

out modern Hillsong style music (only the Christ-centred ones!). But we found pipe organ just seemed to have some cultural resonances that turned many off. Then again this may not fit your context if you are in an area that has a higher cultural values.

- While overall direction may be more modern, don't let one culture completely dominate or win!

12. Kids Talks Are Rubbish.

- Kid's Talks should morph to include adults and all ages.
- Don't highlight children on their own and make them sit up front.
- Would you do that to teens or adults?
- Talk to everyone together.
- Give them things to talk about and do together in families or groups.
- Don't do "Kids Talks" do "All Age Talks".
- Sermons and messages can be for all ages with activities and elements for children and adults.

13. How We Pray Is What We Believe (Lex Credendi Lex Orandi)

- All ages should always lead prayer.
- This cannot be emphasised enough.
- They should lead it in their own words and ways, not dictated to by others.

14. Consider Media/Publications/Art/Imagery For All Generations.

- Let the media you present have a variety of generational cultures.
- Get many generations generating media!

15. Try Tactile Things, Living Responses, Reflective Activities.

- We commonly have activities and reflective things to try during Holy Communion.
- These reflection times are highly intergenerational and all generations seem to love them.
- Prayer activities or exercises engage senses (smell, sight, touch, taste).
- Activities can involve creating something, art work, writing responses, or praying for people etc.

16. Different Things Can Happen At Once Within Worship.

- Prayer stations and activities can happen simultaneously.
- Other reflections can happen at same time as communion.
- Sermons can include sheets for children and questions to follow on at end.
- Kids Talks can have components or deeper questions for adults.
- You can still have some separate ministry bits for special needs.

17. Experiment. Take Risks. Many More Things Must Be Tried Than Can Be Expected To Succeed.

- Try different modes, ways of working together, tell people you're experimenting and get feedback.
- Ask the young what worked.
- Ask the old to have patience!
- Don't lose perspective.

INTERGENERATIONAL WORSHIP

Elevation Presentation
Good News Lutheran Church Middle Park 2016



Why Are We Here?
Intergenerational Stories
Intergenerational Worship Is Biblical
Single-Generation Worship May Be Sin
Intergenerational Worship Is Evidence Based
Seventeen Steps Towards Intergenerational Worship

WHY I AM HERE?

I am 43 years old and I have been leading and preaching for 26 years. I have been asked to give this presentation because someone thought I am great at including all generations in worship. I thought I was average, but when I asked around many consider me a leader in this area. I'm not sure I have a lot of answers, but I've done lots of experiments.

WHY ARE YOU HERE?

What brought you to this session?

What are you hoping to get, learn, receive today?

STORIES ABOUT INTERGENERATIONAL WORSHIP

As the father sang something amazing happened – he had a vision! He saw his mother (who had been Catholic) singing in church when he was a child. It was half memory half vision. He saw his mother singing in the choir and him as a child standing beside her. He saw her prayer answered in him.... Then felt something new. It was his son's arms around him...

In my late teens a revolution happened. Modern music came to our church. Older people invested in me and encouraged me until I became a core worship leader. Somehow a Sunday night youth service evolved and I was a leader. There I was at age 17 preaching and playing in the band. The service grew and grew. It was energising. All ages were present. But this was the new 'youth movement' of our church...

I was serving in a congregation with 3 totally different worship services ranging from ancient chanting to a loud band. But I regularly had people come and say, "we need a young adult service." Another group came and said "we need a young families service." Another group said that we needed a "proper traditional service at a more accessible time." We had become consumers who thought worship should be designed around our needs. As the only pastor of this fragmented church I was near breakdown...

As I look back on my learning about mission and worship I have realised that the only real and true communities that I have seen grow have included many generations at once.

What are you hearing?

INTERGENERATIONAL WORSHIP IS BIBLICAL

In New Testament thinking worship is where heaven and earth intersect. It's not a show, not a mission rally or concert. It's where Jesus connects heaven and earth. When human beings come before the God of Grace, when we come together humble, sinful, broken, and seeking grace. Then heaven and earth meet. In true worship we start to forget about "me" and it's about "us". This is the worship of heaven...

Revelation 5:8-14

Then the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb. Each one had a harp and they were holding golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. And they sang a new song:

- Give them something simple to do or say in response – but it has to be real.

8. *Fun and laughter.*

- In cross-cultural situations laughter is essential.
- Laughter greases the cogs when cross-cultural dialogue occurs.
- Be willing to make mistakes and laugh at them (and especially yourself).

9. *Beware of try-hard mediocrity and cool.*

- Older ones must never assume they know how to speak younger people's language. The worst I ever heard was a 75 year old preaching who deliberately put on his 'cool' 1960s language for our young adults and talked about a 'groovy gal' he liked.
- Don't try to be cool – it's instant death. 'Real' is better than 'cool'.
- Presenters: be yourself. Be simple and clear.
- Invite younger people to lead and co-lead – let their efforts bridge the gap to their generations.
- Lead and preach by asking questions and inviting participation and response. By doing this you let the generations fill in their own culture and responses rather than trying to work it out for them.

