideas on how to work together in focus groups and interviews, and that there will be a willingness to move towards implementation of intergenerational dynamics in worship service.

Implementation of the Strategy

A strategy can be understood as a carefully planned means to reach a goal. When research includes a well-planned strategy, it can serve several purposes. First, it provides the lead-researcher with clear direction and plans towards the desired goal and it enables participants to understand everything necessary to complete the task. Additionally, it allows a means of casing a new vision for the research context. Regardless of the level of planning put into a strategy, the success or failure of a strategy lies in the implementation. Having a well-planned strategy in writing is one thing, converting it into action is another thing. For this reason, attention will be given to answer the questions of why, what, and how each output of the strategy will be implemented.

Sermon Series

The first output planned in this strategy is to present a multi-part sermon series on the biblical foundations for moving towards an intentionally intergenerational model of ministry. The rationale behind having the sermon series first is that it reaches the largest number of members. Laying this foundation will assist in the selection of focus group and personal interview participants by presenting the biblical foundation as a primary reason for member support. This series would cover a minimum of three topics: Church Generations as the Body of Christ, Faith Transmission to the Next Generation, and the Remnant's Elijah Message to Reconcile Broken Relationships.

The first sermon on the Church Generations as the Body of Christ will look at the consist biblical narrative that God's desire is for His people to regularly assemble and work together as a united whole. This united whole should be inclusive and diverse in nature, including every age throughout the lifecycle or all generations. The community of generations, when gathered and treating one another in mutually respective and loving ways, is an expression of who God is, an expression of His church, and a process that is integral to spiritual growth and development.

Primary biblical principles addressed in the first sermon will include the *imago deii* as the underlining reason why God desires His people be a diverse yet unified entity, a people in His image and likeness. The apostle Paul's analogy of the church being a "body" made of many parts that all work together (see 1 Cor 12:12-30) will serve as the correlation between the *imago deii* and the Body of Christ. This passage will be presented from an intergenerational perspective, illustrating how the various generations, like the various body parts, work best when they all work together as a united whole. It will be noted that if the church neglects any generation in a way where it isn't fully integrated into the body of Christ, it is like a human limb amputated, leaving the body weaker and with diminished functionality and effectiveness. Thus, only when the church is all-age inclusive does it truly reflect God's design.

The second sermon on Faith Transmission to the Next Generation will look at the need for older generations to intentionally invest in and transmit faith into the younger generations. Key passages in this message would include the *Shema* as found in Deuteronomy 6:4–9, multiple passages in the Psalms, and 2 Timothy 1:5. Other passages that identify negative perceptions of children or elderly will be shared as an example of

what we must avoid in order to transmit faith successfully. The impact of the home environment, the consistency of family and personal worship, and the benefits of Christian education will all be shown as strong influences. This will serve to show the need to avoid negative or critical perceptions and speech towards others as well as the need for generations to intentionally interact in a loving manor in order for faith transmission to occur.

The third sermon on the Remnant's Elijah Message to Reconcile Broken Relationships will be based on the correlation of Elijah and the remnant in the book of Revelation in conjunction with Malachi 4:5-6. Parallels between Elijah will include the three and half years of drought (1 Kings 17:1-7, James 5:17) and related fleeing to the wilderness with 1260 prophetic day years (360 x 3.5) when the "woman" fled into the wilderness in Revelation 12:13-17. Paul's commission to be "ministers of reconciliation" found in 2 Corinthians 5:18-19, will then be applied to a reconciliation between the generations as outlined in Malachi 4:5-6. It will also be shown that this is a reciprocal reconciliation in the heart of both young and old. The key takeaway is that the remnant has a special call from Scripture to bring the generations together.

Seminar on Being Intentionally Intergenerational

The next output in the implementation of the strategy is to prepare and present a seminar on what it means to be intentionally intergenerational. The seminar will be open to all of the church, yet I recognize only a fraction will attend. One of the goals of the sermon series will be to foster additional interest and buy-in from the congregation to look deeper into this topic. The seminar will address the following areas: Generational Composition and Cultures, The Benefits of Intentional Intergenerational Interaction, and

The Generational Strengths and Challenges of Each Generation.

       The first section on Generational Composition and Cultures will address the basic process that formed each generation. We will look at examples of how each generation "took for granted the good, reacted against the bad, and responded within their own historical context" (Sbanotto and Blomberg 2016, 20), and how each generation then takes on varied and unique values, beliefs and worldviews. This composition results in "each generation as a separate culture" (Sbanotto and Blomberg 2016, xiv).

       The specific generations that the seminar will focus on will be: Baby Boomers (born between 1946 and 1960), Generation X (born between 1961 and 1980), Millennials (born between 1981 and 1996), and Generation Z (born between 1997 and 2012). These generation represent the majority of current leadership as well as the generations that they need to be equipping.

       Once we establish the foundation of who the generation are and what has led to the generational cultures, we will look at The Benefits of Intentional Intergenerational Interaction. This is done to reinforce why the church needs to move in this direction. I will review how current research has shown that the efforts to make congregations more intergenerational have profound positive impacts on individuals and congregations as a whole (Allen and Ross 2012, 47-63). I have included the recent study in an Adventist context in Australia that discovered "intergenerationality positively influenced both wellbeing and discipleship" (Azzopardi 2019, 7). Another benefit includes the role in the neurological development when early childhood ministries partner with our other ministries (Allen 2018, 166-170). This part of the seminar addressed the negative costs of not moving towards an intentionally intergenerational culture.

The final section in the seminar covers The Generational Strengths and Challenges of Each Generation. Looking at the four primary generations listed above, we examine what gifts and benefits each brings to the church as a whole. The primary focus is framed in a positive orientation to address the pre-existing negative perceptions, the goal being to illustrate how we can all work together in a way that our differences can work together towards a united purpose. We then show how the elderly can gain renewed purpose when they intentionally invest in younger generations. We also see what the middle generations can do to transmit faith and even grow in perspective through younger generations. The challenges of each generation are paired with the generation that can fill that specific void. One example is that a technically challenged older generation can benefit from the younger generations that often referred to as "digital natives."

Time was given for small group discussions after each presentation with one individual in each group tasked with taking notes. Key take-aways from the small groups were then shared and or addressed with the larger grou In this way, the whole group is growing and participating in the process as is designed in the Action Research model.

<div align="center">Focus Groups and Personal Interviews</div>

The third output in the implementation of the strategy was to select and organize candidates for focus groups and individual interviews. The focus groups and personal interviews were planned to be done both before and after the implementation of the intentionally intergenerational elements are added to the worship service. This was planned in order to get input from all generations prior to implementation as well as after to evaluate efficacy.

In an effort to get a balanced perspective from each generation and still maintain a manageable focus group size, I will select 2-4 people from the Baby Boomers, Gen X, Millennials, and Gen Z willing to participate. These candidates will be grouped into two groups of eight with two generational representatives in each grou Focus groups will meet in mixed generational groups and in isolated generational groups. Ideally, there will be four of each generation to better facilitate the times when the generations are separated into isolated generational groups. This is done to see if there is impact of having the generations separated or together. One concern is that all of the generational representatives will feel comfortable sharing in the grou In addition to the focus group meetings, each of these individuals will be personally interviewed to gain additional insights.

Part of the strategy will be to develop discussion questions and methods for optimal group participation. Questions that each group will respond to will revolve around how we do church together. Time will be given to brainstorm ways that each generation is best ministered to and what aspects are appropriate to incorporate into the Lacey Seventh-day Adventist Church worship and ministry context. All of the ideas will then be processed through the church's Worship Committee before implementation.

Once the church implements the four consecutive weeks of intentional intergenerational elements added to the worship service, the focus groups will meet and additional personal interviews be performed to evaluate effectiveness. This is done within the cyclical nature of the Action Research model. The goal of this repetition is to refine and improve the church worship service and discover new ways to be intentionally intergenerational.

Introduction of Intergenerational Dynamics to the Lacey
Seventh-day Adventist Church Worship Services

The final output in this strategy is to determine and initiate semi-permanent intergenerational dynamics into the worship service. The dynamics introduced can and may change over time, yet some principles can be permanent. This will be the outworking from the sermons, seminar, focus groups, and personal interviews. Each of the preceding outputs is done to lead us to this paradigm shift, moving from theory to practice.

I will arrange for special allocation of generational representatives to join worship committee or bring the suggestions from the brainstorming session for consideration. Then the worship committee will meet to plan for four consecutive sabbaths where we will introduce intentionally intergenerational dynamics. At this time, the dynamics to be introduced are not known as they are selected through the research process. However, the primary goals are to involve multiple generations in different aspects of the worship service in a concerted effort to effectively minister to every generation throughout the worship service.

Evaluation

In an effort to evaluate if the strategy was effective, three surveys were administered by an external examiner, focus groups will meet to provide feedback, and individual interviews will be done. As a part of the evaluation process, it is important to factor in the perceived power the pastor may have. For this reason, the request for survey responses were made by a neutral party on all three occasions. All printed surveys were

collected, without the pastor's involvement, and scanned or mailed to the external examiner for tabulation.

The congregation was asked to take a survey prior to introduction of the worship modifications. At the end of the four weeks of implementation the congregation received a similar survey request to evaluate post implementation results. A final survey of the whole congregation was taken three months later for insights into longevity of the implementation.

