

Generate 2019 – Reality Check! Handout 2

One definition

Intergenerational ministry is.....

The practice of facilitating, hosting and celebrating the shared life and connection of all and any generations together – in ways that disempower generational divisions.

OR – for the purpose of more wholly embodying the call to live as God’s reconciled people in the Kingdom of God. by Beth Barnett

Why intergenerational church?

A quote from the Church of England blog ‘....because God is love’:

What if, instead of asking “why should church be intergenerational?” we start from an assumption of church as intergenerational and ask “why should church be segregated by age?” It’s a question which should make us uncomfortable. Not least because the underlying question is “why should church be segregated?” – which should make us very uncomfortable indeed. We don’t like to think of the way we do church as ‘segregated’. But in reality, that’s exactly what the church is when it isn’t intergenerational.¹

Prayer

‘Prayer is not an escape from the world but an entrance into it. We become conscious in prayer of how much of the world is with us and how much we are in the world.’²

Messy Church

Messy Church provides a framework for experiences and encourages all ages to learn from and with each other. Marcia Bunge says this reflects the teaching behind Scripture such as Matthew 18:2-5:

challenge adults to be receptive to the lessons and wisdom that children offer them, to honour children’s questions and insights, and to recognize that children can positively influence the community and the moral and spiritual lives of adults.³

¹ From the blog ‘.....because God is love’, article ‘Intergenerational church and unexamined assumptions’ December 2018.

<https://becausegodislove.wordpress.com/2018/12/07/intergenerational-church-and-unexamined-assumptions/> (accessed January 2019).

² Ann Belford Ulinov and Barry Ulinov, *Primary Speech: A Psychology in Prayer*. (Georgia: John Knox House, 1982), 4.

³ Marcia J Bunge, ‘The Child, Religion, and the Academy: Developing Robust Theological and Religious Understandings of Children and Childhood’, *Journal of Religion*, 86 issue 4 (Oct 2006): 567.

This model of theological reflection forces us to be honest about shortcomings and areas that require development through wondering and deeper engagement with Scripture and cultural context. No methodology or fresh experience of church will appeal to all. The important lesson is the need to listen to the voices of all ages and affirm they are valuable contributors to the spiritual growth of the whole community.

Search Institute 40 Developmental Assets

Search Institute has identified 40 positive supports and strengths that young people need to succeed. Half of the assets focus on the relationships and opportunities they need in their families, schools, and communities (external assets). The remaining assets focus on the social-emotional strengths, values, and commitments that are nurtured within young people (internal assets).

Taken from the website:

<https://www.search-institute.org/our-research/development-assets/developmental-assets-framework/>

UCA Resources

The UCA Synod of VicTas decided that one of its focus areas would be ministry to children, families and young people. To this end, there has been some synod work in helping to develop some resources to assist the wider church.

- Tools for Listening: How to engage children and young people to participate in decisions affecting them in your community

<https://www.assembly.uca.org.au/tools-for-listening>

- Growing up Together: Intergenerational rituals to mark rites of passage in the lives of children and young people

<http://ctm.ucahost.com/CTMR/Growing%20up%20together.pdf>

- DIY modules are available on various aspects of pastoral care and congregational life. They are free downloads and congregations and ministry teams can work through the training together.

<http://www.ctmresourcing.org.au/digital-downloads/?pnum=2>

Intergen

An interdenominational body which advocates for and produces resources for intergen worship and engagement

<https://intergen.org.au/>

“Intergen champions inclusive ministry: Jesus for all, providing resources and training to help every church be intergenerational.”

Here2stay

An organisation concerned about the movement of young people out of the church. Another is the Fuller Institute and their work around Sticky Faith. The aims of Here2 stay are to:

- alert parents and church leaders to the current data about the declining church/faith trend
- rediscover biblical emphases that have been overlooked which begin to explain why we are at where we are today
- present some suggested building blocks for more effective discipleship for parents and faith communities
- empower parents and church leaders to devise and implement their own localised strategies

Talk about anchors or rites of passage, positive peer groups,
<http://here2stay.org.au/>

Fuller Institute's Stick Faith

In the US, 50% of young people attending college walk away from faith. Fuller's research confirms that it's never too early or too late to start developing faith that continues to grow and lasts. Sticky Faith gives parents and leaders both a theological/philosophical framework and a host of practical relationship and programming ideas that develop long-term faith in teenagers.

<https://fulleryouthinstitute.org/stickyfaith>

Children and Families Ministry: Core Issues and Contextualities for Excellence in Practice - Beth Barnett

Field and Discipline: Field D – Mission and Ministry (DA)

Suitable for those studying undergraduate and postgraduate awards

Semester 2 Intensive: July 11, 12, 13 and 15, 16, 17

The needs of children and their families will focus our discussion of church and the Australian context. Addressing the theology, spirituality and sociology of the child in relation to family, church, faith, culture, technology, history and philosophical discourse, the unit develops critical skills for comprehensive approach to mission and leadership with children and their families today.

https://pilgrim.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/2019_Course-Guide-web-version.pdf

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