10. *Blended Music Advice?*

- Too often attempts at intergenerational worship devolve into a kind of mediocre 'middle ground'.
- So music predominantly comes from the 1970s to 1990s as that's the middle ground.
- This is deathly and uninspiring.
- Consider 'bookend' music instead – draw from both ends.
- So include the latest Hillsong (Christ centred ones of course!) and oldest Hymns.
- Orchestrate transitions well between songs.
- But deliberately transition from ancient to new.
- The leader must plan and communicate how things work together and how music melds.

11. *While each generation's culture is included we need to be aware that certain generational cultures have different meanings to other generations and can be negative "memes" for them.*

- There are some extremes of different generational cultures that must simply be avoided as they have become "memes" to other generations. For instance, Gen Xers need to stop preaching about "The Matrix" and "Lord Of The Rings". Everyone else is sick of it and probably don't care!
- Beware of using highly specific generational language without explanation for others.
- Do be aware of jarring extremes and a worship that doesn't gel together because it 'lurches' unpredictably.
- For instance in our context the pipe organ was jarring and didn't fit. So we sing hymns to piano and sometimes sing unaccompanied plainsong or chanting as well. We also have a band pumping

- Communicate what 'living together' means. (See Bonhoeffer's "Life Together")

"Today we are all here to worship together with all generations. This isn't modern or ancient, traditional or contemporary, this is all of us with our crazy differences coming together in worship of Jesus. If you came wanting something that suits you perfectly then this won't work for you today. Because we are not here for "me" but for "us". Some parts may be too quiet or too loud for you. Some bits may be too old or too new for you. But we're not here to please ourselves but instead to bring all of our differences into unity in Jesus Christ. We're going to be loud and quiet, old and new, young and older, traditional ancient and brand new all together! Let's be the Body Of Christ with all our amazing diversity together today!"

4. Humility And Intention.

- Working together requires humility from all concerned.
- Leaders need to announce the humility agenda and call for it openly!
- Older generations must give up ground and cannot do it how it always was.
- Worship leaders should avoid focussing only on one or two crucial generations.
- Everyone must commit (publicly in a ritual) to work together and welcome diversity!

5. Educate On How Generations Work:

- Talk each Sunday about generational differences and what we bring to each other.
 - Under 40 happiness = excitement.
 - Over 40 happiness = contentment.
 - Under 40 faith = experience, passion, action.
 - Over 40 faith = commitment, sacrifice, patience.
- And that is why we need each other!
- In sermons and messages invite different generations to reflect, share their views.
- Sermons and messages can be used to help generations understand each other too.

6. Change Who Does What

- Who ushers / welcomes / greets?
- Bible reading, prayer leading, offering, giving communion
- Who speaks up front?
- Who gives news/announcements?
- Who serves refreshments?
- Everything is an intergenerational opportunity!

7. Specific Allowances Older Generations Must Make

- Older generations must give up ground.
- This especially applies musically – they need to enjoy hearing the young lead their own way!
- The reciting or reading of long sections of text doesn't work for X Gen, Y Gen, and iGen.
- If you're going to have a Psalm etc, keep the 'refrain' short and obvious.
- Same with prayers, don't ask people to read chunks of text from a book or screen.

"You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation. You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth."

Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels, numbering thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand. They encircled the throne and the living creatures and the elders. In a loud voice they sang:

"Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!"

Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all that is in them, singing:

"To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honor and glory and power, for ever and ever!"

It can't be heavenly if it's tailored to just your tastes. In this world it is imperfect and not everyone can sing well. As we bring together old and young perhaps some of the imperfections could be a sign of heaven! In fact, in healthy worship we shouldn't "like" everything. Because healthy worship will reflect the diversity of heaven as different ages and cultures come together. Then our worship will be centred not on "me" but on "us". This kind of worship prepares us for mission to the world.

Ephesians 4:4-7. There is one body and one Spirit, just as we were called to one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all...

See also Matthew 10:13-16, Acts 2:39, Deuteronomy 6:4, Matthew 11:25-26, Matthew 18:2-6, Matthew 18:10, Matthew 19:13-14, Matthew 21:16, Mark 10:13-16, Luke 9:46-4...

SINGLE-GENERATION WORSHIP MAY EVEN BE SINFUL

"Churches have fully consumed consumerism... It is impossible for us to constantly feed our own preferences and have energy left to help those outside."

- Ed Stetzer (www.edstetzer.com)

Single Generation Worship eventually crashes:

- Single-generation you serve will grow up, change, move on.
- if everyone in the room is culturally homogenous it's not a church it's a clique or club.
- Single-generation worship is not the whole Body Of Christ.

Consumers consume a product – they need it to their tastes.

Disciples walk together following Jesus to the cross and empty grave.

John 2:16. Jesus said, "Get these out of here! How dare you turn my Father's house into a market!"

INTERGENERATIONAL WORSHIP IS EVIDENCE BASED!