The focus groups met one time after the implementation to gain collective feedback from those more involved in the overall strategic process. Discussions revolved around what worked well and what did not. We also looked into ways to maintain those aspects that proved beneficial and improve new ways to minister to all generations.

The personal interviews were planned to be done to evaluate effectiveness after the implementation. These were planned to obtain insights into what was most impactful to each generation in regards to all the inputs into the strategy. These insights could prove beneficial to other contexts as to what helps the targeted generation move towards an intergenerational culture.

Conclusion

In conclusion, a strategy to increase intergenerational interaction and reduce intergenerational conflict within the Lacey Seventh-day Adventist Church has been planned. A Logical Framework Matrix was developed to organize and visually outline what was undertaken in order to reach my project's purpose and goals. This includes what the project was to achieve, what activities were carried out to achieve its outputs and purpose, the resources required, the potential problems which affected the success of

71

the project, and how the process and ultimate success of the project was measured and verified. Details have been outlined for each output and means of measuring its effectiveness. The following chapter provides the narrative of implementation.

CHAPTER 5

STRATEGY IMPLEMENTED FOR INTENTIONAL
INTERGENERATIONAL INTERACTIONS AT THE
LACEY SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH

Introduction

This chapter will relate the research conducted in the first six months of 2022 at

the Lacey Seventh-day Adventist Church to implement a strategy to combat generational

conflict and cultivate a pervasive intergenerational culture within the church. Since the

Action Research model is cyclical by design and all participants benefit along with the

researcher as we journey through the project together, some strategies were modified

during implementation. This project aims to increase intergenerational interaction and

reduce intergenerational conflict.

Strategies Implemented

Pre-Test Survey to Establish Baseline Data

Before any strategies were implemented, a pre-test survey, the first of three

surveys, was designed to establish a baseline of how the congregation felt about the

various elements of the worship service and if these elements were designed for people

like them (of their generation). On January 8, 2020, one church's elders read a brief

description and administered the pre-test before the sermon. Paper copies were provided,

while members were encouraged to take the survey online through the provided screen

link and QR code. The pastor was not present at the church that day due to contracting Covid-19.

The church averages about 150-200 in regular in-person attendance, with an internationally diverse membership with current members from Germany, Samoa, Mexico, Kenya, Tanzania, Japan, Philippines, Korea, Vietnam, and the United States (not including guests). It is noteworthy that another English-speaking Seventh-day Adventist church, with a more contemporary worship style, is located less than five miles away. Spanish and Korean Seventh-day Adventist churches are also available in the area. The diversity of nations and ages at the Lacey Seventh-day Adventist Church creates a draw for various people. Many who regularly attend commute more than 50 miles to follow this particular church.

When the first survey was administered, just before the sermon, on January 8, 2020, the attendance measured more than 80, a lower than usual attendance that may be attributed to the school services not starting up after the long Christmas break until the following week, and only 44 worshipers completed surveys. Of these, the largest age group responding ranged from 60-79, with the second-largest ages 40-59 and the third largest 30-39 (see Figure 4). Very few responded under 30, with none from the 20-29 age range. Another question the survey asked was regarding how long the individual had been attending the Lacey Seventh-day Adventist Church. These results can be seen in Figure 5.

What is your age group?

Answered: 44   Skipped: 0
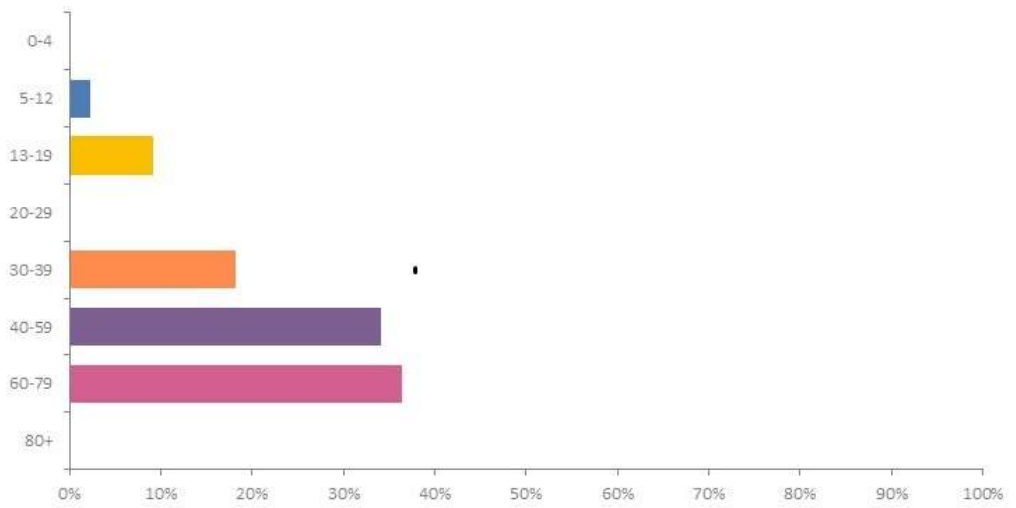
Figure 4. Age group responses for the pre-test at the Lacey SDA Church.

How many years have you attended this particular church?

Answered: 43   Skipped: 1
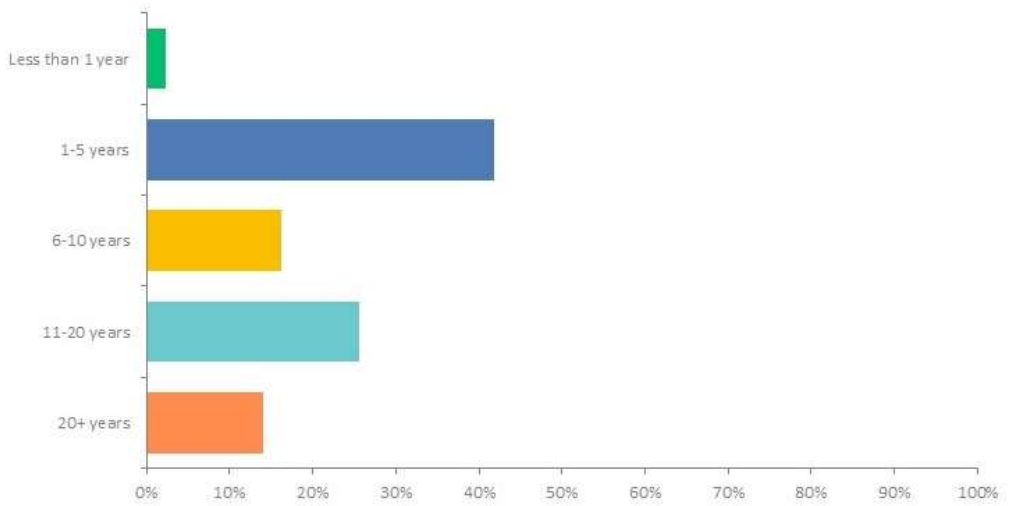
Figure 5. The number of years research participants attended the Lacey SDA Church.

The largest group, 40%, of those who participated in the traditional research surveys indicated that they had only attended the church for 1-5 years. This reflects the time the current pastor (lead researcher) has led the church.

The survey then questioned the respondent on ten different components of the worship service and looked at the whole church service as one entity. Survey questions asked worshipers how much the various parts of the worship service seemed designed to reach people like them. Keep in mind that most of the respondents were 40 years of age or older. The scores were relatively high, with each component well beyond the mid-range of 3.0. (See Figure 6 for graphs of the responses). All parts scored high among the respondents with minimal variation. The consistency that each component of the worship service was designed for the respondent indicates that the church's baseline was well-balanced for all ages.
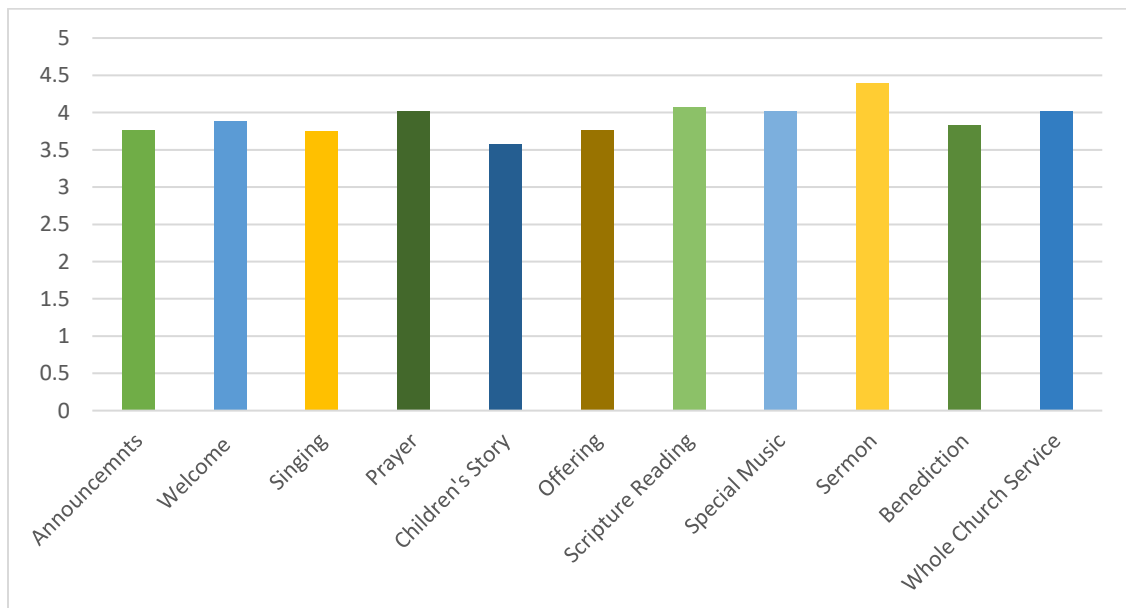
Figure 6. How much of the parts of the worship service are designed to reach people like you, pre-test overview.

