THE INTERGENERATIONAL WORSHIP MODEL: YOUTH-SPECIFIC BENEFITS

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A THESIS PRESENTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT

OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

DOCTOR OF WORSHIP STUDIES

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ABSTRACT

King David declared that one generation should proclaim the goodness of the Lord to another, yet what David writes of cannot take place in an age-segregated setting. Multiple generations must be present. Much progress has been made regarding the church's acknowledgment of the significance of an intergenerational worship (IGW) model. Though each generation is precious to God and created in His image, IGW holds considerable benefits for churched youth, as it is one of the few places in society where youth can intentionally connect with older generations. Despite the importance of youth engagement in IGW, there is a limited amount of research concerning the benefits of an IGW model for the youth of the church, and even less literature pertaining to the specific factors that may contribute to a lack of youth buy-in regarding an IGW paradigm. Therefore, this qualitative historical study will show that the benefits for youth related to a practice of IGW involve opportunities for mentorship, meaningful relationships, intentional training in worship and liturgical leadership, and connection with the entire church body. Additionally, this project will demonstrate that youth who consistently engage in IGW are more likely to stay in church as young adults because they understand the benefits of intergenerationality. Finally, this study will examine factors that may contribute to lack of buy-in among youth toward an IGW model, including an unbalanced approach in planning liturgical elements, as well as youth being denied a place of service and being underrepresented in the planning and leadership process.

Keywords: intergenerational worship, intergenerational ministry, intergenerationality, multigenerational, cross-generational, youth, engaged Christian teens, worship model, liturgical

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Emerging Trend – ET

Generation Z – Gen Z

Impact 360 Institute – I360

Intergenerational Worship – IGW

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

King David proclaims in Psalm 145:4 (ESV): "One generation shall commend your works to another, and shall declare your mighty acts."[1] Yet what David writes of cannot take place in an age-segregated setting, since it calls for a culture of corporate intergenerational worship (IGW). Certainly, there are proper places and times for age-graded settings in the church, and for that matter, in civilization as a whole. As Holly Allen and Christine Ross write, "Churches that embrace an intergenerational culture also deeply value the unique and important place of age-graded learning settings, the appropriate bonding fostered in youth groups, and wonderful blessings of fellowship with those in shared seasons of life."[2] Nevertheless, the corporate worship hour in the local church should never be one of those places and times for segregating the generations.[3]

Much progress has been made regarding churches acknowledging the significance of an IGW model. Indeed, Holly Allen and Chris Barnett note that "all types of Christian communities … are now asking, 'How can we bring the generations back together?' This renewed interest in intergenerational ministry is … grounded in a growing body of research that supports the idea that intergenerational experiences contribute uniquely to sustainable, long-term faith formation across all ages."[4] However, there is still much left to do in the way of

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[1] Unless otherwise noted, all biblical passages referenced are in the *NIV Study Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2008).

[2] Holly Catterton Allen and Christine Lawton Ross, *Intergenerational Christian Formation: Bringing the Whole Church Together in Ministry, Community and Worship* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2012), 185.

[3] Ross Parsley, *Messy Church: A Multigenerational Mission for God's Family* (Colorado Springs: David C. Cook, 2012), Kindle Ed., Loc 1709 of 2501.

[4] Holly Catterton Allen and Chris Barnett, "Addressing the Two Intergenerational Questions," in *Intergenerate: Transforming Churches Through Intergenerational Ministry,* Holly Catterton Allen, ed. (Abilene, TX: Abilene Christian University Press, 2018), 17.

stemming the generational divide that exists in many local churches. If, as James Frazier asserts, "Worship is the single most important activity that brings one generation of saints into contact with another in the life of a congregation,"[5] then for the sake of *each* generation of saints, the church must commit to an intergenerational paradigm and practice of corporate worship for *all* generations of saints.

And though each generation is precious to God and created in His image, IGW holds considerable benefits for churched youth,[6] as it is one of the few opportunities in society for youth to intentionally connect with older generations. This is sorely needed in today's individualistic culture, and certainly in the church. Ross Parsley, who led New Life Church in Colorado Springs to adopt an IGW format, concurs: "Our picture of who we are as the church is woefully inadequate and tragically shortsighted. We are not learning enough from each other. We are not connecting generationally, and we are not birthing new family members. Most tragically, we are not making enough disciples to make a dent in our current culture."[7]

Statement of the Problem

Many who today are in vocational church leadership positions were to some degree influenced and nurtured as youth by an older mentor—perhaps a church lay leader, a former pastor or youth pastor, or even a parent. But as a culture of ageism and age-segregated worship and ministry continues to permeate the church,[8] there are less and less opportunities for these

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[5] James Frazier, "All Generations of Saints at Worship," in *Across the Generations: Incorporating All Ages in Ministry: The Why and How,* Vicky Goplin, Jeffrey Nelson, Mark Gardner and Eileen Zahn, eds. (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2001), 57.

[6] Brenda Snailum, "Implementing Intergenerational Youth Ministry within Existing Evangelical Church Congregations: What Have We Learned?", *Christian Education Journal,* Series 3, Vol. 9, No. 1 (2012): 171.

[7] Parsley, Loc 230.

[8] William H. Davis, "Creating a Climate for Intergenerational Worship at Thomasville Road Baptist Church, Tallahassee, Florida," DWS Thesis, Robert E. Webber Institute for Worship Studies, April 2007, 2.

types of interactions. This is a profoundly serious problem the church must address, as every year nearly seventy percent of youth ages seventeen to nineteen drop out of church or at least take an extended hiatus.[9] Wesley Black notes, "Student ministry [and worship] that is totally separate from intergenerational relationships with a wider range of ages is doomed in the long term. Teenagers need to see what a walking, talking, adult Christian is like. They need the opportunities for interacting and dialoguing with a number of adults who care for them."[10] And so, a primary rationale for this study's focus on churched youth is that youth represent not only the future of the church, but of society as a whole. As Henry Eyring asserts, youth "hold the future in their hands. The Church has always been one generation away from extinction."[11]

Another significant issue at play is that of churches which have become entrenched in age-segregated models of worship and ministry, to the point of being utterly convinced of their viability and effectiveness. As Mel Walker, president and co-founder of Vision for Youth, affirms: "Somewhere along the line we [churches and pastors] have accepted the idea that it is a good thing to separate the various generations, to the exclusion of developing healthy inter-generational relationships in the church."[12] Churches must acknowledge that despite its inherent challenges,[13] embracing an intergenerational concept of ministry and worship is essential for the

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[9] Griffin Paul Jackson, "Dropouts and Disciples: How Many Students are Really Leaving the Church?", *Christianity Today Research,* January 15, 2019, accessed July 31, 2019, https://www.christianitytoday.com/news/2019/january/church-drop-out-college-young-adults-hiatus-lifeway-survey.html.

[10] Wesley Black, "Stopping the Dropouts: Guiding Adolescents Toward a Lasting Faith Following High School Graduation," *Christian Education Journal,* Series 3, Vol. 5, No. 1 (Spring 2008): 44.

[11] Henry B. Eyring, "We Must Raise Our Sights," *Address to Religious Educators at a Conference on the Book of Mormon*, BYU, August 14, 2001.

[12] Mel Walker, *Inter-Generational Youth Ministry: Why a Balanced View of Connecting the Generations is Essential for the Church* (Chinchilla, PA: Vision for Youth Publishing, 2013), 2.

[13] Joseph P. Conway, "In It for the Long Haul," in *Intergenerate: Transforming Churches Through Intergenerational Ministry,* Holly Catterton Allen, ed. (Abilene, TX: Abilene Christian University Press, 2018), 123.

spiritual formation, leadership training, and connection of the younger generations of the church with those who might play a mentoring, discipling and/or parenting role in their lives.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative historical study is to identify the youth-specific benefits of an intergenerational paradigm of corporate worship, as well as to demonstrate that youth who consistently engage in IGW are more likely to stay in church as young adults because they understand the benefits of intergenerationality and have been regularly connected with other adults in worship. Furthermore, this study will explore specific factors that may contribute to lack of buy-in among youth toward an intergenerational corporate worship model. In a supportive manner, a comparison will be made between age-segregated worship and IGW, with the purpose of revealing how an IGW model is significantly more conducive to spiritual formation in youth.[14] Finally, a historical and biblical precedent for IGW and ministry will be established, which will serve as a foundation upon which a church or organization may build a framework of IGW and ministry.

Significance of the Study

This study is significant for pastoral church leaders and lay leaders—especially youth pastors and worship pastors—in considering the strengths of an IGW model over an age-segregated worship model, and how such a culture of intergenerationality significantly benefits youth. The study is also important because identifying and understanding the purpose of an IGW ministry reinforces to pastoral church leaders the truth that the Church Universal—that is, the body of Christ (Eph. 4:11-16)—is not generationally-divided.

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[14] Kara E. Powell, "Is the Era of Age Segregation Over?", interview by Marshall Shelley and Brandon O'Brien, *Leadership Journal,* a publication of *Christianity Today,* Vol. 30, Issue 3 (June 22, 2009): 44.

This study will accomplish these objectives by explicating specific ways an IGW model benefits youth, exploring the concept that youth who have been consistently exposed to an atmosphere of IGW during their teenage years are more likely to stay in church beyond high school, and considering specific factors that may contribute to a lack of youth buy-in toward an intergenerational corporate worship model, as well as how these factors may be addressed by churches that practice IGW. Furthermore, considering that a mother and father's regular church attendance and a practice of parent-led family Bible reading, prayer and worship in the home result in a significant likelihood that teenagers will continue to be meaningfully involved in church beyond the high school years,[15] this study may also prove beneficial for parents, grandparents, and other family members of youth who consider the spiritual formation of teenagers and the continuation of youth in active church participation beyond the high school years to be important matters.

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Statement of Primary Research Questions

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If youth represent the future of the church,[16] and every year nearly seventy percent of youth ages seventeen to nineteen drop out of church or at least take an extended hiatus,[17] it is of paramount importance for local churches to strive toward adopting philosophies and methodologies that will "stop the bleeding" and keep teens in church beyond the high-school years. But in order for the church to be successful in retaining post-high school youth, certain questions must first be asked and thoughtfully answered. Therefore, the following research questions are addressed in this study:

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[15] Black, 34-35.

[16] Eyring, "We Must Raise Our Sights."

[17] Jackson, "Dropouts and Disciples."

RQ1: In what ways does an intergenerational corporate worship model benefit youth?

RQ2: In what ways might youth who consistently participate in IGW be more likely to stay in church as young adults?

RQ3: What factors contribute to lack of buy-in among youth toward an intergenerational corporate worship model?

These three questions are intimately interrelated. In seeking to ascertain the various benefits and detrimental factors concerning youth involvement in IGW and ministry in the local church, both RQ1 and RQ3 serve to inform RQ2 and assist local churches in discovering and developing a consistent plan to facilitate the likelihood of youth staying in church beyond the high-school years. If churches are able to clearly identify the youth-specific benefits of an intergenerational corporate worship model and determine factors that contribute to lack of buy-in among youth in relation to such a model, then churches will be equipped and empowered toward cultivating a "sticky faith"[18] that keeps teenagers in church as emerging adults.

Core Concepts

The first core concept this research project encompasses is the idea of IGW, which Allen and Ross define as "When a congregation intentionally brings the generations together in mutual serving, sharing or learning [and in this application, corporate worship] within the core activities of the church in order to live out being the body of Christ to each other and the greater community."[19] In IGW and intergenerational models of ministry, diverse ages are brought together in the same place and with the same resources for a unified purpose: To build cross-

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[18] Kara E. Powell and Chap Clark, *Sticky Faith: Everyday Ideas to Build Lasting Faith in Your Kids* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), Book Title.

[19] Allen and Ross, 17.

generational relationships that reinforce spiritual formation in the faith community and at home.[20] Intricately linked to this concept will be how intergenerational corporate worship specifically benefits youth.

A second core concept is the exploration of a youth's church commitment level and how intergenerational corporate worship may positively impact that commitment level beyond high school. As aforementioned, according to recent statistics nearly seventy percent of high-school graduates drop out of church or take an extended hiatus annually.[21] A key reason cited for this ecclesiastical exodus is "I didn't feel connected to people in my church."[22] While an age-segregated worship paradigm divides the church into niche-based segments, a primary tenet of IGW and ministry is to intentionally connect the generations in mutual serving, sharing, and learning.[23] Simply put, IGW seeks to facilitate the generations doing life together. Acknowledging this, it only stands to reason that embracing IGW is crucial for churches deliberate about finding ways to keep young adults engaged beyond the high school years.

Finally, this study will address the core concept of how the presence of certain factors within the scope of an IGW model might contribute to a lack of buy-in among youth toward IGW, as well as include a discussion of various ways pastoral and lay leaders in the church may address these factors. But simply identifying these factors apart from a solution is inadequate. It is not enough to only believe that IGW is beneficial for youth, or that IGW facilitates the

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[20] Drew Zahn, "Connecting the Generations: How Churches are Building and Sustaining Age-Integrated, Multi-Generational Ministry," in *Intergenerational Ministries: Practical Tips for Effective Cross-Generational Ministry* (Carol Stream, IL: Christianity Today International, 2008), 5.