John Roberto, Wesley Black, Roland D. Martinson write in "The Spirit And Culture Of Youth Ministry":

"The Spirit and Culture of Youth Ministry, identified the significance of an intentionally intergenerational congregation on the faith maturity of young people. Congregations whose basic ministries were thoroughly intergenerational had a significant impact on the faith growth and commitment of young people. In these congregations young people are welcomed and expected to participate and lead in church-wide ministries, including worship, education, fellowship, outreach, and decision-making.

Kara Powell, Brad Griffin & Cheryl Crawford write in "Sticky Faith Youth Worker Edition":

Intergenerational Insight #1: Involvement in all-church worship during high school is more consistently linked with mature faith in both high school and college than any other form of church participation.

Intergenerational Insight #2: The more students serve and build relationships with younger children, the more likely it is that their faith will stick.

Intergenerational Insight #3: High school seniors don't feel supported by adults in their congregations.

Intergenerational Insight #4: By far, the number-one way that churches made the teens in our survey feel welcomed and valued was when adults in the congregation showed interest in them.

- From www.stickyfaith.org/articles/the-church-sticking-together. Originally published in 'Immerse' Journal and is a summary of 'Faith, Youth Worker Edition', by Kara Powell, Brad Griffin and Cheryl Crawford (Zondervan 2011)

INTERGENERATIONAL WORSHIP IS HARD

Intergenerational worship is hard because it's basically cross-cultural work. Working cross culturally (eg. in Africa) means never assuming you understand their culture. What's important in cross-cultural work?

This is why it's hard. For each generation I have chosen a song written by that generation...

'Builders' 70+

Lived through WW2.

"I'll be yours through all the years, till the end of time" (Love Me Tender by Elvis Presley).

Stoic, experienced real privation, unemployment, economic trouble and war.

Respect, reverence, commitment, frugality, rules, reliability.

We have always done it this way.

'Boomers' 50-70 ish

Born post WW2. Boom time. Optimism. (Cold War).

"We are the champions... and we'll keep on fighting to the end!" (We Are The Champions by Queen)

Grew in prosperity and optimism.

Entrepreneurs, career options, diversity, change to sexuality and family life.

High divorce rate. Workaholic. Change and upheaval in culture.

Organised and love teamwork and want to have a say.

In church life, the Boomers love to create visions for the future, they are open to team.

'Generation X' 35-50ish

Recession, uncertainty, pessimistic, fear of Armageddon.

"Here we are now, entertain us!" (Smells Like Teen Spirit by Nirvana)

First generation born to largely broken families.

Individualist, cynical, not wanting to repeat mistakes and excesses of boomers.

Realist. Fluid. Measure success in terms of output (not input).

First generation to prefer short term opportunities over long term commitment.

'Generation Y' 20-35ish

Born mostly to boomers. Often called "echo-boomers" because of their optimism.

"I cant change, even if I tried, even if I wanted to..." (The Same Love by Mackelmore)

Never gone without. Mostly been 'told they are special' and believe it.

Decide their own future. Friends more important than ever. Work has to be meaningful.

No concept of starting at bottom and working up because no struggle to attain stuff.

Always connected. Social media driven. Multitasking in incredible ways.

But also lack of attention on single given thing in an intent way.

'iGen' Under 20

Planking. App. Gangnam style. BRB. GTG. IKR.

"They are writing their song sometime soon!"

First generation to be born and grow up online with no concept of life before Google!

Coming of age post Sept 11 and GFC (Global Financial Crisis). Pessimism about humanity!

Less likely to take risks than Gen Y. Highest levels of depression and mental illness in a generation yet.

Tertiary education. Gen X: 1 in 4. Gen Y: 1 in 3. Gen Z: 1 in 2.

SEVENTEEN STEPS TOWARDS INTERGENERATIONAL WORSHIP

1. Get A Clear Understanding Of Worship As "Us" Not "Me".

- The perspective we're teaching isn't specifically "young people, like older people; older people, like younger people," but rather "IT'S NOT ABOUT ME!" A gathering on a Sunday morning isn't ultimately about satisfying our preferences, but rather coming together as the Church to worship Him
- Sermon & study series called "[World Changing Worship](http://www.ichurch.net.au)" at [ichurch.net.au](http://www.ichurch.net.au)
- This series particularly explores what worship is and that it's not about "me" but "us."

2. As A Team/Church Reflect, Pray, Study And Agree That It's Important, Vital Central.

- A great resource to start off is the Sermon & study series called "[Handed Down](http://www.ichurch.net.au)" at [ichurch.net.au](http://www.ichurch.net.au)
- This series helps people define what they want to 'hand down' and how to do it.
- It's a great way to start together intergenerationally to do a series like this.
- To do this it must be owned corporately as part of your vision.
- If one or two want it but others strongly reject it work on ownership of intergenerational values.

But if there is no consensus:

- o Start with a unified team.
- o Ensure noisy children are welcomed
- o Preach on Mark 10:13-16
- o Help your pastor/priest by naming the sin as it may be hard for him or her.

3. Worship Leaders Must Communicate 'Intergenerational Intent' Right Up Front.

- From the very start communicate positively that this service is different and we don't want everything to be entirely comfortable for you but to instead bring the diversity of the faith together!