The next set of questions on the pre-test survey asked which age group various

components of the worship service usually reach. Moving from an individualistic view,

these questions sought to identify the respondents' age group(s) they felt each worship

component was designed for. Figure 7 shows a collection of graphs for each worship

component, the church service as a whole, and the age groups the respondent believes it

usually reaches.
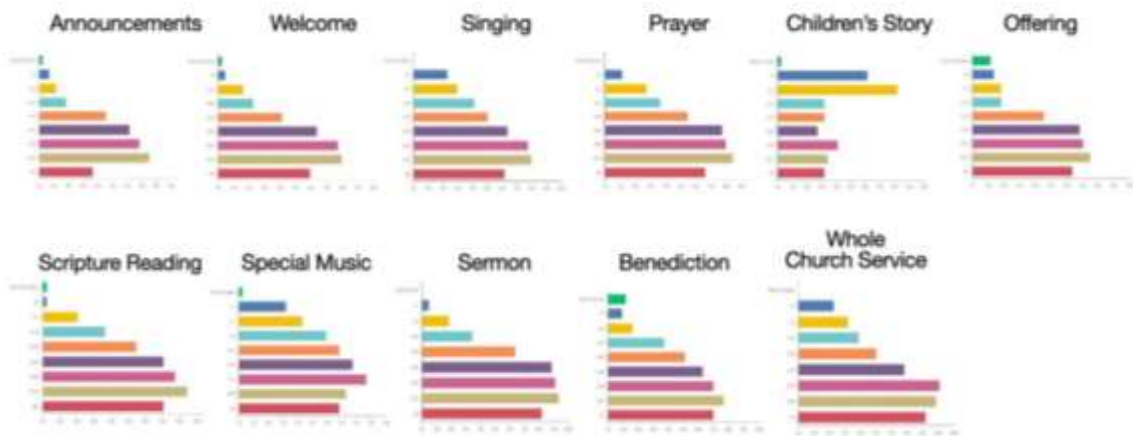
Figure 7. Bird's eye view of the age group(s), the worship components, and the church
service usually reach pre-test results.

Overall, respondents saw most of the worship services designed for those 40+,

except for the children's story, which identified ages 0-12 as the primary target grou

While the respondents felt that all the worship service elements were designed to reach

people like them, the scores indicate that the worship service primarily targets the older

end of the church.

Sermon Series

The first output of the strategy was a sermon series on the foundations of being

intentionally intergenerational. Because the sermon time reaches the most significant number of members in the church, this series came first to get the most important interest in moving towards a more intentionally intergenerational church culture. The three-part series was delivered on January 22, 29, and February 5, 2022. Links to view these sermons can be found here:

- All Together – Part 1 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9sycaMP6YF4)
- All Together – Part 2 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XNtruiHKmd0)
- All Together – Part 3 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J0A5V59Ncyg)

The first sermon was focused on Intergenerational Reconciliation and the Remnant in the last days, with the subheading of understanding The Elijah Message found in Mal 4:5-6. The point of the message was that the "turning the hearts" of old and young towards each other through God's power is a work of reconciliation that God's "remnant people" must do. This sermon was initially planned to be the final one in the series but was moved to the first. This was done in response to some older generations' concerns that this was a new language to push a youth-focused ministry, leaving them out. Knowing through personal relationships that these members held strong beliefs about the role of the Remnant (see Rev 12:17) in the time just before the Second Coming, it was decided that getting them to see this connection first was necessary for them to hear the other messages with an open mind.

The second sermon in the series focused on the benefits and challenges of being intentionally intergenerational. This sermon outlined the biblical foundations for why God wants His people to be all together while pointing out the challenges we face now in the clash of generational cultures. Today's generation living in the church described and

explained the reasons behind the differences that often lead to conflict. This incorporated some of the information initially planned to be shared in the seminar as it was desired to have more people hear the news, with the church service being the highest exposure to members.

The third and final sermon focused on faith transmission. Specific statistics were shared regarding venues where faith transmission occurs within the Seventh-day Adventist context. Other factors, such as the three general responses young people go through (Rebels, Zealots, and Prodigals) in response to the faith in which they were raised. The ultimate conclusion was that "the Biblical narrative, and modern research, informs us that when people of faith outside the immediate family invest in mentoring others, successful transmission of faith is much greater."

Seminar on Being Intentionally Intergenerational

The following output of the strategy was to present a seminar on what it means to be intentionally intergenerational. This is where the most modification to the original approach occurred. Because many of the components initially planned for this seminar were already presented within the sermon series, a new plan to foster intergenerational relationships came together. Rather than simply relaying more information, it was decided that having the generations interact and have intentional conversations on spiritual topics would give them first-hand experience of the benefits of being intentionally intergenerational.

The seminar occurred on February 12, 2022, in the fellowship hall at the Lacey Seventh-day Adventist Church. More than two-thirds of the active members attended the

workshop, with over ninety people representing every generation in the church.

Before any interactions took place at the seminar, details regarding locations young people felt were "safe places" during the pandemic (see Figure 8).

Participants were allowed to select more than one option.

29%		School
22%		Work
22%		Shopping
20%		In Public
18%		Church
11%		Spiritual Gatherings

Percentages are rounded
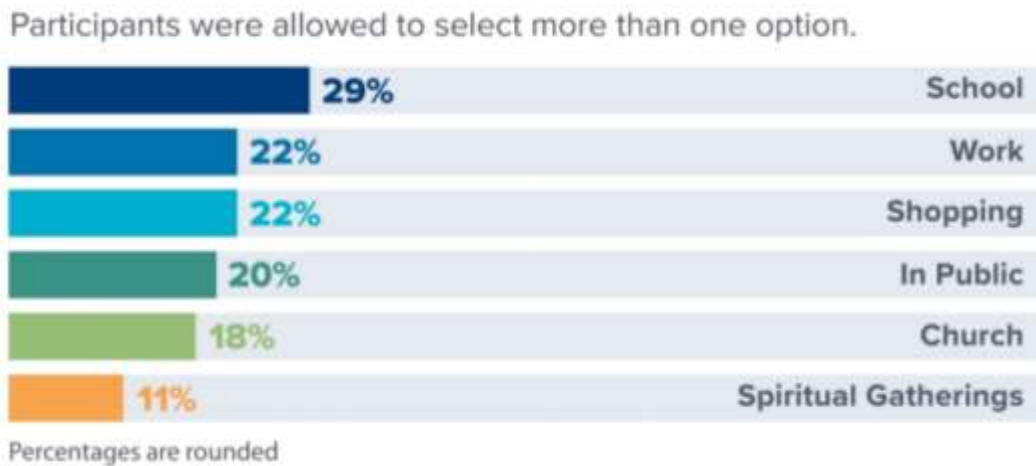
Figure 8. Spaces where young people say they felt safe during the pandemic.

Because both church and spiritual gatherings were listed as the least "safe," attendees were encouraged to avoid all critical comments. A "safe" place was described as sharing your genuine thoughts and feelings and knowing you will be heard and not criticized.

The primary activity at the seminar was an interactive "speed dating" style of conversations that members would have with each other. When people arrived for the workshop, they were given badges to write their generation on and wear throughout the seminar. Each person was given 1 minute 30 seconds to ask the person opposite of them the question on a form and collect the person's generation and answer(s). The roles were then reversed and repeated. Once both had answered and recorded, each person on the outer ring moved one seat to the right. We asked those who had difficulty moving to sit in

the inner circle to accommodate them. It was again emphasized that individuals listen and not discuss their opinions. The goal was to gain a generational understanding of various topics and have fun doing so.

The following is the list of questions by category given to the attendees and collected at the end of the seminar.

Views of God:

Is it more important for God to be a Friend or King? (You can only choose one, we know He is both). Do you desire to experience God or understand Him and His Word more? (You can only choose one, both are important)

Mission or purpose of the church:

Is it more important to be reverent or engaged in church? What is the most important thing the church should be doing? In a few words, how would you describe the Lacey SDA Church?

Worship Service:

What's the purpose of a worship service? Who is it for? Rate the following elements of the worship service by how they bless you from 1 (most) to 3 (least): Music, Sermon, Fellowshi In a few words, how would you describe the Lacey SDA Church worship service?

Word Associations:

What's the first thought that comes to mind regarding Youth Ministry? What's the first thought that comes to mind regarding Evangelism? What's the first thought that comes to mind regarding Intergenerational Ministry?

In addition to the speed conversations, tables were set up with representatives

from each generation seated at a table to discuss their experiences. These groups at the

tables took the place of the planned focus groups. Each table was asked to fill out one

form and place thoughts and ideas they felt were helpful. They were then tasked with

brainstorming ideas that would be intergenerational and enjoyable to all generations of

our church. These ideas were then shared with the larger group and any church leaders

responsible for implementing any ideas. Before they left, each attendee was given a form

to provide any personal feedback they may desire to show that still needs to be shared.