[21] Jackson, "Dropouts and Disciples."

[22] Aaron Earls, "Most Teenagers Drop Out of Church as Young Adults," *LifeWay Research,* January 15, 2019, accessed September 14, 2019, https://lifewayresearch.com/2019/01/15/most-teenagers-drop-out-of-church-as-young-adults/.

[23] Allen and Ross, 17-18.

likelihood that post-high school youth will stay in church as young adults. For youth to find meaning and purpose in worship and ministry, they must be part of the process that drives church programming and planning. Pastors and ministerial staff who are purposeful about building upon an intergenerational foundation of worship and ministry must act to create pathways of leadership and service for all generations, including youth. In other words, they must become accommodators. As Anglican minister and Cliff College lecturer Gareth Crispin shares, "In forming intergenerational communities, it will be important for all within the community to adopt a posture of accommodating others."[24]

Hypotheses

H1: The youth-specific benefits of an intergenerational model of corporate worship include opportunities for mentorship, meaningful relationships, intentional training in worship and liturgical leadership, and connection with the entire church body.

Allen and Ross write, "Faith communities are perhaps the only places where families, singles, couples, children, teens, grandparents—all generations—come together on a regular interacting basis."[25] Within this multigenerational framework of faith, there are benefits for each generation, for humanity was created with an innate need for companionship and fellowship. God made this clear in Genesis 2:18 as He declared, "It is not good for the man to be alone." Therefore, a primary benefit of IGW is a sense of belonging and purpose for every generation.[26] Incorporated within this benefit are opportunities for youth to engage in meaningful mentoring relationships with adults of various ages.

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[24] Gareth Crispin, "Intergenerational Communities and a Theology of Accommodation," in *Intergenerate: Transforming Churches Through Intergenerational Ministry,* Holly Catterton Allen, ed. (Abilene, TX: Abilene Christian University Press, 2018), 51.

[25] Allen and Ross, 30.

[26] Ibid., 48; and Parsley, Loc 337-344.

Furthermore, in a world where youth are so connected electronically that they are often referred to as "iGen,"[27] IGW and ministry offers opportunities for meaningful, "flesh-and-blood" relationships with older generations whereby youth may be positively influenced and encouraged. This is especially critical in the realm of spiritual guidance that an older mentor might have in the life of those in younger generations, since research and statistics have shown that adolescence and young adulthood are life stages when religious conversion is likely to take place.[28] In some churches, these connections may even include surrogate parenting relationships for youth whose biological parents are largely absent from their lives.[29]

Also, since age-segregated worship and ministry separate the generations, only in IGW are youth afforded opportunities to be incorporated into roles of worship and liturgical leadership within the scope of a church's primary worship gathering, thereby receiving valuable leadership training. And perhaps most significantly, in IGW youth find connectedness and their rightful place of belonging within the body of Christ.[30] As the Apostle Paul imparts in Ephesians 4:15-16: "Speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ. From him the *whole* (emphasis added) body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work."

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[27] Jean M. Twenge, *iGen: Why Today's Super-Connected Kids Are Growing Up Less Rebellious, More Tolerant, Less Happy—and Completely Unprepared for Adulthood* *and What That Means for the Rest of Us* (New York: Atria Books, 2017), Kindle Ed., Loc 54 of 6510.

[28] Christian Smith with Melinda Lundquist Denton, *Soul Searching: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of American Teenagers* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 4.

[29] Brian Greene, "Parenting the Unparented," in *The Age-Old Divide: How Do You Integrate the Generations and Life Stages at Your Church?,* interview by Helen Lee, *Leadership Journal,* a publication of *Christianity Today,* Vol. 27, Issue 4 (Sept 22, 2006): 44.

[30] Davis, 36.

H2: Youth who consistently participate in IGW are more likely to stay in church as young adults because they recognize the benefits of such a model and have already adapted to being regularly connected with other adults in worship.

Kara Powell, executive director at the Fuller Youth Institute at Fuller Theological Seminary and a former youth pastor, imparts: "There is a strong link between kids staying in church after they graduate and their involvement in intergenerational relationships and worship."[31] A key benefit for youth who regularly engage in IGW and ministry is connection to an intrinsic church culture of intergenerationality.[32] And crucial toward establishing a truly intergenerational culture is a focus on fostering and sustaining meaningful cross-generational relationships.[33] As Brenda Snailum notes, "Leaders need to consider ways to facilitate relationships between every generation represented in the church body, including children, teens, college students, singles, couples, parents, and seniors. Relationships, not programs, are the heart and soul of an intergenerational community."[34]

Furthermore, research and practical experience has shown that many churches embracing age-segregated models of corporate worship create vastly different worship experiences for children and youth than for adults.[35] In such cases, the likelihood of youth making a successful transition from a youth service during high school to a fundamentally-changed adult service post-high school is low.[36] It is readily apparent that youth who have been consistently separated

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[31] Powell, "Is the Era of Age Segregation Over?", 43.

[32] Black, 41-42.

[33] Ibid., 38; Snailum, 173-74; Davis, 48-54; and David A. Hasker, "Developing a Strategy to Transition First Baptist Church, Melbourne, Florida, from Venue Worship to a Multigenerational Worship Model," DMin Project in Ministry Report, New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, December 2010, 7.

[34] Snailum, 173.

[35] Parsley, Loc 2380-2418.

[36] Powell, "Is the Era of Age Segregation Over?", 44.

from other generational cohorts during the formative teenage years and have only interacted with other teenagers in a worship setting will likely have little desire to radically alter their worship perspective and adapt to a completely different paradigm of corporate worship beyond high school. Jason Brian Santos corroborates: "Perhaps we shouldn't be surprised when youth abandon the corporate body of the church after graduation—it wasn't theirs from the start."[37]

> H3: Factors that contribute to a lack of buy-in among youth toward an intergenerational corporate worship model include an unbalanced approach in planning liturgical elements, as well as youth being denied a place of service and being underrepresented in the planning and leadership process.

A primary strength of liturgical planning for IGW involves intentionally incorporating a careful balance of stylistic elements applicable and relatable to all ages.[38] Conversely, it may be assumed that an unbalanced approach in liturgical planning for worship would likely be a contributing factor to a lack of buy-in among youth toward IGW. It has been said, primarily by proponents of age/style-segregated worship, that such a balanced worship approach "displeases everyone equally."[39] The church and its leadership must decide whether it will offer a worship smorgasbord which caters to each individual whim—and also necessitates a niche-based segregational model—or unite the body of Christ via a facilitation of IGW and ministry. To achieve such unity within the scope of an IGW environment, it seems evident that a balanced approach to worship planning is an inevitable conclusion. Tori Smit, a Diaconal Minister with

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[37] Jason Brian Santos, "Why Now?", in *Intergenerate: Transforming Churches Through Intergenerational Ministry,* Holly Catterton Allen, ed. (Abilene, TX: Abilene Christian University Press, 2018), 44.

[38] Allen and Ross, 196-197.

[39] John C. Ortberg, "The Gap: The Fractured World of Multi-Generational Church Leadership," *Leadership Journal,* a publication of *Christianity Today,* Vol. 30, Issue 3 (June 22, 2009): 50.

the Presbyterian Church in Canada, concurs and clarifies: "Intergenerational worship needs to be prepared with all ages in mind. Each aspect of the worship liturgy must include words and concepts applicable for all ages, and all ages have a need for worship to become more experiential and participatory, appealing to all of the senses at the same time, enabling the family of God to touch, see, smell, hear and taste that the Lord is good."[40]

Another factor that may contribute to lack of youth buy-in is the denial of an avenue of service to youth within the scope of corporate worship simply because they are young and inexperienced. Churches and church leadership committed to an intentional culture of intergenerationality in worship must be willing to see the inexperience of youth as an asset and opportunity, not a detriment. As Powell again imparts: "It's important, we're finding, to get beyond a token youth Sunday and start thinking about how to involve kids as ushers and greeters and readers and musicians in our services."[41]

Finally, lack of youth buy-in may be a result of an underrepresentation of youth in the worship planning and leadership process. Although youth by nature are inexperienced and will likely require guidance from more seasoned adults, allowing youth ownership in the worship life of the church is crucial to the success and longevity of an IGW culture. Parsley conveys wisdom here: "Don't give away the whole service or just host a special occasion where 'the youth' lead the worship, rather, actually include them in the process. Don't just use them because they're good musicians. Invest in them, and allow them to help shape the culture of your church."[42]

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[40] Tori Smit, "Intergenerational Worship," *The Presbyterian Record,* Vol. 140, Issue 10 (Nov 2016): 34.

[41] Powell, "Is the Era of Age Segregation Over?", 45.

[42] Parsley, Loc 874.

Research Method

This study employed a qualitative historical research method which included investigating from existing research the common elements of IGW, with an exclusive focus on how these elements specifically benefit and impact youth. In following the Creswell text, this study adhered to a process of research which "involves emerging questions and procedures, data typically collected in the participant's setting, data analysis inductively building from particulars to general themes, and the researcher making interpretations of the meaning of the data."[43] In light of this, biblical precepts, precedents, and patterns of IGW and ministry from both Old and New Testaments were examined and evaluated. Additionally, five of the most commonly-adopted current worship models were explicated, and the intergenerational implications of each worship model were developed and presented. Finally, in addition to utilizing existing research materials, questionnaire-based surveys were electronically distributed to a sampling of youth (approximately 13-19 years of age) and young adults (approximately 20-35 years of age).

Definition of Terms

Ageism: Negative stereotyping and discrimination against the older population.[44]

Cross-Generational: A combination of the generations in which there is some sharing, listening, and learning, but little individual or collective transformation.[45]

Intergenerational: An intentional combining of the generations together in mutual serving, sharing, or learning.[46]

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[43] John W. Creswell and J. David Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches,* 5th edition (Los Angeles: Sage, 2018), Kindle Ed., Loc 634 of 10113.

[44] Allen and Ross, 62.

[45] Allen and Barnett, 18.

[46] Allen and Ross, 17.

Liturgical: Of, relating to, or having the characteristics of liturgy—that is, a set of words, music, and actions regularly used in religious ceremonies.[47]

Multigenerational: A combination of the generations, but mutual interaction between generational cohorts is not necessarily assumed or encouraged. In the multigenerational environment, there is tolerance living alongside superficial and polite interaction.[48]

Spiritual/Faith Formation: The [Holy] Spirit-driven process of forming the inner world of the human self in such a way that it becomes like the inner being of Christ himself.[49]

Young Adults: Those approximately 20 – 35 years of age.[50]

Youth: Those approximately 13 – 19 years of age.[51]

Chapter Summary

Although progress has been made regarding churches acknowledging the benefits of an intergenerational corporate worship model, many churches still choose to practice age/style-segregated corporate worship, thereby fostering ageism and segregation within the body of Christ. In contrast, IGW seeks to purposefully unite the generations in the corporate worship experience. And although an IGW culture offers benefits for all ages, it is especially beneficial during the formative years of younger generations in that it provides opportunities for

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[47] *Cambridge English Dictionary, s.v.* "liturgy," accessed August 11, 2019, https://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/liturgy.

[48] Allen and Ross, 18-19; and Allen and Barnett, 18.

[49] Dallas Willard, *Renovation of the Heart: Putting on the Character of Christ* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 2002), 22.

[50] Thomas Armstrong, *The Human Odyssey: Navigating the Twelve Stages of Life* (Calabasas, CA: Ixia Press, 2019), 130.

[51] Ibid., 110.

mentorship, meaningful relationships, intentional training in worship and liturgical leadership, and connection with the entire church body.

Furthermore, youth who consistently engage in IGW are more likely to stay in church as young adults because they understand these benefits and have grown accustomed to being regularly connected with other adults in worship. Unlike niche-based corporate worship, a key strength of IGW is its intentional focus on the potential relationships between believers of all ages. When churches and church leaders recognize that relationships are the heart and soul of intergenerational communities and embrace an intergenerational corporate worship paradigm, each generation will find their rightful place of belonging within the body of Christ. When this occurs, King David's declaration in Psalm 145:4 of one generation commending God's works to another will come to full fruition.