These personal feedback sheets took the place of the individual interviews initially

planned. The focus groups and personal interviews were applied to solicit greater

membership involvement and improve time management and efficiency.

Introduction of Intergenerational Dynamics to the Lacey
Seventh-day Adventist Church Worship Services

After the seminar, an appeal was made for members to see me if they were

interested in taking the next step in making our worship services more intergenerational

by joining the special intergenerational worship committee. We selected candidates on a

first-come-first-serve basis, selecting two to three from each generation. Because of the

difficulty in some of the oldest ages signing up, a few people were asked if they would

consider joining from those most active in the church. It should be noted that we had

limited representation from Gen Z, primarily due to them being under 18.

Since the traditional research feedback from the pre-test survey was only

available after the completion of the fundamental research, the research method

implemented to facilitate this phase was based on the Participatory Action Research

Model. Participatory Action Research (PAR) is an approach to inquiry that involves researchers and participants working together to understand a situation and change it for the better through an interactive cyclical process (see Figure 9).
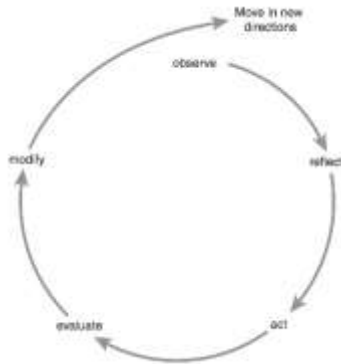
Figure 9. Cyclical nature of participatory action research visual.

On Sunday, February 6th, the newly appointed intergenerational worship committee met with the pastor to brainstorm ideas for how different components of the church service could be even more intergenerational. The committee included members by position, such as the pastor, church secretary, head-deaconess, and head-chorister, as well as members at large from the Silent Generation (2), Baby Boomers (2), Gen X (2), Millennials (2), and Gen Z (1). Each committee member received a document with a collection of ideas prepared by the other doctoral students and the lead professor of the pastor's Doctorate of Ministry cohort before the meeting to serve as a springboard for discussions. Initially, there was a sense of pride in how many elements the church was already doing that were intentionally intergenerational.

The group aimed to evaluate ways to collectively make every member, regardless of generation, find meaning and involvement in the worship service. The goal of the first

meeting was to establish what changes we would implement for the following two weeks; we would then meet again to consider the second two weeks as well as a final meeting after the full four weeks of implementation. The four weeks of intentionally making the worship service more intergenerational began on February 19th, 2022, and ended on March 12th, 2022.

Some modifications to make the service more intentionally intergenerational were a simple re-emphasis on being intentional about what was already happening by happenstance. One example can be seen in the music. We had encouraged choristers bring their young children up to sing with them occasionally. As a result of the meeting, we asked that this be intentional as frequently as possible. We also asked all choristers to select at least one traditional hymn and one contemporary song, with a third left to choose. Although this practice wasn't an entirely new concept, the discussion among the committee members helped the various generations to gain perspectives on those different than themselves and why they liked the music they liked. It became apparent that the music mattered more to the younger generations, yet the older generations were more reluctant to allow the newer music. Hearing each other out brought renewed emphasis by all choristers to be mindful that music is often a generational preference and not a matter of right and wrong.

Other modifications included the addition of children reading the verse of the day at the beginning of the sermon, people of differing generations giving personal "Jonah" experiences, and having an "ask the pastor" time after the service ended. These "ask the pastor" sessions were not well attended by many but were very beneficial to those who did come. In line with the PAR model, it was discovered that the youth and young adults

were the ones with the most questions, which led to the pastor continuing a similar model with that Sabbath School class to continue the conversations. Another modification was to eliminate the collection of the offering within the worship service and have deacons with offering baskets at the door as people exited after the service. This was done primarily to provide more time for the other modifications.

<div align="center">Post-Test and Post-Post-Test Results</div>

As with the pre-test, both the post-test and post-post-test worshipers responded to the questions about which age groups each component of the worship service usually reaches. The post-test survey was made available to participants on March 19, 2022, and the post-post-test survey was made available to participants on June 11, 2022. In both of these surveys, there was an overall increase in participants feeling that each component of the church was designed for people like them (see Figure 10). One reason for the slight increase in the post-test results could be the increased awareness of people's observations. However, given that the consequence then increased again after twelve weeks, there is a reasonable likelihood of a positive and lasting change in people's perceptions. Due to the low number of participants, generalizations for other contexts should not be inferred.
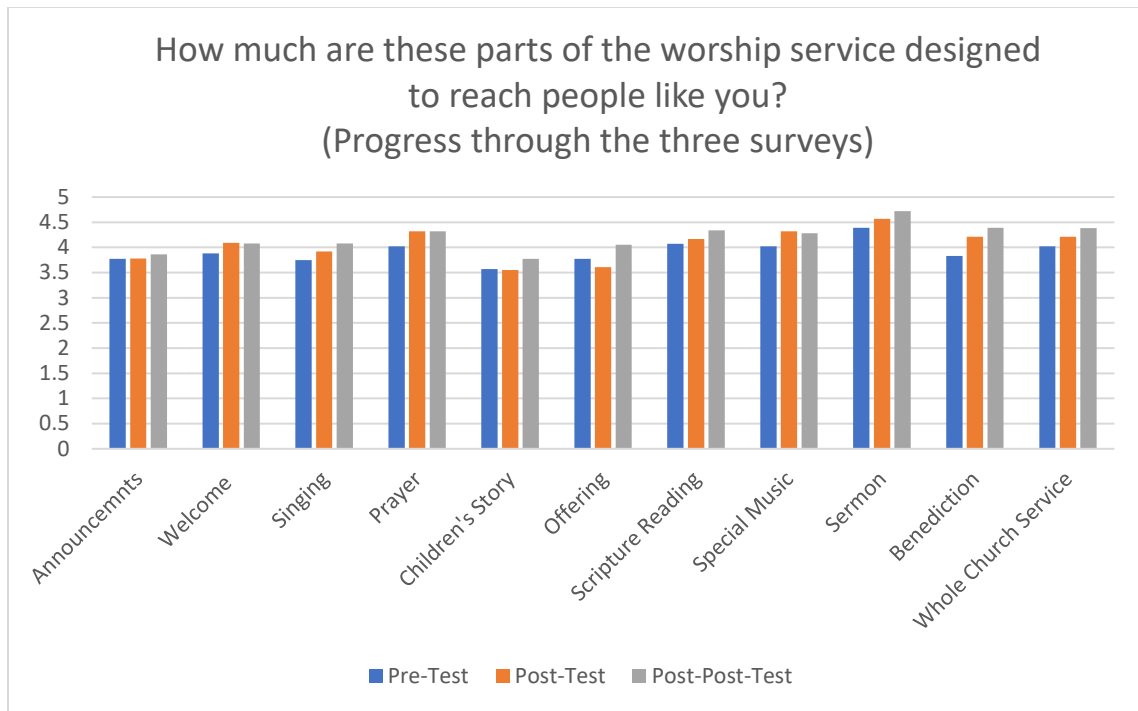
Figure 10. How many parts of the worship service are designed to reach people like you, progress through the three surveys.

The post-test (38 respondents) and post-post-test (40 respondents) included two open-ended questions about the changes made to the worship service to reach all generations in the church service—what did you like and what did you not like about the changes? Nine people skipped these questions in the post-test, and eight from the post-post-test. Most responses to "What did you like?" revolved around the positive changes that included more generations. When asked what they didn't like about the changes, many responded N/A (Not Applicable) or nothing. The most common difference they did not like in the post-test was having the offering collected after the service. This item was changed immediately, resulting in people adding it to the things they wanted in the post-post-test. Some people responded that some elements, such as a teenager's clothing, were irreverent. Overall scores for each worship component rose slightly.

When asked how much the various parts of the worship service seemed designed to reach people like you, the responses showed a steady increase in nearly every age. The scores for all categories were higher than the post-test and the pre-test.

CHAPTER 6

PROJECT EVALUATION, FINDINGS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This final chapter will review the evaluation methods, findings, and

recommendations for the strategy implemented for intentional intergenerational

interaction at the Lacey Seventh-day Adventist Church in the first six months of 2022.

First, we will look at the description of the evaluation, including the method and means

of interpretation of each element and phase of the strategy. Second, we will see how the

findings lead to three overarching conclusion and take-aways for the research. Includes is

the lead researcher's personal transformation process as a means to understand how

conclusions were interpreted. Third, recommendations for use and further study will be

given. Finally, we will conclude and summarize the research.

Description of the Evaluation

The following is a description of how the data from the strategy implemented

(Chapter 5) was evaluated and interpreted, as well as a report of the resulting conclusions

and outcomes. Due to the mixed methods of traditional and participatory action research,

the data evaluation differed between the two types of research.

The traditional research was done through the three surveys given to the church

members before the modification of the worship service, right after the modifications,

and nearly three months afterward. This element of the research was also part of a more extensive study done by colleagues of the lead researcher around the world. The data was collected by an external examiner who then processed the research data to determine if any significant findings were valid in this research and the broader research. Petr Cincala, a professor at Andrews University, ran the data through statistical software to determine the significance of any of the findings. The statistical result showed no significant findings. This is one reason indicates the need for the qualitative research to validate any claims. Since the researcher and the overall church felt the results were positive and impactful to the congregation, we will segway into that element of the research process.