Unfortunately, despite the significant benefits IGW holds for youth, research has identified certain factors that contribute to a lack of buy-in among youth toward this worship model. These factors include an unbalanced approach in planning liturgical elements, youth being denied a place of service, and youth being underrepresented in the planning and leadership process. A carefully planned liturgical balance is essential for the facilitation of an ongoing practice of corporate IGW in which words and concepts are applicable and meaningful for all ages. Additionally, youth must not only be incorporated as congregants, but as servants who play integral roles in the worship life of a given congregation. Finally, a successful IGW practice must embrace a culture of accommodation, understanding that each generation matters and should have a voice and a place at the table where worship planning and leadership take place. When a church invests in its youth and allows them to help shape its worship culture, the result is

a healthy congregation in which each generation may find value and meaning in worshiping

together as the body of Christ.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

This chapter reviews literature pertaining to various issues regarding generational engagement within the context of the local evangelical church, particularly as it relates to Generation Z and the corporate worship experience. The literature review consists of four parts. Believing that the church falls under the authority of Scripture, the first section serves to establish a precedent for a biblical theology and practice of IGW. Next, literature is reviewed which documents the progression of generational segregation as it relates to the corporate worship life of the church. Furthermore, factors related to the various corporate worship liturgies and methodologies employed in five commonly-adopted current worship models will be explicated, and the intergenerational implications of each worship model will be developed. Third, since this project seeks to determine how today's youth relate and respond to an IGW model and how such a model specifically benefits youth, section three reviews literature addressing the implications of IGW engagement for Generation Z (Gen Z). The final section summarizes current scholarship regarding generational worship involvement within the local church, addresses currently unknown knowledge, and identifies the gap in the literature regarding the benefits of an IGW model for Gen Z.

A Biblical Precedent for Intergenerational Worship

The issue of IGW and ministry in relation to corporate worship in the local church is first and foremost a theological issue. Before churches and pastoral leadership investigate and employ philosophical, historical, and cultural viewpoints and methodologies, the question must first be asked: "How and where does the Bible speak to this issue?" Historical developments and cultural trends may well be valid and applicable to generational corporate worship practices, and may aid

church leaders in facilitating the dynamics of corporate worship in the local church. However, these developments and trends must by design fall under the authority and auspices of Scripture and be viewed via a biblical perspective that serves to inform and shape one's understanding of history, philosophy, and culture. Therefore, a biblical theology of IGW is the proper starting point for understanding and adopting a paradigm and practice of IGW.

The Old Testament

Deuteronomy

In Deuteronomy 6:1-2a, Moses writes: "These are the commands, decrees and laws the LORD your God directed me to teach you to observe in the land that you are crossing the Jordan to possess, so that you, your children and their children after them may fear the LORD your God as long as you live." Moses delivers these words during the second of three farewell addresses from the plains of Moab, shortly before the Israelites enter into the Promised Land.[52] Knowing that God has forbidden him to enter into the land due to his faithlessness, and recognizing that his own death is imminent, Moses emphasizes the crucial importance of the older generations of Hebrews passing their legacy of faith in Yahweh and observance of His precepts down to their children and grandchildren.

To say the family was central to Hebrew life is a significant understatement, and the Book of Deuteronomy clearly substantiates this truth. In the biblical world of ancient Israel, the individual was socially, politically, and economically ostracized. A single individual disconnected from a household, village, or tribe could not make a living, marry, parent, buy, or

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[52] John MacArthur, *The MacArthur Study Bible, NASB* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, Inc., 2006), Kindle Ed., Loc 32589-32693 of 307907.

sell.[53] So central was the familial household in ancient Israel that much of what Moses and other

Old Testament authors reveal about the character and activity of God is shaped by discourse

concerning the family.[54] Raising a family and instilling within children a knowledge and respect

of Yahweh was a sacred duty in early Judaism. Furthermore, a careful study of Hebraic history

reveals a priority of intergenerationality within family units, in which the passing down of faith

traditions and spiritual formation was chiefly the responsibility of the parents, especially the

father. Indeed, a specific rationale for intergenerationality in worship and spiritual formation

does not appear anywhere in the Bible, because Scripture intrinsically presumes that faith

formation occurs organically within intergenerational, familial, and community settings.[55]

William C. Williams, Professor of Old Testament at Vanguard University, imparts further

wisdom regarding the Old Testament picture of family:

> In Western societies individuals are often considered the societal units, brought together
> by some commonly felt need … In contrast, Israel's social structure was tribal and
> therefore corporate (solidary) in its internal relationships, generating tightly structured
> communities. Whatever their size, these communities perceived themselves as totalities,
> bound together through internal agencies that made their presence felt in each individual
> member. The individual was neither overlooked, nor was he considered the unit on which
> the society was built. Instead, the family was the unit, and the individual found his place
> in society through the family and its extensions. The subtribe was really a greatly
> extended family; a collection of related subtribes formed a tribe; and a federation of tribes
> yielded a people.[56]

Intergenerational writer and speaker Daphne Kirk likewise offers commentary on early Hebraic

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[53] Victor H. Matthews and Don C. Benjamin, *Social World of Ancient Israel 1250-587 BCE* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1993), xviii.

[54] Leo G. Perdue, Joseph Blenkinsopp, et al., *Families in Ancient Israel* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1997), 225.

[55] Allen and Ross, 77.

[56] William C. Williams, "Family Life and Relations," in *Baker's Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology,* Walter A. Elwell, ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House Company, 1996), 243.

families, and relates that it was God Himself who founded this design: "When God set His people Israel in order, he placed each individual within a family, each family within a tribe, and each tribe within the nation. No generation was excluded, no child left out, no older person put aside. Within each tribe were the components of family; they were community."[57]

The implication that spiritual formation and worship were a natural outflow of what took place daily within each Hebrew family is also clear in Scripture. The Torah (Pentateuch) was central to Israeli life, and in the broadest sense was the culmination of God's revelation of Himself to His people in ancient Israel. In it, and especially in Deuteronomy, the fifth and final book of the Pentateuch, we find numerous passages where Moses commands the households who were to enter into the Promised Land to teach the Mosaic Law to their children and grandchildren. The aforementioned Deuteronomy 6 is surely among the most significant of these passages. In addition to Verses 1 and 2, which were quoted earlier, Moses also writes: "These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates" (Deuteronomy 6:1-2, 6-9). The picture of family and household is easily identifiable in this passage: "Talk about them when you sit *at home* (emphasis added) … when you lie down and when you get up … write them on the doorframes of your *houses* (emphasis added)."

Although mothers would have actively taken part in passing the faith along to children—as Proverbs 1:8 attests—these commands were specifically directed to fathers. Bruce E.

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[57] Daphne Kirk, *Heirs Together: Establishing Intergenerational Church* (Suffolk, UK: Levin Mayhew, 2003), 17.

Willoughby, former professor at Gordon College, informs: "The father was the family religious leader (Deut. 6:7; 12:15; 14:22; 15:19). He was expected to fulfill the need for daily worship by stressing family religion in the home (Duet. 4:9, 10; 5:30f.; 11:19; Prov. 6:20-22). His responsibility to teach God's salvation narratives (6:20-25) and Israel's necessary response was an essential component of community life."[58] J. Andrew Dearman, Professor of Old Testament at Fuller Theological Seminary, adds: "The Hebrew term closest to 'family' is *bet ab,* literally rendered as 'father's house,' reflecting a male-headed, multigenerational household as the basic kinship unit in ancient Israel."[59] So not only would there have been a national expectation of fathers to teach their children, there was also a clear directive for this implicit in the Mosaic Law.

Psalms

The Psalter is rich with references to the generations worshiping together.[60] Indeed, this project began with Psalm 145:4, which in itself is a strong biblical rationale for IGW: "One generation shall commend your works to another, and shall declare your mighty acts." Leslie Allen offers astute commentary on this verse, noting that David "calls upon each generation of God's people to transmit to the next the tradition of his work in creation and in redemptive history, a tradition which reveals his kingly power. The poet willingly owns himself to be a link in this living chain of worship of the great King."[61]

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[58] Bruce E. Willoughby, "A Heartfelt Love: An Exegesis of Deuteronomy 6:4-19," *Restoration Quarterly,* 20 (1977), 83.

[59] J. Andrew Dearman, "The Family in the Old Testament," *Interpretation,* Vol. 52, No. 2 (1998), 117.

[60] Ps. 22:30, 71:17-18, 78:1-8, 100:5, 102:18, 145:4, 148:12-13.

[61] Leslie C. Allen, "Tell of His Might, Sing of His Grace!", in *Word Biblical Commentary, Volume 21: Psalms 101-150,* Bruce M. Metzger, et al., eds. (Nashville: Zondervan, 2002), 298.

Another noteworthy psalm referencing the importance of generational interaction within the scope of worship and spiritual formation is Psalm 78:1-8, where Asaph, a priest who served as the chief worship leader of ancient Israel,[62] composes:

> O my people, hear my teaching; listen to the words of my mouth. I will open my mouth in parables, I will utter hidden things, things from of old—what we have heard and known, what our fathers have told us. We will not hide them from their children; we will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord, his power, and the wonders he has done. He decreed statutes for Jacob and established the law in Israel, which he commanded our forefathers to teach their children, so the next generation would know them, even the children yet to be born, and they in turn would tell their children. Then they would put their trust in God and would not forget his deeds but would keep his commands. They would not be like their forefathers—a stubborn and rebellious generation, whose hearts were not loyal to God, whose spirits were not faithful to him.

Howard Vanderwell notes, "Asaph, the writer, is pleading for practices to be put in place that will minimize the possibility of future apostasy. If you read these words carefully, you will hear reference to at least four, if not five, generations."[63] This is a recurring theme throughout the Old Testament, and really, throughout all of Scripture: The importance of current generations teaching and investing in future generations so that "God's people remain faithful to God."[64]

Intergenerationality within Biblical Examples of Corporate Worship

In light of this clear emphasis on the spiritual formation inherent within Hebraic families, one might naturally expect to find that entire family units were a part of all significant worship gatherings in the Torah and beyond, and this is indeed the case. However, before developing this idea further, it would be prudent at this point to briefly explore the common dynamics of

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[62] Daniel L. Akin, *The Book of Psalms,* accessed March 22, 2020, https://www.danielakin.com/wp-content/uploads/old/Resource_620/1%20The%20Book%20of%20Psalms.pdf.

[63] Howard Vanderwell, "Biblical Values to Shape the Congregation," in *The Church of All Ages: Generations Worshiping Together,* Howard Vanderwell, ed. (Herndon, VA: The Alban Institute, 2008), 25.

[64] Ibid.

corporate worship in the Bible. For this, we turn to the worship wisdom of the late Robert E.

Webber, who imparts five basic structural elements for a meeting between God and His people:

1) The meeting was convened by God; 2) The people were arranged in a structure of

responsibility; 3) The meeting was characterized by *the proclamation of the Word;* 4) The people

accepted the conditions of the covenant, thus signifying a subjective commitment to hear and to

obey the Word; and, 5) The meeting was climaxed by a *dramatic symbol* of ratification, a sealing

of the agreement.[65] Each of the following Old Testament worship gatherings reflect Webber's

structural elements of corporate worship.

<div align="center">Deuteronomy</div>

First, Deuteronomy 29. It is notable that, as Moses gives his farewell address and final

instructions in this chapter, we find these words in verses 10-13:

> All of you are standing today in the presence of the Lord your God—your leaders and
> chief men, your elders and officials, and all the other men of Israel, together with your
> children and your wives, and the aliens living in your camps who chop your wood and
> carry your water. You are standing here in order to enter into a covenant with the Lord
> your God, a covenant the Lord is making with you this day and sealing with an oath, to
> confirm you this day as his people, that he may be your God as he promised you and as
> he swore to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

This passage records one of the most significant formal covenantal worship gatherings in the

whole of Scripture. Daniel Block, in *The NIV Application Commentary* for Deuteronomy,

affirms this, writing that Moses in this account "provides the longest catalogue of participants in

a formal religious event in the entire Old Testament."[66] Herein is a distinct example of a

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[65] Robert E. Webber, *Worship Old and New* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009), Kindle Ed., Loc 225-243 of 5241.

[66] Daniel I. Block, *The NIV Application Commentary: Deuteronomy* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2012), 677.

generational gathering of God's people: "your leaders and chief men … your elders … all the other men of Israel, together with your children and your wives."

2 Chronicles

Next is 2 Chronicles 20, where we find another example of a formal worship gathering of God's people—from youngest to oldest—during the reign of King Jehoshaphat. Jehoshaphat was one of the kings of Judah who "did what was right in the eyes of the LORD" (2 Chronicles 20:32). When a vast army of Moabites and Ammonites descended upon Judah, Jehoshaphat "resolved to inquire of the LORD, and he proclaimed a fast for all Judah" (20:3). Then the people came from all over Judah to seek the Lord's help. The Chronicler describes the scene: "All the men of Judah, with their wives and children and little ones, stood there before the LORD" (20:13). When all are gathered, Jehoshaphat cries out to God for help, ending his prayer with these powerful words: "We do not know what to do, but our eyes are on you" (20:12b).

Then the Bible records: "the Spirit of the LORD came upon Jahaziel son of Zechariah," who prophesied: "You will not have to fight this battle. Take up your positions; stand firm and see the deliverance the LORD will give you, O Judah and Jerusalem. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged. Go out and face them tomorrow, and the LORD will be with you" (20:14a, 17). God, as always, was true to His word: "When the men of Judah came to the place that overlooks the desert and looked toward the vast army, they saw only dead bodies lying on the ground; no one had escaped" (20:24). Allen and Ross share these words regarding this story of God's deliverance: "What a day! Threatened by powerful enemies, the children, parents, aunts, uncles, cousins, grandparents, brothers, sisters, neighbors, friends—everyone—heard their king entreat Yahweh, and then heard the Lord respond through a prophet. The events of this

memorable day were experienced en masse, then told and retold to the generations yet unborn, even to this present day."[67]

<center>Nehemiah</center>

A third passage is found in Nehemiah 7:73b – 8:12, near the end of Old Testament chronology, during the post-exilic period after the Jews had returned from captivity to Jerusalem to rebuild the wall.[68] In Nehemiah 8:2-3, we read these words: "So on the first day of the seventh month Ezra the priest brought the Law before the assembly, which was made up of men and women and all who were able to understand. He read it aloud from daybreak till noon as he faced the square before the Water Gate in the presence of the men, women and others who could understand. And *all the people* (emphasis added) listened attentively to the Book of the Law." It is also significant that sometime later in Nehemiah, when the newly rebuilt wall of Jerusalem was dedicated, Ezra records these words: "And on that day they offered great sacrifices, rejoicing because God had given them great joy. *The women and children also rejoiced* (emphasis added). The sound of rejoicing in Jerusalem could be heard far away" (Neh. 12:43). Again, Vanderwell comments: "When Nehemiah led them in rebuilding the wall of Jerusalem after their return from exile, Ezra called them together as an intergenerational congregation."[69]

<center>**The New Testament**</center>

We also find a precedent for an intergenerational model of worship and ministry in the New Testament. Christianity finds its roots in Judaism;[70] therefore, many of the Hebraic familial

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[67] Allen and Ross, 79.

[68] "Book Introduction: Ezra and Nehemiah," in *The NIV Study Bible,* Kenneth L. Barker, ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2008), Kindle Ed., Loc 101450-101591 of 406168.

[69] Vanderwell, 22.

[70] Bruce L. Shelley, *Church History in Plain Language* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2013), 4.

and liturgical customs naturally translated over to early Christian churches. Allen and Ross affirm this: "The first-century churches were multigenerational entities, with children present for worship, healings, prayer meetings, even perhaps when persecutions were perpetrated. Inherent in these communities was a radical mutuality and interdependence which crossed age boundaries, a feature consistently stressed by the New Testament writers."[71] Although New Testament writers only sparsely record specific worship gatherings, the Gospels, the Book of Acts, and the Pauline Epistles do offer some insight toward a precedent of IGW and ministry.

The Gospels

First, the Gospels. It is appropriate at this juncture to revisit an earlier statement that a specific rationale for intergenerationality in worship and spiritual formation does not appear anywhere in the Bible, nor does a detailed biblical IGW methodology. Yet woven into the warp and woof of Scripture is a clear holistic precedent for intergenerationality in all aspects of life, including worship and spiritual formation. Allan Harkness clarifies:

> The books of the Bible were written in historico-cultural contexts, generally as occasional documents addressing specific concerns. Because the faith communities of both the Old Testament and New Testament were naturally intergenerational communities, the comparative silence on major concerns relating to the intergenerational principle may lead us to reasonably assume that they were functioning adequately as such. In the light of this, the number of intergenerational interactions "coincidentally" recorded is heartening rather than discouraging.[72]

Perhaps the greatest example of the concept of intergenerationality in the Gospels is that of Jesus spending time with children. Cynthia Westfall writes, "Jesus stressed the importance and value of children. It was traditional in the Jewish culture to value children. Children were a

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[71] Allen and Ross, 82.

[72] Allan G. Harkness, "Intergenerationality: Biblical and Theological Foundations," *Christian Education Journal,* Series 3, Vol. 9, No. 1 (Spring 2012): 123.

blessing from the Lord, and producing children was an act of obedience to the biblical mandate in Gen. 1:28 to 'be fruitful and multiply.'"[73] Christ's most notable interactions with children center around His teachings on "kingdom community."[74] A prime illustration of this is found in Matthew 19:13-14, where Matthew records: "Then little children were brought to Jesus for him to place his hands on them and pray for them. But the disciples rebuked those who brought them. Jesus said, 'Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.'" Furthermore, Jesus declares in Mark 10:15, "I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it."

These remarkable teachings flew in the face of the Greco-Roman culture of Jesus' day, in which children had low status and no power in society, and infants often were treated as expendable.[75] Jesus, with these words, sets the bar for the manner of humility and faith necessary for kingdom inclusion. He speaks not of a *childish* faith, but rather, a *childlike* faith that demonstrates through its vulnerability a deep dependence upon God. In promulgating childlikeness as a prerequisite for God's kingdom community, one may reasonably assume that adults will begin to reflect these childlike qualities through consistent, meaningful interactions with those who best demonstrate these qualities—namely, children.[76] There is an extraordinary precept embedded into this concept: True intergenerationality entails mutual interaction across age groups in which participants both give to and receive from those of other ages. Jesus loved and embraced children, and calls us to learn from them.

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[73] Cynthia Long Westfall, "Family in the Gospels and Acts," in *Family in the Bible: Exploring Customs, Culture, and Context,* Richard S. Hess and M. Daniel Carroll R., eds. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2003), 126.

[74] Harkness, 123.

[75] Westfall, 127.

[76] Harkness, 124.

Many of the Pauline Epistles reveal that in the early church the generations met together in homes.[77] Several whole families, including the extended family and household servants, would gather together in "house churches" where all generations would break bread, pray together, sit under apostolic teaching, and minister to one another in the context of the home (Acts 2:46-47; 4:32-35; 16:31-34). As the church grew, this of course necessitated larger facilities to gather in, but the genesis of the Christian Church[78] took place in the homes of faithful believers and their families, from children to the elderly. These included Mary's house church in Acts 12:12 (this was Mary the mother of John Mark, who later accompanied Paul and Barnabas on their first missionary journey); Lydia's house church in Acts 16:40; Priscilla and Aquila's house church in Romans 16:3-5; Nympha's house church in Colossians 4:15; and, Philemon and Apphia's house church in Philemon 1-2.

In addition to multigenerational house churches, the Apostle Paul's letters, written to churches in Asia Minor, address believers across the span of life. The fact that these letters were addressed to specific churches, and that Paul directs his comments to men, women, and children, speaks to the intergenerational nature of these gatherings. When Paul's letters made their way to these church locales, all ages listened as his divinely-inspired words were read to wives and husbands: "Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord" and "Husbands, love your wives as Christ loved the church" (Eph. 5:22, 25); to slaves and masters: "Slaves, obey your earthly

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[77] Robert J. Banks, *Paul's Idea of Community: Spirit and Culture in Early House Churches* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2020), 29-31.

[78] The term "Christian Church" refers to the community of those who profess faith in Jesus Christ. In the New Testament it is used in a limited sense for local communities, and in a universal sense for all believers. Within the scope of this thesis project, "Christian Church" also encompasses the concept of the "Church Universal" or "Invisible Church," signifying all who truly believe in Jesus Christ and are the recipients of salvation (the elect), both those who are currently alive and those who have died. See Donald K. McKim, *The Westminster Dictionary of Theological Terms, Second Edition* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2014), 53, 169.

masters with respect and fear" and "Masters, treat your slaves in the same way. Do not threaten them" (Eph. 6:5, 9); and, to children and parents: "Children, obey your parents in everything" and "Fathers, do not embitter your children" (Col. 3:20, 21).

The Progression of Generational Segregation in the Local Church

Perhaps more than any other institution in the annals of history, the Christian Church has undergone seminal moments of transformation throughout the centuries of her existence.[79] Some of these moments—such as the First Council of Nicaea, the Council of Trent, the Protestant Reformation, and the Great Awakenings—may be understood as true landmarks which served to forever change the scope and essence of the Christian Church. While history has proven some changes to be catalysts for productive unity, others have been marked by the disunity and division they have fostered, whether intentionally or unintentionally. Such is the case with churches and pastors that have chosen to segregate their generational cohorts in the corporate worship experience, which is the one place and time in the life of the local church the generations should be together.[80] Indeed, even beyond the generational aspect, the corporate worship experience, through the power of the Holy Spirit, has the potential to unite those of differing social statuses, backgrounds, cultures, and ethnicities. Vernon Whaley affirms this:

> Thus is the dynamic of corporate worship—people of diverse and broad cultural backgrounds, life experiences, and personal preferences declaring genuine love and devotion to God, together! … What makes biblical worship dynamic is that it emerges out of a genuine hunger to know and express love for God together—in one mind, in one accord. Such worship begins in the hearts of many individuals and is expressed to God collectively. The optimal word is *together*.[81]

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[79] Jackson W. Carroll and Wade Clark Roof, *Bridging Divided Worlds: Generational Cultures in Congregations* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2002), 88; and Shelley, *Church History in Plain Language,* Prologue.

[80] Frazier, 57.

[81] Vernon M. Whaley, *The Dynamics of Corporate Worship* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2001), 15.

Sadly, the truth of Whaley's words was lost at some point within the recent history of the local church. As pastors and other church leaders began to adopt the societal trend toward ageism and consumerism, *togetherness* yielded to a "have it your way" mentality wherein consumer-driven individuals shopped around for the church that seemed most to their liking at any given moment.[82] The result was a smorgasbord of generationally-segregated worship services, with designations such as traditional, contemporary, postmodern, seeker, blended, and a plethora of other consumeristic labels. In this section of the Literature Review, the progression of this journey toward generational segregation as it relates to the corporate worship life and ministry of the church will be traced and evaluated.

Congregational Models in American History

For the vast majority of its roughly two-thousand-year existence, the Christian Church has largely practiced a sense of multigenerational inclusiveness within its congregations. In fact, it has only been within the last hundred years or so that societal and cultural changes have gradually fostered the practice of churches separating families and segregating generational cohorts in corporate worship.[83] Nevertheless, it is prudent here to briefly examine church history, with a particular focus on American churches from the early years of the country's formation to the present day. Brooks Holifield, in his treatise, "Toward a History of American Congregations," imparts four congregational models that emerged during this time.[84]

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[82] Frank S. Page and L. Lavon Gray, *Hungry for Worship: Challenges and Solutions for Today's Church* (Birmingham, AL: New Hope Publishers, 2014), Kindle Ed., Loc 439 of 2750.

[83] Allen and Ross, 30.

[84] E. Brooks Holifield, "Toward a History of American Congregations," in *American Congregations, Vol. 2: New Perspectives in the Study of Congregations*, James P. Wind and James W. Lewis, eds. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 23-53.

First, the *comprehensive* congregation,[85] which was the primary model from the early

years of settlement in America to roughly the late 1700s. As the name implies, these churches

comprehensively encompassed an entire community. The comprehensive congregation's primary

reason for existence was the conducting of public worship—there were by and large no Sunday

schools or other church organizations or programs. These churches also functioned as public

institutions, giving aid to the poor within their communities as well as exercising discipline.

As the American nation grew and towns became cities, the comprehensive congregation

gave way to the *devotional* congregation.[86] Unlike the comprehensive congregational model, for

which the ideal was to have only one congregation per community, the rise of the devotional

congregation resulted in the proliferation of multiple congregations of differing denominations in

a single town or city. Within these more diverse congregations, a variety of new patterns and

programs were developed, including Sunday schools, prayer meetings, mission societies, and

more varied music and worship styles. Unfortunately, the diversity within these local

congregations often led to a competitive atmosphere and social class distinctions.

In the larger cities, a third congregational model emerged near the end of the nineteenth

century, known as the *social* congregation.[87] This model might well be labeled the "seven-days-

a-week" church because of its full weekly calendar of social gatherings and ministry

engagements, many of which were generationally-based (youth groups, girls' guilds, boys'

brigades, and the like). The social congregation sought to meet the physical needs of its

community through the proliferation of various social ministries, and the spiritual needs of its

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[85] Holifield, 28.

[86] Ibid., 33.

[87] Ibid., 38.

community via outreach activities and worship services rich with congregational singing, prayer, and Bible reading.

It should be noted here that intergenerationality and family cohesiveness within the corporate worship experience was inherent in Holifield's comprehensive, devotional, and social congregational models, although the social congregation served as a forerunner to generationally-segregated worship models.[88] As has already been established, this was overwhelmingly the case in both the Jewish and Christian tradition as well, from the time of the patriarchal age until roughly the 1960s. It was around this time that Holifield's final congregational model emerged, which he labels the *participatory* model.[89]

The participatory congregation is characteristic of many present-day churches, in that its programs and ministries are designed to address the needs and desires of a progressively more diverse, educated, and secularized congregation. It is within the realm of the participatory model that concepts and terms such as "seeker-sensitive," "church marketing," and the "church-growth movement" originated.[90] It is also within the chronology of this model that two youth-centered organizations—Jim Rayburn's Young Life and Billy Graham's Youth for Christ—appeared on

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[88] Carroll and Roof, 104-107.

[89] Holifield, 43.