When it comes to the remainder of the research data, it is vital to understand that Participatory Action Research (PAR) is qualitative and cyclical in nature and seeks to engage the relevant parties close to the problem (participatory) while endeavoring to make a positive social change (action). The process is committed to a democratic principle of equality and justice by engaging stakeholder participation and allowing their voices and perspectives to aid the research throughout the process. The goal is to make a positive social change by getting participants involved and making them more aware of their situation so they can take action to improve it. That means some of the evaluations were done by the Lacey Seventh-day Adventist Church members, primarily those on the special intergenerational worship committee, throughout the research process.

Evaluation Method

This research's evaluation method and approach were qualitative and involved participants directly affected by the study. The data collected from the surveys was

chronologically evaluated to determine changes from the inception and throughout and after the implementation to determine positive/negative changes.

Interpretation of Data (Chapter 5)

Interpretation of the Results
from the Three Surveys

As previously indicated, the responses steadily increased in nearly every age from the pre-survey to the post-post-survey. The scores for all categories were higher than the post-test and the pre-test in the final survey, indicating an overall gain in the emphasis on intentionally being more intergenerational in the worship service.

Interpretation of the Results
from the Sermon Series

Cultivating feedback from a sermon series is challenging. It is difficult to determine if a given opinion is sincere and accurate to the majority. The data was primarily received and evaluated through actively listening to conversations shortly after each sermon. The sermon series aimed to facilitate the first four phases of Mezirow's transformational learning process: a disorienting dilemma, a self-examination, a critical assessment of assumptions, and a recognition of shared experiences. The latter phases of Mezirow's transformational learning process focus on exploring options for new behavior, planning a course of action, acquiring knowledge, trying new roles, building confidence, and reintegration.

The first phase came through an awakening of not only the generational differences and conflicts within the church but the scriptural necessity as it pertains to God's people in the last days. This awakening functions as the disorienting dilemma that

results in some self-examination and a critical assessment of assumptions as to why generations other than one's own think or act the way they do. The discontentment recognized by this disorientation is essential to the transformation process in that they recognize that others share the experience. Recognition that everyone struggles through such changes and God seeks for His people to work in unity, not uniformity, leads to seeking and exploring options to move forward (phase 5).

A variety of individual members shared their views and experiences that collectively gave credence to various findings as a part of the Participatory Action Research process. One clear example that can illustrate some of the findings can be seen in the response of one Gen Z member who had recently agreed to lead out in singing with others in the church. In the days leading up to the first sermon in the series, this member had become increasingly frustrated with adding songs she wanted to sing but was refused due to an overwhelming lack of familiarity with the songs selected. She stated that she had decided not to do it again after she sang for the church that day. After the sermon, she openly admitted that she had never considered how singing hymns comforted the elderly and that taking that completely away and only singing songs her generation preferred was doing the very thing she was frustrated about. She agreed to continue singing and began volunteering to help many of the elderly due to her new understanding of why we need each other. This resulted in some of the elderly getting to know and accept her more fully, and they became more open to her music preferences.

One of the critical indicators of the success of the sermon series was attendance at the seminar. Nearly 50% of the active members, a total of 86, attended the seminar. Many verbalizing it was a result of the sermon series piquing their interest and a desire to learn

more. To optimize the results, there is a need for maximized participation. The sermon series was designed to spark an interest that would lead to a more direct interaction at the seminar.

Interpretation of the Results
from the Seminar

The speed conversations at the seminar were the one strategy most talked of with great positivity from the members who attended. Members regularly asked if or when the church would have another similar activity in the months following this activity. The only critical feedback received was related to an oversight in how the questions were handed out, which resulted in some people being asked the same question three to four times in a row. Suggestions were given by those who attended that we should have extended the conversation's time to aid older members and others suggested shortening the time for the younger generations. These suggestions were an obvious obstacle during the implementation and only highlighted one more difference between the youngest and eldest generations.

The speed conversation questions brought to light generational differences in four areas: Views of God, Mission or Purpose of the Church, Worship Services, and Word Associations. The data collected revealed numerous differences that clearly pointed to generational differences as seen in the in the four groupings below.

Views of God

Only two questions were designed to draw out a view of God from the participants. First, "Is it more important for God to be a friend or king?" The answers were designed to find if a generational difference in God could be seen as either focused

on God's sovereignty and power (king) or His relationship and approachability (friend). It should be noted that only two Gen Z responses were received. The following chart shows the responses received (Figure 11).

	Silent Generation	Boomers	Gen Xers	Millenials	GenZ's
■ Friend	83%	33%	38%	80%	50%
■ King	16%	66%	63%	20%	50%
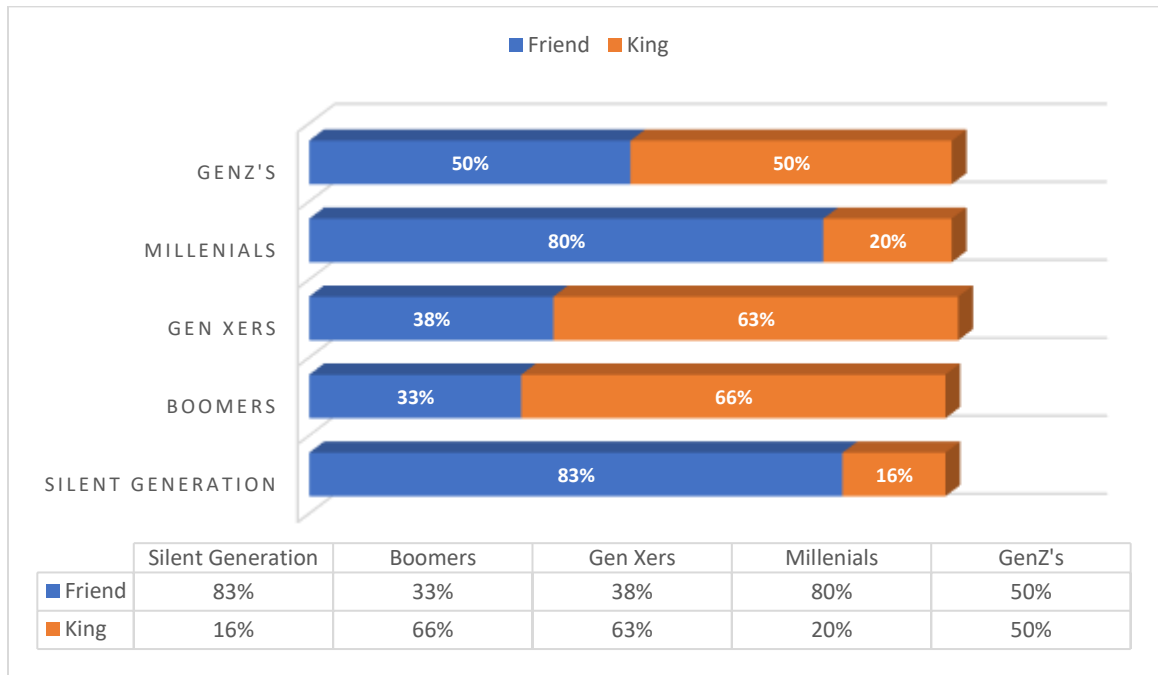
Figure 11. Is it more important for God to be friend or king? Results by generations.

The second question was, "Do you desire to experience God or understand Him and His Word more?" The concept was to see if Generations differed in how they seek God, experientially or cerebrally. As seen in the chart below, no Gen Z responses were received for this question (Figure 12).

	Silent Generation	Boomers	Gen Xers	Millenials	GenZ's
■ Understand	75%	38%	66%	64%	0
■ Expereience	25%	62%	33%	36%	0
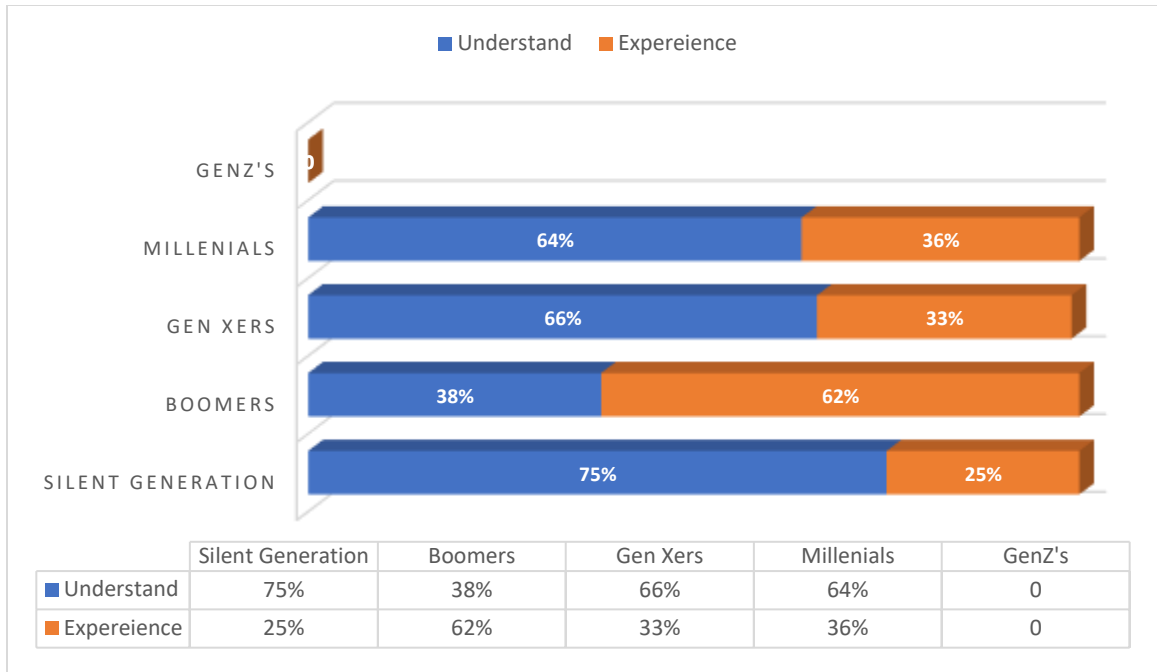
Figure 12. Do you desire to experience God or understand Him and His word more? Results by generations.