[90] Holifield lists the approximate chronological timetable of the participatory congregational model as 1950-1990 (43). Willow Creek Church was founded October 12, 1975 in South Barrington, Illinois, by Dave Holmbo and Bill Hybels, and is generally recognized as the first church to practice and promulgate what has since become known as the seeker-sensitive movement. Most theologians and church-growth experts affirm Donald A. McGavran as the father of the church-growth movement. Furthermore, McGavran's 1955 book, *The Bridges of God,* is widely acknowledged as the Magna Carta of this movement. Although the seeds of the concept of church marketing were planted by McGavran, they came to full fruition in 1988 when George Barna published his groundbreaking and controversial book, *Marketing the Church.* See Gary L. McIntosh, "Why Church Growth Can't Be Ignored," in *Evaluating the Church-Growth Movement: 5 Views,* Paul E. Engle and Gary L. McIntosh, eds. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2004), Kindle Edition, Loc 63-458 of 4300; and Michael S. Hamilton, "Willow Creek's Place in History," *Christianity Today: CT Archives,* November 13, 2000, Vol. 44, No. 13, accessed June 21, 2020, https://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2000/november13/5.62.html.

the scene.[91] The goal of these parachurch ministries was laudable and is well-expressed in Young

Life's Mission Statement: "To introduce adolescents to Jesus Christ and to help them grow in

their faith."[92]

Nevertheless, as local congregations imported and implemented the relational strategies

of these and other youth-based parachurch organizations, including the gradual development of

attractional ministry models and entertainment-driven music and worship methodologies, the

Church in effect segregated the youth cohort from the rest of the congregation. In many

churches, youth became completely disengaged with "adult" church and felt very out of place

once they graduated from high school. Rather than benefitting from formative intergenerational

relationships, they were instead relegated to the youth room.[93] Certainly, peer-to-peer interaction

is important and necessary within the scope of ministry to teenagers, but a well-balanced youth

ministry will also emphasize and foster strong intergenerational connections.[94]

During the latter years of the twentieth century, this practice of segregating teenagers

from the rest of the church came to its full fruition. More and more churches began hiring

pastoral ministers dedicated solely to youth ministry and pouring a great deal of time and

resources into creative programming designed to draw large numbers of both churched and

unchurched youth.[95] And on the surface, these programming methodologies and attractional

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[91] Mark DeVries, *Family-Based Youth Ministry* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2004), 23-24; and Dave Wright, "A Brief History of Youth Ministry," *The Gospel Coalition,* April 02, 2012, accessed June 08, 2020, https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/a-brief-history-of-youth-ministry/.

[92] Wright.

[93] Ibid.

[94] Walker, 74.

[95] Jamie R. Coates, "Join the Band: Benefits of Engaging Intergenerational Volunteers in the Local Church Worship Ministry," DWS Thesis, Liberty University, April 2019, 27; and DeVries, 23-24.

ministry models were highly successful in drawing large numbers of teenagers to churches.[96]

Nonetheless, the unhealthy trend of segregating the youth of the church from the rest of the Body

of Christ not only continued, but increased—and not only from the church as a whole, but even

from their own families. As Walter Surdacki, former youth pastor and now Associate Professor

of Bible at Lipscomb University, writes: "In the life of most congregations, although dynamic

things are being done in training individuals in their faith, no forum exists in which parents and

children interact *together* in faith-focused activities."[97]

An early warning cry was sounded by former youth pastor Stuart Cummings-Bond in

"The One-Eared Mickey Mouse," an article he wrote for *YouthWorker Journal* in Fall of 1989.

In this article, Cummings-Bond posits, "Churches with strong youth programs have usually

controlled adolescence by corralling it not within the daily rhythm of the church, but outside

it."[98] Cummings-Bond goes on to express the need for adolescents to hear the "secrets of

adulthood" through intergenerational spiritual formation.[99] A youth ministry that separates teens

from the rest of the church begins to see church only from a youth-ministry perspective, which

makes it all but impossible to successfully transition post-high school youth to a "normal" church

experience.[100]

There is hope on the horizon, although it has been a long time coming. Holly Allen and

Chris Barnett wrote in 2018: "Community churches, emerging churches, evangelical churches,

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[96] Steven Bonner, "Understanding the Changing Adolescent," in *Adoptive Youth Ministry: Integrating Emerging Generations into the Family of Faith,* Chap Clark, ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2016), 35.

[97] Walter Surdacki, "Remembering the Family in Youth Ministry," *Leaven,* Vol. 10, Issue 1, Article 5 (Spring 2002): 1.

[98] Stuart Cummings-Bond, "The One-Eared Mickey Mouse," *YouthWorker Journal* 6 (Fall 1989): 78.

[99] Ibid.

[100] Chap Clark, "The Strategy of Adoptive Youth Ministry," in *Adoptive Youth Ministry: Integrating Emerging Generations into the Family of Faith,* Chap Clark, ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2016), 17-18.

mainline churches, missional churches, charismatic churches, Catholic churches—all types of

Christian communities—are lamenting the silos created by age-segregated ministries. Leaders

are now asking, 'How can we bring the generations back together?'"[101] And almost all IGW

proponents agree that one of the pivotal answers to this question must involve a careful

examination and evaluation of a church's corporate worship style. Therefore, in the next section

of this Literature Review, five of the most commonly-adopted corporate worship models[102] will

be studied. Furthermore, the intergenerational implications of each of these models will be

examined and explicated.

Five Common Models of Corporate Worship

"Worship" and "war" are two words that should never be mentioned in the same

sentence. Yet, differing worship models or styles within the scope of the Christian Church have

proven to be one of the most contentious and divisive factors in all of ecclesiology and

liturgiology.[103] And although each generation might assume worship wars are something new,

they are sadly as timeless as worship itself.[104] Although this has been true of theological issues

for centuries, most recently the dissonance and disagreements have been fueled via the various

musical genres, philosophies, and methodologies used in the corporate worship spectrum—as

author and Presbyterian minister Terry Johnson writes, "The current divisions over music are at

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[101] Allen and Barnett, 17.

[102] J. Matthew Pinson, "Introduction," in *Perspectives on Christian Worship: 5 Views,* J. Matthew Pinson, ed. (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2009), Kindle Ed., Loc 73 of 7341.

[103] Paul A. Basden, "Introduction," in *Exploring the Worship Spectrum: 6 Views,* Paul E. Engle and Paul A. Basden, eds. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2004), 11.

[104] Timothy Quill, "Liturgical Worship," in *Perspectives on Christian Worship: 5 Views,* J. Matthew Pinson, ed. (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2009), Kindle Ed., Loc 569-579 of 7341.

the heart of our worship wars."[105] Of course, those who would passionately argue and debate

over which worship or musical style is "correct" are completely misunderstanding the biblical

function of corporate worship in the first place. Ed Stetzer and Thom Rainer impart profound

clarity to this truth in their book, *Transformational Church:*

> Current worship wars have two sides. One is driven by what is believed to be relevance.
> What kind of musical style will connect with the people we are trying to reach and
> encourage true worship? The other side is represented by those who feel that reverence is
> the key element for worship. The first group is trying to pull the church forward (from
> their perspective). The second is trying to push the church back to a more reverent style.
> The pushing and pulling is the problem. A right or wrong side does not exist. In most
> cases the pushers and the pullers have missed the point. Additionally, both pushers and
> pullers are causing unnecessary division in the church and damage to the testimony of
> Christians. We should all remember that worship is as timeless as God.[106]

Nonetheless, pastors and other church leaders who purpose to embrace and practice true

intergenerationality in their church must wrestle with this issue of worship style and eventually

determine which worship model will be most likely to facilitate an authentic sense of unity and

camaraderie within the full generational gamut of their church's worshiping community.[107] But

this is a task easier said than done. Humanity is bent toward selfishness and self-worship—the

Bible is rife with narratives to support this fact, even from the dawn of creation.[108] We want it

our way, which is, of course, the "right" way. Indeed, Kevin DeYoung and Ted Kluck, in their

book *Why We're Not Emergent,* claim that every generation tends to think they "are superior to

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[105] Terry L. Johnson, *Reformed Worship: Worship That Is According to Scripture* (Greenville, SC: Reformed Academic Press, 2000), 35.

[106] Ed Stetzer and Thom S. Rainer, *Transformational Church: Creating a New Scorecard for Congregations* (Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2010), 159.

[107] Allen and Ross, 195-197.

[108] G. K. Beale, *We Become What We Worship: A Biblical Theology of Idolatry* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2008), 146-147.

every preceding generation."[109] Therefore, achieving a genuine sense of intergenerationality in the corporate worship experience will necessitate an abundance of selflessness and humility from each generation. And this is especially true concerning worship style.

Liturgical Worship

To some, the term "liturgical" conjures thoughts of cathedrals, stained glass, pipe organs, and reverence. To others, it denotes formality and lifelessness, a "going through the motions," so to speak. Even Paul Zahl, Rector of All Saints Episcopal Church in Chevy Chase, Maryland, and a proponent for liturgical worship, admits: "Liturgical worship can easily come across as chilly and alienating."[110] Yet consider the Cambridge English Dictionary's definition of liturgical: "Relating to … the words, music, and actions used in ceremonies in some religions, especially Christianity."[111] With this understanding, it becomes evident that every church is "liturgical" in some form or fashion. Bruce Benedict, founder of *Cardiphonia Music* and Chaplain of Worship and Arts at Hope College in Holland, Michigan, clarifies: "For many of us *liturgy* is a word that comes with a lot of baggage. Often, perhaps unfairly … it is associated with dead ritual and with worship that is devoid of the power and presence of the Holy Spirit. But every worship service is liturgical, whether we admit it or not. Every worship experience, in its order and content, is an expression of the congregation's liturgy."[112]

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[109] Kevin DeYoung and Ted Kluck, *Why We're Not Emergent (By Two Guys Who Should Be)* (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2008), 11.

[110] Paul F. M. Zahl, "Formal-Liturgical Worship," in *Exploring the Worship Spectrum: 6 Views,* Paul E. Engle and Paul A. Basden, eds. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2004), 31.

[111] *Cambridge English Dictionary, s.v.* "liturgical," accessed June 13, 2020, https://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/liturgical.

[112] Bruce Benedict, "The Worship Leader and Liturgy," in *Doxology and Theology: How the Gospel Forms the Worship Leader,* Matt Boswell, ed. (Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2013), 121.

Regardless of this truth, there nevertheless remains a tradition of liturgical worship that has gone largely unchanged from the infancy of the Christian Church until today. Timothy Quill, Professor of Pastoral Ministry and Missions at Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne, Indiana, imparts six distinctives of this historic liturgical worship.[113]

First, there are a variety of forms among the great liturgical families of Christendom, including Roman Catholic, Anglican, Lutheran, Episcopal, Orthodox, and an array of others. However, all forms of traditional Christian liturgy share a common two-part structure: The Service of the Word, which focuses on hearing Holy Scripture and preaching, and the Service of Holy Communion, which focuses on eating the Lord's Supper.[114] Christ is present in Word and sacrament, and in them He bestows gifts of forgiveness of sin, eternal life, and salvation.

Second, the Liturgy is profoundly biblical.[115] Scripture, and in particular the doctrine of justification, shape and inform the content and structure of the Liturgy. Therefore, it is Trinitarian, Christological, sacramental, and eschatological in nature. The vast majority of the text of the Liturgy—including Scripture Readings, Psalms, Introits, Graduals, Versicles and Responses, Canticles, Blessings, and more—is, word-for-word, directly from the Bible. The reason for this is that right thinking about God, Christ, and the condition of the human race is essential in forming and creating worship.[116] Thus, worshipers are not encountering man's words as they hear, speak, and sing the Liturgy, but the very Word of God, inspired by the Holy Spirit.

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[113] Quill, Loc 423-1465.

[114] Ibid., Loc 434.

[115] Ibid., Loc 528.

[116] Zahl, 25.

Third, the Liturgy adheres to the Church Year and Lectionary.[117] Or, as Zahl so aptly

conveys, liturgical worship "rules out the approach that makes it up as you go along."[118] The

liturgical church year orders corporate worship and the Christian life around the person of Christ

and His saving deeds, and celebrates what He did and still does for His Church. The lectionary,

which is a book or list of lections (liturgical readings) for the church year,[119] assures worshipers

that the church will proclaim the entire counsel of God and all the saving deeds of Christ. It is

based on Christ's life, work, and nature, and the belief that the risen Lord Jesus is truly present

among His people.

Fourth, the Liturgy serves as a common confession and fosters global Christian unity.[120]

Worshipers who participate in liturgical worship are able to engage even when visiting a church

in another part of the world—they sing common hymns, pray common prayers, and even share

common observances. Furthermore, liturgical churches hold to the same theological confession,

so unlike many autonomous Christian churches, worshipers possess the assurance that the

doctrine they are speaking, singing, and hearing is sound, biblical doctrine.

Fifth, liturgical worship is reverent.[121] The historic Liturgy includes liturgical actions or

ceremonies, and ceremony fosters reverence. For many worshipers more accustomed to

charismatic worship forms, reverence equates to boredom. But worship is not (or at least should

not be) about excitement, fun, and fantasy. Bungee jumping is exciting. Sitting in a pew,

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[117] Quill, Loc 788.