The varied data from these questions did not indicate specific generational differences. Although some generational responses were higher on one view or the other, the data seems to suggest that an individual's idea of God is more of a personal reaction than a generational perspective, given no statistical data or feedback received indicated a generational consistency.

The Mission or Purpose of the Church

The questions in the area of the church's mission and purpose are where the most polar differences were found. When asked, "Is it more important to be reverent or engaged in church?" we found that 100% of the two youngest generations surveyed (Gen

94

Z's and Millennials) felt that engagement was more important. On the same question, 100% of the Silent Generation felt that reverence was more critical, and the Boomers and Xers were divided between the two options, as seen in Figure 13.

	Silent Generation	Boomers	Gen Xers	Millenials	GenZ's
■ Reverent	100%	41%	38%	0%	0%
■ Engaged	0%	59%	62%	100%	100%
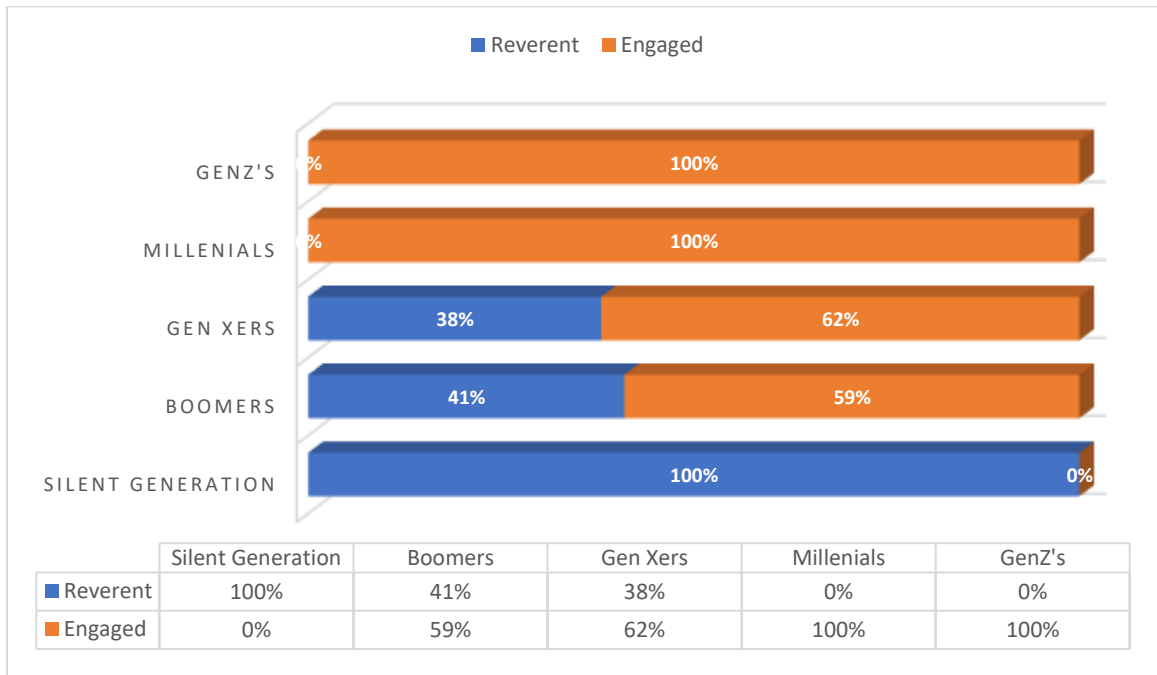
Figure 13. Is it more important to be reverent or engaged in church? Results by generations.

This datum shows a change in perspective over time, although not statistically significant, moving from a focus on reverence to engagement. There was an audible response when this information was shared with the congregation. After sharing, multiple members shared with me how this information genuinely helped them see the generational differences in their congregation in a new light. This insight was pivotal in reshaping how many viewed the actions of members not of their generation. For some, this was their disorienting dilemma.

Worship Services

The latter phases of Mezirow's transformational learning process focus on: exploring options for new behavior, planning a course of action, acquiring knowledge, trying new roles, building confidence, and reintegration. Each of these phases was woven through the intergeneration worship committee's process as they discussed and planned to integrate the intergenerational dynamics within the church service.

The open-ended questions regarding participants' views of their church were primarily utilized by the intergenerational worship committee in the modifications to the services in the weeks after the seminar. Common ideas were that the church was for everyone, a blessing, a conservative orientation, and a family. The majority of responses were positive in nature. Generation Xers gave the most critical answers to all open-ended questions in this area and the word associations.

When participants were asked to rank worship service elements regarding what they were most blessed by, there was a clear shift from older to younger generations. The sermon was the highest-ranked element by the Silent Generation (83%), Boomers (56%), and Gen Xers (56%). The Millennials had Fellowship (44%) and Music (44%) tied for the greatest blessing. Gen Z ranked Music (80%) as the most enjoyed element of the worship service to them. Again, while this is not statistically significant it does give insight into the generational divides within the specific congregation.

This became an essential finding given the older generations that seemed to be the loudest with their opinions of what the music should be like while it remained the lowest in importance to them. On the other hand, Gen Z, who valued music the most, felt they had little influence in this area.

Word Associations

The questions related to word associations asked the participants what their first thought was regarding Intergenerational Ministry, Youth Ministry, and Evangelism. With all three words, there was a positive view regarding doing all three types of ministries. One Millennial indicated that intergenerational ministry was "impossible, trying to please everyone… over customization." People from all generations expressed that intergenerational and youth ministry is needed but difficult/challenging/lacking.

The word associations were the least beneficial of the four areas in the questions that sought to find relevant data. The lead researcher and participant on the intergenerational worship committee felt the responses in this area did not add relevant insight.

Summary of Interpretations of the Data

The traditional and participatory action research data collected indicated a positive change in perspectives and overall culture and desire among the membership of the Lacey Seventh-day Adventist Church toward an intentionally intergenerational perspective. This was the intent of this research, although not the ultimate intent. The ultimate intent is for member to become more intentionally intergenerational for the purpose of deepening one another's spiritual relationship with God through the blending of each generation's strengths. Each element of the implementation was strategically put in chronological order to bring about a transformational learning process that would lead most of the congregation to a culture that does not merely tolerate other generations but intentionally seeks to integrate and spiritually grow together. The evidence from the data analysis indicates a positive move in this direction. Within the Participatory Action

Research model, it is assumed that the process of intentionally integrating the generations will continue with the objective of growing the intergenerational culture of the congregation.

Outcomes of the Implemented Strategy

Summary of Other Conclusions

In an effort to bring all the data from each chapter together, a brief overview of the conclusions drawn in summary form are included here. This includes a summary of the theological, theoretical, and methodological conclusions reached in Chapters 2, 3, and 4. These conclusions, along with the interpretations of the data in the previous section, will guide the way for some overarching findings.

Theological Conclusions: Chapter 2

There is a Biblical foundation that is established for churches being intentionally intergenerational through Paul's analogy of the church as a body, through the image of God, and a specific call to do so in the final Elijah message to draw the heart of the children to the fathers and vice versa.

Theoretical Conclusions: Chapter 3

Transformative learning is the idea that learners getting new information are also evaluating their past ideas and understanding, shifting their worldview as they obtain further information and through critical reflection. It goes beyond simply acquiring knowledge and dives into how learners find meaning in their lives and understanding. This kind of learning experience involves a fundamental change in our perceptions—

learners start to question everything they knew or thought before and examine things from new perspectives to make room for new insights and information.

Methodological Conclusions: Chapter 4

By combining the traditional research method through the three surveys with the Participatory Action Research, the implemented strategy provided some statistical data for validation. It also involved a more significant percentage of the church membership in making a lasting change within the congregation. By intentionally sequencing the actions implemented, there was an ever-increasing level of buy-in from the church membership. This is key if the results are to have a long-term impact.

Overarching Conclusions

The conclusions from the theology (Chapter 2) informed the interpretation of the literature (Chapter 3), which aided in the formation of the strategy of implementation (chapter 4) and the interpretation of the results gathered (Chapter 5. Collectively, some major conclusions can be deducted. I have broken these overarching conclusions into three key take-aways.

First, churches include people throughout the lifecycle, including people from multiple generations. Each generation has a unique shared culture, evident in shared preferences and opinions. This often results in intergenerational conflicts. Conflict, by nature, is uncomfortable and is usually responded to through avoidance until it reaches a climactic point that often results in turmoil and division. In the church setting, it can and often results in people leaving the church. As the body of Christ, the church needs to find healthy means of moving towards a more intentionally intergenerational culture to fulfill

the biblical imperative. This research shows that leading the church through a transformative learning process can assist in this transition.