[118] Zahl, 24.

[119] *Merriam-Webster Dictionary, s.v.* "lectionary," accessed June 13, 2020, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/lectionary.

[120] Quill, Loc 760.

[121] Ibid., Loc 565.

standing, kneeling, and bowing may not be exciting but are important—more important than anything else we do in life and anything "fun" that our popular culture might offer.

Finally, the Liturgy has been established by generations and has stood the test of time.[122] For centuries, generation after generation of Christian believers have been nourished and sustained on the Liturgy. The primary theological content of the Liturgy is fundamentally based on the Creeds of the early church fathers (Apostles', Nicene, and Athanasian) and has been tested and doctrinally approved since the age of the early Christian Church.

Music in Liturgical Worship

Zahl affirms that music has almost always been and still is a crucial component of formal-liturgical worship.[123] Historically, many of the musical elements of liturgical worship have centered around the Mass, a central liturgical ritual in which the Eucharist, or Lord's Supper, was a major focal point. The "ordinary" (standard order) of the Mass includes the Introductory Rites, Liturgy of the Word, Liturgy of the Eucharist, and Concluding Rites. In addition to various prayers, readings, the homily (sermon), and of course, the Eucharist, the parts of the ordinary which are almost always sung include the *Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, Sanctus* (sometimes divided into the *Sanctus* and *Benedictus*), and *Agnus Dei*.[124]

Additionally, both Zahl and Quill affirm that liturgical congregations sing traditional hymns almost exclusively. Quill writes, "Liturgical churches sing liturgical hymns … there must therefore be a relationship between the hymn and the liturgy. The hymns ought to have the same goal as the liturgy and the liturgy as the hymns."[125] Zahl further comments that liturgical worship

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[122] Quill, Loc 753.

[123] Zahl, 28.

[124] Bard Thompson, *Liturgies of the Western Church* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1989), 48.

[125] Quill, Loc 1290.

"was, and is in principle, marked also by an appreciation of good music … [and] good music in this particular context usually means the Western canon, and especially hymns."[126] Moreover, most liturgical churches eschew "contemporary" praise music, although to be sure there are exceptions. Quill warns that the church "must be very careful about adopting the styles of contemporary culture," including the "so-called praise music,"[127] and Zahl adds: "Formal-liturgical worship will always, or almost always, require music of quality married to words of substance … much contemporary praise music is repetitive in melody and flaky in text."[128]

<center>Traditional Evangelical Worship</center>

Like "liturgical," the word "evangelical" has the potential to summon strong feelings of both regard and ridicule. In recent years the term "evangelical" has become highly politicized, used to designate a voting bloc or as a blanket label for those with conservative or fundamentalist views. Some figures from within the evangelical movement have dropped the label or even left evangelicalism entirely, coining the term "exvangelical."[129] Yet when politics and predilections are set aside, the simple definition of evangelical is: "of, relating to, or being in agreement with the Christian gospel, especially as it is presented in the four Gospels."[130] In other words, to be evangelical is, among other things, to be Christian.

According to Ligon Duncan, Presbyterian pastor and Chancellor/CEO/Professor of Systematic and Historical Theology at Reformed Theological Seminary in Jackson, Mississippi,

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[126] Zahl, 34.

[127] Quill, Loc 601-954.

[128] Zahl, 29.

[129] CT Editors, "What Does 'Evangelical' Mean?", *Christianity Today,* January 27, 2020, accessed June 27, 2020, https://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2020/january-web-only/evangelical-distinctives.html.

[130] *Merriam-Webster Dictionary, s.v.* "evangelical," accessed June 27, 2020, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/evangelical.

to be evangelical is also to be "radically biblical."[131] Duncan goes on to assert that in churches which practice traditional evangelical worship, the Bible will be read, preached, prayed, sung, and "seen"[132] (that is, the biblical ordinances or sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper will be observed). Furthermore, Duncan posits that traditional evangelical worship strives to help the congregation offer scriptural, simple, spiritual, God-centered, historic, reverent and joyful, mediated, corporate, evangelistic, delightful, active and passive, Lord's Day worship to the living and true God.[133] He unpacks each of these as follows.

First, evangelical worship is scriptural—that is, it is ordered and propelled by Scripture. This is known as the "Regulative Principle," which expresses that God "may not be worshiped according to the imaginations and devices of men, or the suggestions of Satan, under any visible representation, or any other way not prescribed in the holy Scripture."[134]

Next, traditional evangelical worship is simple. Evangelical worship requires no elaborate ritual or prescribed book of common prayer, nor does it necessitate the latest state-of-the-art worship technologies or creative extremes. True evangelical worship, stripped of all unessential encumbrances, is simply spirit-and-truth worship according to Jesus in John 4:23-24.

Traditional evangelical worship is also spiritual. Spirit-gathered, Spirit-dependent, Spirit-engendered, and Spirit-empowered are all apt descriptors for evangelical worship. God the Holy Spirit is the One who generates, facilitates, and energizes the desire and capacity to worship. He ushers us into God's presence and enables us to commune with the Father.

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[131] Ligon Duncan, "Traditional Evangelical Worship," in *Perspectives on Christian Worship: 5 Views,* J. Matthew Pinson, ed. (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2009), Kindle Ed., Loc 2186 of 7341.

[132] Ibid., Loc 2173.

[133] Ibid., Loc 2267-2432.

[134] John Macpherson, n.d., *The Westminster Confession of Faith,* 21.1 (Edinburgh: T & T Clark).

Evangelical worshipers do not meet to merely experience worship, but to worship GOD. In other words, traditional evangelical worship is God-centered. "Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only" [Deut. 6:13a]: there is the heart of the matter … Worship is a transitive verb (a verb that requires a direct object), and the most important thing about it is the direct object.[135]

Traditional evangelical worship is historic worship. It aims for a worship service that would be recognizable to the apostles. It is historic in that it cumulatively connects with the devotional repository of Christian worship through the ages. Evangelical worship is not traditional for tradition's sake, but it doesn't try to reinvent the worship "wheel."

Evangelical worship is both reverent and joyful. Duncan writes, "In some churches there is such an emotional display in worship that reverence is lost completely. In other churches, the congregation appears to have been caught at a stranger's funeral."[136] Both of these worship tendencies fall flat. The aim of evangelical worship is to respond to God with reverence *and* joy.

Apart from the finished work of Christ on the cross, there is no mediator between God and fallen man. It is only through the gospel of Christ—His atoning death and salvific resurrection[137]—that worship is possible. Traditional evangelical worship is a Christ-mediated worship model, through which worshipers approach God through Christ and Christ alone.

Evangelical worship is corporate worship. It is not evangelism, nor even mutual edification, but rather, it is simply a family meeting with God. In the days of the Old Covenant,

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[135] D. A. Carson, "'Worship the Lord Your God': The Perennial Challenge," in *Worship: Adoration and Action,* D. A. Carson, ed. (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 1993), 15.

[136] Duncan, Loc 2332.

[137] Romans 10:9-10, 1 Corinthians 15:1-8

God manifested His special presence at "the tabernacle" or "the temple." In the New Covenant, that special "place" is wherever God's people are gathered.[138]

Evangelical worship is evangelistic. Evangelism is not worship, yet for evangelicals it is always a by-product of true worship. This is seen in Isaiah 6:1-8. God reveals Himself to Isaiah, cleanses his sin, and extends a call to go, then Isaiah responds, "Here am I. Send me!" (8b). Bruce Leafblad asserts: "Every true worship encounter ends with a 'Here am I. Send me!'"[139]

Traditional evangelical worship is delightful. The delight is not found in the worship experience, elements, leadership, or style, but rather, in the *object* of Christian worship—God Himself. As John Piper writes, being satisfied in and treasuring Christ "is tremendously relevant for understanding what worship services should be about."[140]

Traditional evangelical worship is active and passive (or initiative and receptive). There are two expressions of this in evangelical worship. First, in corporate worship we come to bless (praise) and to receive God's blessing (Psalm 134)—to give and to receive. Second, God always initiates worship through His Spirit, and only then may we receive and respond to Him.[141]

Finally, traditional evangelicals believe that every Lord's Day (Sunday), morning and evening worship is vital. Duncan shares the following biblical realities in support of this: 1) The resurrection of Christ; 2) The eternal rest foreshadowed in the Lord's Day; and, 3) The Lord's Day language and observance of the New Testament church.[142]

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[138] Matthew 18:20, John 4:21

[139] Bruce H. Leafblad, "The Design of Worship I: A Basic Pattern" (Class Lecture, "Music in Worship," Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, TX, March 09, 1995).

[140] John Piper, *Brothers, We Are Not Professionals: A Plea to Pastors for Radical Ministry* (Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2013), Kindle Ed., Loc 4038 of 4445.

[141] Isaiah 6:1-8, John 6:44.

[142] Duncan, Loc 2424.

Music in Traditional Evangelical Worship

Much has already been made of the idea that terms such as "liturgical" and "evangelical" fall short of adequately expressing the philosophy and rationale behind models or styles of corporate worship. The issue lies not so much with the words themselves as with the worldviews and cultural contexts of the people interpreting the words. The same can be said of the word "traditional," because one person's tradition is almost certainly likely to be different than another's. For instance, traditional worship for a New Englander in a small Presbyterian church will undoubtedly look and sound much different than traditional worship for an African Methodist Episcopal worshiper in the deep south. Even within the same Protestant denominations, there is a great deal of variety in worship styles and methodologies.

Regardless, "traditional worship" has widely come to be known as the antithesis of "contemporary worship,"[143] which will be explicated more fully in the next section. And as it relates to music, Harold Best conveys that "traditional worship" is most commonly equated with hymns, sung from hymnals, accompanied by keyboard instruments—especially organs (and occasionally, orchestral instruments).[144] So, at the risk of stereotyping, for the purposes of this project Best's description of music used in traditional evangelical worship will suffice.

Contemporary Worship

Before the latter half of the twentieth century, a discussion of common corporate worship models would have included only the previous two categories. The final three have developed out of traditional evangelical perspectives on worship. They largely constitute late twentieth- and

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[143] Swee Hong Lim and Lester Ruth, *Lovin' on Jesus: A Concise History of Contemporary Worship* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2017), 10-11; and Marva J. Dawn, *Reaching Out without Dumbing Down: A Theology of Worship for This Urgent Time* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1995), 3.

[144] Harold M. Best, "Traditional Hymn-Based Worship," in *Exploring the Worship Spectrum: 6 Views,* Paul E. Engle and Paul A. Basden, eds. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2004), 64-74.

early twenty-first-century responses to the conventional traditions of evangelical worship—responses that arose primarily out of the desire to adapt Christian worship to contemporary American culture.[145] As with other worship models discussed heretofore, the mention of the descriptor "contemporary" regarding worship style tends to evoke reactions of ridicule, regard, or even indifference. Detractors would speak in terms of contemporary worship being the bane of everything that had been good, reverent, and decent in church; advocates would draw a sharply contrasting vision of it being the boon to bring revitalization to the church.[146] Some would even say contemporary worship instigated the worship wars of the last few decades—and to be sure, almost as soon as the term "contemporary worship" began to appear in publications, so too writers began to note the worship wars being waged in congregations.[147]

Furthermore, the word "contemporary" fails to holistically express the crux of a particular worship style's principles and practices. Indeed, the word itself is somewhat of a misnomer, at least as it relates to a corporate worship style. The Oxford English dictionary brings light to this premise via its definition of the word: "Belonging to or occurring in the present."[148] So, when a congregation sings a worship song or participates in a worship custom that is even only a few years old, although that congregation may claim a contemporary worship style, its practice of engaging in worship elements which do not belong to or occur "in the present" prove otherwise. Therefore, though contemporary worship might seem to be the newest, "shiniest" type of corporate worship, as Harold Best writes, "The passage of time turns it into a tradition,

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[145] Pinson, Loc 73-76.

[146] Lim and Ruth, 2.

[147] Ibid., 11.

[148] *Oxford English Dictionary, s.v.* "contemporary," accessed July 03, 2020, https://www.lexico.com/en/definition/contemporary.

however new or 'contemporary' it might seem to be."[149] Dan Wilt, longtime worship leader and

founder of worshiptraining.com, affirms and expounds this maxim with these words:

> What most of us think of as being "contemporary worship expression" in our day is
> stagnant in neither form nor style. Our current expressions have been subject to historical
> process, just as every other mode of worship has been since the inception of Christian
> faith. To take a snapshot of contemporary worship and its values would be much like
> pulling out a photo of oneself as a toddler, adolescent, teenager, adult, or senior and
> declaring that photo to be stylistically reflective of who one has been, is now, or is
> becoming. There is simply too much to the human personality trudging through time to
> draw decisive parameters that capture such a "once-and-for-all" glimpse. Contemporary
> worship is a soul in process.[150]

More so than any other corporate worship model referenced here, contemporary worship

expresses the worship style of a great plethora of denominational and non-denominational

entities. The early contemporary worship developments that found their roots in the Jesus People

movement[151] has now cascaded into the twenty-first-century human experience and is

representative of a vast range of forms, liturgies (formal and informal, defined or assumed),

styles, and ministry philosophies within the global scope of the Christian Church.