Second, many individuals harbored negative impressions and attitudes towards generations other than their own due to a lack of understanding of why that generation thinks or behaves the way it does. Because these differences are often met with avoidance, the conflicts often fester and grow rather than find resolutions. Aiding individuals through a process of gaining an understanding of the varied generations by answering the questions of why they respond the way they do is a foundational step towards intentional intergenerationality.

Third, once people have the awareness and some information as to why they need or should move in an intergenerational direction, they need assistance in seeing the reality of the conflict in their context. From this point, a cyclical form of trying and evaluating ways to involve all generations and do things so that they all receive a benefit can and should be explored. This should lead to a context-specific course of action that brings the desired result. In this case, it was to be more intentionally intergenerational to bring about a generationally wholistic church culture that best facilitates spiritual growth and revitalization.

Personal Transformation

Another means of assessing this project is to consider its impact on my life as a researcher and pastor. First, it wasn't until the end of the research that I realized that I had personally gone through the transformative learning process and was leading my congregation through a similar approach. At the onset of joining the doctoral program, I found myself disoriented by what I was learning about the different generations and how

100

they interact. I began to see where my generation's preferences and culture conflicted with those surrounding me. When I shared what I was learning with my wife, we began to see the shared experiences and gain further insights. This insight made me view some of the challenges and conflicts the church faced in a new light.

As I assessed situations and sought new ways to view and engage with the intergenerational conflicts in my personal and church life, I naturally sought more information and explored better ways forward. As I put plans into action in my roles, I gained confidence that being intentionally intergenerational with a working knowledge of the generations was needed. My understanding was transformed. This led me to believe that, if well planned, one could lead a more extensive group like the Lacey Church through a similar process resulting in a transformation of thoughts and actions towards a model of church that is intentionally intergeneration at its core.

Recommendations

Given the specificity of the research to the congregation in the Lacey SDA Church, it is assumed that identical results would not be replicable in all contexts. The prevalence of intergenerational conflict in the business world and the church (see chapter 3) indicates a need for intentional strategies to provide healthy interactive environments.

In a broad context, all organizations should seek to inform themselves of the generations and their differences. Efforts should be made to understand and communicate why bringing the generations together holistically will benefit that organization. The organization should then engage people from all generations to collaboratively seek avenues forward in a cyclical and ongoing way.

More specifically, churches should intentionally communicate the biblical foundations and the imperative to be intergenerational more frequently. This awareness should foster a desire for bible believing Christians to become more intentionally intergenerational. Planning events like the speed conversations performed in this study to assist in intergenerational interactions that help members understand that this isn't just a philosophical paradigm but a challenge in their specific context should be planned and implemented.

I recommend having conference leadership implement training for pastors in this area. This would inform the spiritual leaders of the local churches and equip them with practical steps and processes, such as described in the sermon series and seminar, for application. Although the core of this research focused on the worship service, the time in which the largest percentage of member are in attendance, times outside of the worship service are pivotal to healthy intergenerational interactions. Church socials and small groups that are intentionally intergenerational should be sought out as point of entry into the transition to become more intentionally intergenerational. Data should be collected from additional contexts to quantify this research further.

Final Thoughts

The Lacey SDA Church already views itself as an intergenerational church, at least by those in leadership and from many church members. The participatory action research model, involving multiple parties throughout the process, highly impacted those directly involved. The attempts to make the worship service even more intergenerational included slight adaptations, such as a child(ren) joining an adult who led the singing, open dialog after the service with the pastor, and intermittent testimonies in the sermon.

The sermon involving the multiple generational "Jonah experiences" seemed to be an

exceptionally high point for all.

The Lacey SDA Church continues to strive for a holistic, inclusive model of

worship in which all generations are welcomed, involved, and blessed through our

services. The research showed an overall improvement and desire to be more

intentionally intergenerational. The congregational "desire" being measured by decreased

conflict and resistance to adopting more intentionally intergenerational dynamics.

Leading a group of believers through a transformative learning process to change the

overall culture and belief of a congregation from a generationally divided and conflicted

state to an intentionally intergenerationally harmonious state that promotes greater

spiritual growth. The author believes the study was a success, and plans continue to

unfold through the participatory action research model to bring ongoing improvements.

APPENDIX A

SPEED CONVERSATION(S) DETAILS

In a few words, how would you describe the Lacey SDA Church Worship Service?	
Silent	Conservative, Variety. Appropriate, Fellowship is good. Excellent. PA could be improved. Lessons for everyone. Good. Enough for our education. Okay, need a consistent piano player. Most appropriate for me! Very good presenting the service. Useful for everyday life. I'm not happy without it.
Boomer	Conservative yet inclusive. Uplifting, informative, full of praise. I love it, very fulfilling information. Warm and friendly. Same as always. Inspirational, relevant. Warm, friendly, conservative. Thought provoking, meaningful. Welcoming and conservative. Warm and welcoming. Same as always. Always the same. Meaningful, thought provoking, inspirational. Reverent, good sermons, music, needs a variety of people up front. Welcoming, conservative, with some variety.
Gen X	Family, traditional. Traditional, calmer, consistent, reverent. Ideal to me, friendly to non believer and believer. Good for the heart and good for the soul. Good variety. Meaningful, relevant, inspiring. Fulfilling, beautiful, spiritual. Happy, walking in and feel good, like singing. Engaging. Good. Good. Informative. Fine, Good. Traditional, everyone involved like family. Inspiring, spirit led, fulfilling.
Millennial	Time to study God's word with others. Cozy, conservative. Kind of boring, it moves pretty slowly. Simple, conservative, same people the same thing. Simple and conservative.

	Very welcoming and loving environment.
	Simple, conservative, needs to improve.
	Very helpful like medicine to me spiritually.
Gen Z	Segmented, consistent.
	Friendly, open, quiet.
	Very helpful, loving environment.
In a few words, how would describe the Lacey SDA Church?	
Silent	Most appropriate.
	Friendly, in turmoil for 4-5 years.
	Conservative, something for everyone.
	Very good.
	Excellent.
	Most appropriate.
	Conservative, welcoming.
	Loving.
Boomer	Family friends.
	I love it.
	Warm and welcoming.
	Same as always.
	Motivational and inspirational.
	Reverent, good, music, need more variety.
	Conservative, variety, welcomed.
	Caring, Godly people.
	Warm, welcoming.
	Same as always.
	Inspirational, relevant.
	Dedicated, healthy, getting stronger.
	Same as always.
	Meaningful, inspirational.
	Reverent, good music.
	Warm and welcoming.
Gen X	Family and traditional.
	Family and friendships.
	Absolute.
	Healthy, loving church.
	Welcoming, traditional, like family, good fellowshi
	warm and welcoming.
	Average, good.
	Good.
	Warm and welcoming.
	Traditional family oriented.
	Welcoming.
	Good.

Millennial	A time to get to know God more as a church family.
	A very fine grou
	A very loving church.
	A good community.
	Welcome and conservative.
	Simple, conservative, same.
	Very loving environment.
	Friendly, intentional, spirit let, Bible based.
	Simple conservative, same.
	Helpful, spiritual environment.
	Simple, conservative.
	Very loving, welcoming.
	Crowded in a good way.
Gen Z	Thirst in the soul.
What's the first thought that comes to mind regarding Intergenerational Ministry?	
Silent	For all ages.
	It takes patience to understand each other.
	It is necessary for fellowshi
	Learning about other generations thoughts.
	Learning about how other thinks.
	Harmony among ages.
	Important to get to know each other better.
	IDK.
	No problem.
	Lots of prayer to understand each other.
	All people together to learn about God.
Boomer	Accepting changes.
	Needed.
	IDK.
	Right for everybody.
	Interesting, integration.
	Jesus is for everyone, any age.
	Loving people at every age.
	Changes.
	Wonderful – needed.
	Ministry for everyone.
	Good for everyone.
	Making changes.
	Essential but challenging.
	IDK.
Gen X	It is missing, we don't do it well.
	Provide something for all ages.
	Awesome.
	Needed, but challenging.
	The whole family worshiping and doing outreach together.

	Challenging but needed. IDK. Family worshiping together. Wonderful for family. It's missing. Everybody involved. I think it is good to have all generations involved.	
Millennial	Impossible, trying to please everyone. Over customization. How can we learn from each other. Meaningful that involves people. To serve others and help them to know Jesus. No problem. Going out to teach others about Jesus. Fine. Getting all people together. Unity. How each generation can learn from each other. Getting the generations together.	
Gen Z	The law is most important. Difficult to pull off. To work together with other generations to learn and understand stuff. Yes. Good to worship together. The love of God.	
What's the purpose of a worship service?		**Who is it for?**
Silent	To worship God and glorifying Him. To draw us closer to God always. Closer to God. Learning about God. Praise God. To learn more about Jesus. Good for all generations. To be closer to God. Praising God. To learn how to worship God, worship, appreciation. To bring you closer to God.	 Everyone All who want to come All people Everyone For the individual For all believers Me and God
Boomer	Worship and Praise God. To come closer to God. To praise God. To praise and worship God. To get closer to God. To get to know God. Praise and worship God. Draw us closer to Jesus.	Everyone Everyone Everyone Everyone Everyone All ages Everyone

	To bond with God and each other.	Everybody
	To draw us closer to God.	All of us
	For us to learn more.	Everybody
	Bring people to Christ.	
	To worship the Lord - for the Glory of God.	
Gen X	Not for entertainment.	For Everyone
	To praise and glorify God.	
		Congregation
	Corporate Worshi	
	To worship God.	Everyone
	To teach people about God.	Soul
	Place to grow in God.	Everyone
	To teach the soul about God.	
	To grow relationship with God.	Everyone
	It is for God and for us, build relationshi	
	To bring people together for a purpose.	
	The Lord God - as well as for us to draw closer to Him.	
Millenial	Don't know.	
	Come together to praise God.	Everyone
	Old way of relaying religious information.	
	To praise God and have a relationshi	All
	It helps us in God.	Everyone
	Experience relationships and benefits.	Us and God
	Worship God.	Anyone
	To know our creator.	All ages
	To help us grow and know God - Like a birthday party.	
	Worship God.	Anyone that wants to try
	Know our creator, why we are here, our purpose.	Everyone
	To worship and Fellowshi	
Gen Z	To learn about God.	All ages
	To congregate.	
	To learn about God.	All ages
	Teaching others.	Everyone
	To teach the Bible.	Everyone
In a few words, what is Church?		
Silent	Gathering of people for fellowship about Jesus.	
	Safe Haven to find Jesus.	
	Anywhere to fellowship together.	
	A religious group of people.	
	Gathering for religious reasons.	
	A place of fellowship to worship God.	

Boomer	A blessing.
	Follower of Jesus and making followers of Jesus.
	Family, friends, place to worship Jesus.
	Sharing the love of Jesus with others.
	Fellowship, relationship growth with God.
	Followers of Jesus on a mission to convert others.
	Friends, family, place to worship and learn about God.
	Body of Believers.
	Spending time with friends.
	Fellowship, sharing God's words, relationshi
	Followers of Jesus making more followers.
	Friends, family, place to worship God.
	Family, place, learn about Jesus, about salvation.
	A place where you can become closer to God.
	We are Church.
	Place to learn more about God.
Gen X	Called out ones - fellowship of believers.
	Believers, fellowship, communion.
	All God's kids coming together to worship Him.
	Congregation, teaching for rules of God.
	Where Christ's kids come together to worship him.
	Body of believers, people meeting for fellowshi
	Community, learning growing.
	Share weekly tradition.
	The people, the following.
	Connection to God and humans.
	Being stretched, fun, acceptance, learning, growing, love, comfortable, seniors a part of the family.
	Those called out. Fellowship of believers.
	A community that relates to one another as family and helps.
	A place where people can grow together.
	family and fellowshi
	Come to worship God with other believers and encouraging others.
Millenial	Gather of people for spiritual purposes.
	Place to come, family worshi
	Community, body of Christ.
	People can gather and worshi
	Place that people come to worship the Lord with others who wants to know Him more.
	Small community / Body of Christ.
	A group of believers, people, meeting for fellowshi
	Place to gather, worship, fellowshi
	Spiritual hospital.
	Anywhere to fellowship together.
	A religious group of people.
	Gathering for religious reasons.
	A place of worship and to worship God.

Gen Z	Communion, commitment, family.
	Community that fosters a personal relationshi
	Communion, Family.
	Fellowship, and Love each other.

What is the most important thing the church should be doing?	
Silent	Baptism, Leading to Christ.
	Learning about God's love.
	Telling people about Jesus.
	Outreach.
	Finish God's purposes.
	Helping others learn about Jesus.
	Preach 3 Angels' messages.
	Witness, draw others to Christ, encourage one another.
	More Bible studies at different times.
	To learn all you can about God.
	More outreach.
	Praying more together.
	Getting people for Jesus.
Boomer	Bible studies.
	Outreach and bring people to Christ.
	Outreach.
	Outreach.
	Teach about Jesus, warn what is coming.
	Show people Jesus' love.
	Try to unionize.
	Teach relationship with Jesus.
	Spread the love of Jesus.
	Reach others with Jesus.
	Winning souls.
	Bible studies.
	Tell the world Jesus loves them.
	Reaching the congregation.
	Keep the members we have.
Gen X	Congregate all people.
	Reaching others, spread God's word.
	Build community.
	Baptism and discipling.
	Teaching.
	Reaching others for Christ.
	Showing Christ to everyone.
	Connecting people.
	Challenging members to be involved.
	Praying.
	Baptizing, discipling, visiting.
	Introduce people to Christ.
	Growing disciples.

Millenial	Focus on nourishing young and single.
	Friendship, discipleship, warm environment.
	Loving people.
	Bring new people to Jesus.
	Bible Studies.
	Focusing on the youth and singles and seniors - invite them to your home and events.
	3 Angel Messages.
	Share the gospel.
	Be able to include everyone.
	Bring new people to Christ.
	Bible studies, prepare to bring gospel.
	Introduce people to Christ.
	Love.
Gen Z	Fostering a personal relationship with God and fellow men.
	Doing ministry work overseas.
	Fellowship and the Bible.
	Teaching the Bible and the Law.
What's the first thought that comes to mind regarding Evangelism?	
Silent	Its heyday has come to an end. One on one is more effective now.
	Spreading God's word.
	Everybody a change to hear the love of God.
	Bring the people to Jesus.
	Telling everyone Jesus is coming again.
Boomer	Hard. It's hard to talk to others about how I feel.
	Essential, time is almost out.
	Ineffective.
	Traditional evangelism doesn't seem to work.
Gen X	Necessity and opportunity - we all should be doing.
	Introducing others to Jesus.
	Reaching those that are lost.
Millenial	Theology - reaching other people with the truth of God's word.
	Underprioritized.
	Commitment.
	Reaching out.
Gen Z	Spreading the gospel.
What's the first thought that comes to mind regarding Youth Ministry?	
Silent	Very much needed.
	Learning how to be responsible for your own age.
	Brings generations together.
	Next in line. Preparatory.
	Fun, hopeful.
	Especially important, find someone who can lead them.
	I don't do it any more because I'm too old.
	IDK. Learning how to be responsible for your own age?
	What is that?

	Very important. Do daniel and revelation and prophesy first.
	Absolute.
	Where it's most needed.
Boomer	Very important, the future of the church.
	Need more outreach.
	Shepherding our oung people. Teaching.
	God-ordained.
	Love of God.
	Keeping our kids in church, meeting their needs.
	All for it - future of the church.
	Not for me - for leadershi
	Unlearned.
	It's the future of tomorrow.
	Spending too much time on them.
	Lacking. We've got to do something to keep the kids, but IDK what.
	We don't have any. Someone needs to do it.
Gen X	Growing the soul.
	Priority, essential. Huge need for more, but lacking, super important.
	Pathfinders - keeping kids involved with God.
	Don't know enough, but think they should definitely be involved.
	Missing. Necessary and we need to do it.
	Keeping young people involved so they feel a part of things.
Millenial	Build connections and relationships with the youth..
	Need to be nourished.
	Trickier than when I was a kid.
	Youth and Christ. Church has responsibility. High need.
	Building relationships with youth (not always teaching them).
	Do they really know God?
	Needs work.
	Building relationships with youth.
	Do they know enough?
	Fellowship, openness.
Gen Z	Bringing next gen in line.
	Children's church (fun/silly).
	Children's Church.

Question	Groups	Answers	Percentages
Is it more important for God to be a Friend or King?	Silent	Friend	83%
		King	16%
	Boomer	Friend	33%
		King	66%
	Gen X	Friend	38%
		King	63%
	Millennial	Friend	80%
		King	20%
	Gen Z	Friend	50%
		King	50%

Do you desire to experience God or understand Him and His word more?	Silent	Understand	75%
		Experience	25%
	Boomer	Understand	38%
		Experience	62%
	Gen X	Understand	66%
		Experience	33%
	Millennial	Understand	64%
		Experience	36%
It is more important to be reverent or engaged in church?	Silent	Reverent	100%
		Engaged	0%
	Boomer	Reverent	41%
		Engaged	59%
	Gen X	Reverent	38%
		Engaged	63%
	Millennial	Reverent	0%
		Engaged	100%
	Gen Z	Reverent	0%
		Engaged	100%

Rate the following elements of the worship service by how they bless you from 1 (most) to 3 (least): Music, Sermon, Fellowship		
Silent	1st	Sermon (83%) Fellowship (17%) Music (0%)
	2nd	Fellowship (50%) Music (33%) Sermon (16%)
	3rd	Music (66%) Fellowship (33%) Sermon (0%)
Boomer	1st	Sermon (56%) Fellowship (31%) Music (13%)
	2nd	Sermon (44%) Music (38%) Fellowship (19%)
	3rd	Music (50%) Fellowship (50%) Sermon (0%)
Gen X	1st	Sermon (56%) Fellowship (38%) Music (6%)
	2nd	Fellowship (56%) Music (38%) Sermon (25%)

		3rd	Music (56%) Fellowship (25%) Sermon (19%)
	Millennial	1st	Music (44%) Fellowship (44%) Sermon (11%)
		2nd	Music (44%) Sermon (44%) Fellowship (11%)
		3rd	Fellowship (44%) Sermon (44%) Music (11%)
	Gen Z	1st	Music (80%) Fellowship (20%) Sermon (0%)
		2nd	Fellowship (60%) Music (20%) Sermon (20%)
		3rd	Sermon (80%) Fellowship (20%) Music (0%)

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