Conservatively, hundreds of contemporary worship service styles currently exist on the church

map of today, stretched taut from pegs of ethnic backgrounds, stylistic preferences, theological

distinctions, and diverse demographic communities.[152] But where do the commonalities which

serve as identifying characteristics toward a contemporary worship model lie? For the answer to

this question, we turn first to Joe Horness, Worship and Programming Director and Teaching

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[149] Best, 59-60.

[150] Dan Wilt, "Contemporary Worship," in *Perspectives on Christian Worship: 5 Views,* J. Matthew Pinson, ed. (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2009), Kindle Ed., Loc 2843 of 7341.

[151] Lim and Ruth, 22.

[152] Wilt, Loc 2834-2843.

Pastor at Bay Pointe Community Church in Traverse City, Michigan, who shares this straightforward description:

> Contemporary worship endeavors to use modern instrumentation (e.g., guitars, drums, synthesizers, percussion, horns), contemporary musical styles (e.g., rock, jazz, hip hop, rap, gospel), and freshly written or arranged songs (both new choruses and fresh treatments of traditional hymns), in the language of this generation to lead people into authentic expressions of worship and a genuine experience of the presence of God.[153]

Swee Hong Lim, Assistant Professor of Sacred Music at Emmanuel College in the University of Toronto, and Lester Ruth, Research Professor of Christian Worship at Duke Divinity School, Duke University, offer a more detailed and astute analysis via the following nine qualities of contemporary worship, organized into four larger groupings.

The first grouping Lim and Ruth offer is *fundamental presumptions,* which encompasses the first three qualities of contemporary worship: 1) Using contemporary, nonarchaic English; 2) A dedication to relevance regarding contemporary concerns and issues in the lives of worshipers; and, 3) A commitment to adapt worship to match contemporary people, sometimes to the level of strategic targeting. Lim and Ruth's second grouping is *musical,* under which the next three qualities are incorporated: 4) Using musical styles from current types of popular music; 5) Extended times of uninterrupted congregational singing; and, 6) A centrality of the musicians in the liturgical space and in the leadership of the service. The authors' third grouping is *behavioral,* which includes the following qualities: 7) Greater levels of physical expressiveness; and, 8) A predilection for informality. Finally, Lim and Ruth share that a *key dependency* of contemporary worship is: 9) A reliance upon electronic technology.[154]

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[153] Joe Horness, "Contemporary Music-Driven Worship," in *Exploring the Worship Spectrum: 6 Views,* Paul E. Engle and Paul A. Basden, eds. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2004), 102.

[154] Lim and Ruth, 2-3.

Music in Contemporary Worship

In both historical liturgical worship and traditional evangelical worship, music has been established as playing a crucial role.[155] However, any serious examination of contemporary worship quickly reveals that musical philosophies and practices are at the very core of this worship style. Wilt confirms this: "When most of us think about 'contemporary worship,' we think about the music that defines it."[156] Robert Webber adds, "The contemporary church makes *music* the primary communicator of grace."[157] With this understanding—along with an acknowledgment that a simple and ever-so-brief exploration of the types and implementations of music employed in contemporary worship has already been undertaken in the previous paragraphs—little will be added in this section other than to more fully examine one crucial aspect of the music of contemporary worship.

In establishing a timeline for contemporary worship, its genesis may be traced back to the 1960s Jesus People movement, as well as to African American jazz, folk, rhythm and blues, and gospel musical developments of the same period.[158] Then, contemporary worship continued to progress onward through the Maranatha! Music, Vineyard Worship, and Hosanna! Music eras of the 1970s and 80s, during which the publishing and dissemination of contemporary worship music exponentially increased, birthing a new genre of music labeled "Contemporary Christian Music," or "CCM."[159] Finally, the 1983 founding of the Hills Christian Life Centre (now

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[155] Zahl, 28; Quill, Loc 1228-1349; Duncan, Loc 2153-2171; and Best, 68.

[156] Wilt, Loc 2860.

[157] Robert E. Webber, *Enter His Courts with Praise: A Study of the Role of Music and the Arts in Worship* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1997), 53.

[158] Lim and Ruth, 67; and, Robert E. Webber, "Praise and Worship Music: From Its Origins to Contemporary Use," *Pastoral Music,* Vol. 27, Issue 3 (February 2003): 4-6.

[159] Lim and Ruth, 63-65; Webber, "Praise and Worship Music," 5; and Thomas W. Higgins, "Ken Gulliksen, Jon Wimber, and the Founding of the Vineyard Movement," *Pneuma,* Vol. 34, Issue 2 (January 2012): 208-212.

Hillsong Church) in Sydney, Australia's urban Hills district, and the "British Invasion" of worship artists like Graham Kendrick and Matt Redman, were seminal moments in the growth of the contemporary worship movement, moments which have profoundly shaped American contemporary worship music even to this day.[160] Yet despite the differences in the various iterations of contemporary worship over the past several decades, intrinsic within each is the concept that the music of contemporary worship was and is an endeavor to adapt popular music styles of the day to the church. In other words, since its inception, contemporary worship music has, intentionally or otherwise, reflected a cultural contextualization of music in the church.[161]

Whether one judges this as right or wrong depends on the worldview and opinions of the one doing the judging—and herein lies the fundamental cause of the worship wars that were, and to a degree still are, prevalent in the church: Christ versus culture, and more specifically, cultural disengagement versus cultural relevance.[162] These dividing lines are well-expressed in two Scripture passages, both penned by the Apostle Paul. First, in 2 Corinthians 6:17 (KJV), Paul quotes the Prophet Isaiah as he writes, "Wherefore come out from among them [unbelievers], and be ye separate, saith the Lord." The "be ye separate" camp would decry any attempt to enculturate the church, believing to do so would surely lead to a compromised faith, if not a complete departure from it. And indeed, they have a point. Sociologist Alan Wolfe writes,

> Tracing the history of Christian thought from the New Testament to the twentieth century, theologian H. Richard Niebuhr documented the many ways in which Christ could become a transformer of culture. But in the United States, culture has transformed Christ, as well as all other religions found within these shores. In every aspect of

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[160] Lim and Ruth, 73-78; and Tanya Riches and Tom Wagner, "The Evolution of Hillsong Music: From Australian Pentecostal Congregation into Global Brand," *Australian Journal of Communication,* Vol. 39, Issue 1 (January 2012): 20-24.

[161] Wilt, Loc 2871-2890.

[162] Ibid., Loc 2871.

religious life American faith has met American culture and American culture has triumphed.[163]

As a professing agnostic, Wolfe brings a unique perspective to this conversation. Michael Walters, former Pastor and Professor of Christian Ministries at Houghton College in Houghton, New York, provides needed clarity from a mature believer's viewpoint with these words:

> This triumph of modern culture over religion has profoundly influenced the way churches operate within that culture. Because worship is the most public thing most churches do, it would be odd indeed if the church's cultural wrestling match did not manifest itself in liturgy. The problem is that the church has overreacted, conforming itself to the culture rather than responding to it. Cultural commentator Os Guinness … writes, "For all the lofty recent statements on biblical authority, a great part of the evangelical community has made an historical shift, it has transferred authority from *sola scriptura,* by scripture alone, to *sola cultura,* by culture alone."[164]

As Walters referenced, although the "be ye separate" mindset is valid, there is nonetheless a significant danger in this camp's approach. When a church is so repulsed by the standards and issues of the age that it seeks to totally disengage and live as far removed from cultural issues or influences as possible—to "bury its head in the sand," as it were—that church is headed for isolation and irrelevance, states which are not only untenable, but unbiblical.[165]

The second camp's scriptural battle cry is found in the Apostle Paul's words of testimony in 1 Corinthians 9:19-23: "Though I am free and belong to no one, I have made myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible … I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some. I do all this for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its

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[163] Alan Wolfe, *The Transformation of American Religion: How We Actually Live Our Faith* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2003), 2-3.

[164] J. Michael Walters, *Can't Wait for Sunday: Leading Your Congregation in Authentic Worship* (Indianapolis: Wesleyan Publishing House, 2006), Kindle Ed., Loc 154-163 of 3301.

[165] Stuart McAllister, "The Church and Culture in the 21st Century," *Ravi Zacharias International Ministries Digest,* accessed July 17, 2020, https://www.rzim.org/read/just-thinking-magazine/the-church-and-culture-in-the-21st-century.

blessings" (19, 22b-23). The "all things to all people" camp would argue that to remain culturally

relevant, churches must to some degree adapt to their surrounding culture. This is also an appeal

for personal and corporate evangelistic effectiveness—as Paul expressed, he had become "all

things to all people" for the sake of the gospel, that he might "save some." Joe Horness' words

are reflective of this camp's persuasion and modus operandi:

> Jesus has called the church to be a light to a lost world. Especially in today's culture, the music we use to communicate our message plays an enormous part in that effort … [so] we have a choice to make. We can communicate the love of God through music and worship in a style and language that our unchurched friends can relate to and understand, or we can ask them first to enter into, then to understand, and finally to accept a churched culture (including the organ) that has become woefully out of touch with them before we even begin to tell them of Christ.[166]

Of course, as with the "be ye separate" camp's way of thinking, there is certainly validity

in the mindset of the "all things to all people" camp as well, articulated with clarity and

conviction in Horness' words above. But as one might have already surmised, there is also an

inherent danger here for churches: Enthusiasm for cultural relevance may eventually lead to an

ethos of cultural accommodation. In these instances, churches become so enculturated with the

spirit and rationale of the age that they eagerly conform to it and its standards, leading to issues

of adaptation and compromise.[167] The key, as always, is for congregations and church leaders to

find and facilitate a healthy balance between these two camps—a balance which will be

thoughtfully elucidated in the upcoming "Blended Worship" section of this project.

Emerging Worship

Unlike other worship style monikers used here, "emerging" worship tends to rouse few

reactions of commendation or condemnation. A likely reason for this is because, of the five

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[166] Horness, 81.

[167] McAllister.

models of corporate worship addressed in this project section, emerging worship is undoubtedly the newest and least understood.[168] Therefore, the initial portion of this section on emerging worship will seek to provide a better understanding of the word "emerging," as well as how it specifically applies to corporate worship. A basic definition of the adjective "emerging" is "becoming apparent or prominent,"[169] or, according to Dan Kimball, Staff Lead for Mission & Leadership at Vintage Faith Church in Santa Cruz, California, and a proponent of emerging worship, that which is emerging is "what is coming to the surface."[170] Kimball then continues to unfold a brief description of emerging worship: "What I mean by 'emerging worship' is simply expressions of worship that are relating to how people in today's culture communicate, learn, and express their love to God."[171]

Worship consultant, speaker, and author Sally Morgenthaler offers a more substantial portrayal of emerging worship: "At their core, emerging worship services are encounters with God born out of a dual passion for theological rootedness and a deeply transforming connection with a radically deconstructed culture."[172] Morgenthaler further posits that the emerging church "is fascinated with the supernatural and hungry for mystery," "thrives on diversity and craves community," and claims "a profound recognition of personal and societal brokenness."[173]

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[168] Jeff Mallinson, "The Emergent Church," in *The Encyclopedia of Christianity in the United States: Vol. 2,* George Thomas Kurian and Mark A. Lamport, eds. (New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 2016), 784-786; and Andy Crouch, "The Emergent Mystique," *Christianity Today: CT Archives,* November 01, 2004, accessed July 17, 2020, https://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2004/november/12.36.html.

[169] *Oxford English Dictionary, s.v.* "emerging," accessed July 17, 2020, https://www.lexico.com/en/definition/emerging.

[170] Dan Kimball, "Emerging Worship," in *Perspectives on Christian Worship: 5 Views,* J. Matthew Pinson, ed. (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2009), Kindle Ed., Loc 5694 of 7341.

[171] Ibid., Loc 5703.

[172] Sally Morgenthaler, "Emerging Worship," in *Exploring the Worship Spectrum: 6 Views,* Paul E. Engle and Paul A. Basden, eds. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2004), 230.

[173] Ibid., 220-221.

Finally, Eddie Gibbs and Ryan Bolger, fellow professors at Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California, remove any remaining misunderstandings by first offering an overview of the social and cultural practices of emerging churches, noting that "Virtually all these communities support women at all levels of ministry, prioritize the urban over the suburban, speak out politically for justice, serve the poor, and practice fair trade."[174] Then, the authors contribute a decidedly more incisive and scholarly evaluation of the emerging church, one which will serve to inform the majority of this section:

> Emerging churches are communities that practice the way of Jesus within postmodern cultures. This definition encompasses the nine practices. Emerging churches (1) identify with the life of Jesus, (2) transform the secular realm, and (3) live highly communal lives. Because of these three activities, they (4) welcome the stranger, (5) serve with generosity, (6) participate as producers, (7) create as created beings, (8) lead as a body, and (9) take part in spiritual activities.[175]

Gibbs and Bolger proceed to meticulously develop these nine practices in Chapters 3-11 of their book, *Emerging Churches: Creating Christian Community in Postmodern Cultures.* The following paragraphs serve to expound these practices.

First, emerging congregations identify with the life of Jesus. In concrete terms, emerging church leaders look to Jesus as the one who initiated the work of the kingdom in Israel, and their hope is to point to the kingdom through their communal practices in postmodern culture today.[176] Second, the emerging church transforms the secular realm. Sacralization, the process of making all of life sacred, represents the interaction of kingdom and culture. Emerging churches tear

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[174] Eddie Gibbs and Ryan K. Bolger, *Emerging Churches: Creating Christian Community in Postmodern Cultures* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2005), 10.

[175] Ibid., 44-45.

[176] Ibid., 47.

down the church practices that foster a secular mindset, namely, that there are secular spaces, times, or activities. To emerging churches, all of life must be made sacred.[177]

The last of this initial triad of practices is that emerging congregations live highly communal lives. The emerging church creates a space for the kingdom to come, teaching that being a member of the church means first and foremost identification with Christ and His community of followers. It also examines the practice of peoplehood, which essentially contends that the church is primarily a *people,* not simply a *place* to meet.[178]

Fourth, emerging congregations welcome the stranger. Emerging churches embrace the practice of welcoming the outsider and including those who are different. Emerging churches are deeply influenced by teachings on the kingdom, and at the heart of the kingdom practice of Jesus is the practice of inclusion.[179] Next, emerging church congregants serve with generosity. Hospitality is manifested in emerging churches as members seek to serve those both inside and outside their communities in all spheres of life. Emerging churches largely reject the economic rules prevalent in culture and practice hospitality by serving with generosity.[180] Sixth, emerging church worshipers participate as producers. In emerging worship, full participation means bringing all that we have to God. We bring our world, our context, our material reality to God as an offering. The insights offered by emerging churches into a participatory, indigenous worship challenge the rigidly maintained sacred/secular division of modernity.[181]

Seventh, emerging congregations create as created beings. Creativity and aesthetics

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[177] Gibbs and Bolger, 65.

[178] Ibid., 89.

[179] Ibid., 117-118.

[180] Ibid., 135.

[181] Ibid., 155.

witness to the dynamic and the beauty of the kingdom of God. Emerging churches participate

with the Creator, utilizing all of creation, sacred and secular, as their canvas.[182] Eighth, emerging

churches lead as a body. Emerging churches, in their attempts to resemble the kingdom, avoid all

types of control in their leadership formation. Leadership has shifted to a more facilitative role as

emerging churches have experimented with the idea of leaderless groups. The leader's role in

such groups is to create a space for activities to occur.[183] Finally, emerging congregations take

part in spiritual activities. Spirituality is a major emphasis in emerging churches. Members of

emerging churches recognize that there is no instant formula— spiritual disciplines have to be

learned through costly exploration. They draw upon a variety of traditions and combine them in a

creative mix.[184]

It is prudent here to note the difference between the *emerging* church and the *emergent*

church. The *emergent* church is an official network of likeminded leaders and churches involved

in one particular stream of the emerging "conversation." Prominent leaders within the emergent

church movement include Tony Jones, Brian McLaren, and Doug Pagitt.[185] Ed Stetzer contends

that those who subscribe to emergent worship are largely "Revisionists" who question (and in

some cases deny) theological issues like the nature of substitutionary atonement, the reality of

hell, the complementarian nature of gender, and the nature of the gospel itself.[186]

Emerging, on the other hand, is the term most often used to describe the much broader

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[182] Gibbs and Bolger, 173.

[183] Ibid., 191.

[184] Ibid., 234.

[185] Justin Taylor, "An Emerging Church Primer," *9Marks,* February 25, 2010, accessed July 18, 2020, https://www.9marks.org/article/emerging-church-primer/#_ftn1; and Mallinson, 785.

[186] Ed Stetzer, "FIRST-PERSON: Understanding the Emerging Church," *Baptist Press,* January 06, 2006, accessed July 19, 2020, http://www.bpnews.net/22406.

movement (or conversation) of those seeking to incarnate and contextualize the gospel for postmodernists. Stetzer imparts two broad categories of those who generally comprise the emerging church: "Relevants," who are still committed to a biblical theology of worship and the church, but are genuinely just trying to make their worship, music, and outreach more contextual to emerging culture; and "Reconstructionists," who typically hold to a more orthodox view of the gospel and Scripture but feel that the current form of church is frequently irrelevant and the structure is unhelpful.[187]

It is equally prudent to point out that emerging worship and the emerging church was created from the ground up to reach out and relate to postmodernists, and really, "Post-Everythings,"[188] most of whom are the youth and young adults this project focuses on. In fact, Tim Keller writes, "'Post-everything' people are those who are now in their teens and twenties—and they are our future."[189] The ramifications of this point are vital to the purpose of this project and will be discussed further in the "Intergenerational Implications" section below.

Music in Emerging Worship

Music is a significant part of most emerging worship gatherings.[190] The reason is that music has been and continues to be a profoundly influential aspect of the lives of emerging generations. However, as opposed to contemporary worship, there is a strong emphasis in the majority of emerging churches to embrace and practice a more holistic view of the arts in worship. Morgenthaler notes that emerging worship "draws upon the entire creation—all the arts,

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[187] Stetzer, "FIRST-PERSON: Understanding the Emerging Church."

[188] Timothy Keller, "Post-Everythings," *The Gospel Coalition,* August 06, 2008, accessed July 18, 2020, https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/scotty-smith/post-everythings/.

[189] Ibid.

[190] Kimball, Loc 5954.

not just music" to tell God's story and bring worshipers into a participatory relationship with God.[191] Furthermore, Kimball notes that in his church, an emerging congregation, "It is important to define worship as being more than just the music. We are constantly saying 'musical worship' to remind people that there are also other aspects of worship."[192]

Gibbs and Bolger extend a reminder that emerging churches seek to incarnate, embody, and express the gospel beyond print culture, beyond the linear approach of modernity. For example, in emerging church services, they play "secular" music but alter the meaning (not necessarily the words) of those songs. Thus, church resembles the rest of their lives. Instead of profaning the church, secular music becomes holy, and therefore the rest of their lives becomes holy as well. For alternative worshipers (those connected to the alternative worship movement in the U.K.), music is Christian when they glorify God with it, not because of the lyrics or because a Christian wrote it or played it.[193]

Beyond this, one might say that the general mindset of the emerging church as it concerns music would be, "anything goes," albeit with a purpose.[194] A Taizé chant one might encounter in a liturgical worship setting, or a hymn sung in a traditional evangelical worship gathering (though likely sans organ), or the latest upbeat *Hillsong Worship* radio hit included in a contemporary worship song set would not be considered "out of place" in an emerging or emergent church.[195] Since it has previously been established that emerging churches make

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[191] Morgenthaler, 210.

[192] Kimball, Loc 5989.

[193] Gibbs and Bolger, 71.

[194] Gerardo Marti and Gladys Ganiel, *The Deconstructed Church: Understanding Emerging Christianity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 132.

[195] Kimball, Loc 5964-5982; and Mallinson, 785.

concerted efforts to be relevant to "people in today's culture,"[196] i.e., younger generations, logic and common sense would lead one to assume that current sacred and secular musical styles and genres would comprise a significant portion of the music used in emerging churches. But as Mallinson writes, emerging churches also widely embrace the practice of "re-appropriating" ancient liturgies and liturgical elements, which, in addition to practices like lighting incense, iconography, and *Lectio Divina* (a method of praying with the scriptures that includes the four steps of reading, meditation, contemplation, and prayer),[197] would also include "modernizing" various types of ancient music.[198]

<center>Blended Worship</center>

Blended worship is included last in this section, but not because of its chronology, since it came into existence prior to the "emergence" of emerging worship (though not by many years).[199] Rather, it serves as a proper capstone for this section on corporate worship models because, as its title suggests, it offers a blend or balance of the stylistic forms and methodologies developed in the previous four models—indeed, an equally-suitable label for blended worship might well be "balanced" worship.

Naturally, this begs the question: "Exactly *what* is being blended or balanced in this worship model?" Michael Lawrence, Lead Pastor at Hinson Baptist Church in Portland, Oregon,

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[196] Kimball, Loc 5703.

[197] Antoine Lawlor, "Ever Ancient, Ever New: The Art and Practice of *Lectio Divina,*" excerpts from *Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2nd Edition* (Washington, D.C.: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2009), 1.

[198] Mallinson, 785.

[199] Constance Cherry, "Blended Worship: What It Is, What It Isn't," *Reformed Worship,* RW 55 (March 2000), accessed July 25, 2020, https://www.reformedworship.org/article/march-2000/blended-worship-what-it-what-it-isnt; and Robert E. Webber, "Blended Worship," in *Exploring the Worship Spectrum: 6 Views,* Paul E. Engle and Paul A. Basden, eds. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2004), 178.

and Mark Dever, Senior Pastor at Capitol Hill Baptist Church in Washington, D.C., offer an informed response, but before doing so, they first impart what blended worship is not:

First, blended worship is not *a blending of truths or truth-perspectives.*[200] In other words, syncretism has no place in a proper understanding of blended worship. Many emerging church leaders demonstrate a genuine concern toward reaching postmodernists with the gospel, which is commendable. But in expressing this concern, some go too far in that they are willing to draw on ideas from outside evangelical, or even Christian, perspectives and blend those perspectives into their church's worship and liturgy. True blended worship is unadulterated in its biblicity.

Next, blended worship is not [necessarily] *a blending of diverse theological and liturgical traditions.*[201] Certainly, there is much to be said for constructive dialogue between those of differing theological traditions. However, behind every distinct liturgy or "order of service," behind every decision to include certain elements of worship and to reject others, and behind many (though not all) decisions about the form those elements take, lies a theology about who God is and how He relates to lost sinners through the good news of the gospel. For instance, the reason Catholic, Orthodox, Lutheran, and some Anglican priests historically wear vestments is a reflection of differing theologies of ordination and divergent interpretations of the role the priest or minister plays as the congregation relates to God—i.e., the priestly vestments are a symbolic representation of a sacerdotal theology as opposed to a congregational one.

It is timely at this juncture to pause and briefly examine an early form of blended worship, which will explain the inclusion of the word "necessarily" in brackets above. Originating in the 1970s, and maturing during the 1980s and 1990s, a movement that converged

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[200] Michael Lawrence and Mark Dever, "Blended Worship," in *Perspectives on Christian Worship: 5 Views,* J. Matthew Pinson, ed. (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2009), Kindle Ed., Loc 4228 of 7341.

[201] Ibid., Loc 4247.

liturgical and contemporary forms and experiences of worship emerged, suitably characterized as "convergence worship."[202] Arising out of a common desire and hunger to experience the fullness of Christian worship and spirituality, the Convergence Movement sought to blend or merge the essential elements in the Christian faith represented historically in three major streams of thought and practice: the Charismatic, Evangelical/Reformed, and Liturgical/Sacramental.[203]

Randy Sly, archbishop of the Eastern Province and the Diocese of the Potomac in Washington, D.C., and Wayne Boosahda, archbishop of the CEEC Society of St. Patrick & St. Aidan in Hutchinson, Kansas, list seven common elements of convergence worship: 1) A restored commitment to the sacraments, especially the Lord's Table. 2) An increased desire to know more about the early church. 3) A love for the whole Church and a desire to see the Church as one. 4) The blending of all three streams is evident, yet each church approaches convergence from a unique point of view. 5) An interest in integrating structure with spontaneity in worship. 6) A greater involvement of sign and symbol in worship. 7) A continuing commitment to personal salvation, biblical teaching, and the work and ministry of the Holy Spirit.[204]

Third, Lawrence and Dever note that blended worship does not mean *a blending of elements of worship.*[205] Naturally, culture and context play a role in shaping the forms and circumstances of our public gatherings. But the Bible, rather than our culture or personal preferences, should determine what we do when we publicly gather to worship God. The reading

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[202] Webber, *Worship Old and New,* Loc 2447.

[203] Randy Sly and Wayne Boosahda, "The Convergence Movement," in *The Complete Library of Christian Worship, Vol. 2: Twenty Centuries of Christian Worship,* Robert E. Webber, ed. (Nashville: Star Song Publishing Group, 1994), 134.

[204] Ibid., 137-138.

[205] Lawrence and Dever, Loc 4262.

and preaching of God's Word, the celebration of the Lord's Supper and baptism, prayer, and the singing of God's praises are not options on a menu that we are free to pick and choose from.

Fourth and finally, blended worship is not *a blending of media or means of communication.*[206] Used sparingly and with a proper perspective, modern worship technologies can help remove distractions and aid congregants in maintaining a focus on connecting with God—the primary purpose of corporate worship in the first place. However, there is a fine line between media serving to remove distractions and media *becoming* the distraction or the primary focal point of worship. Increasingly, and not just in emerging churches, the primacy of the preaching of the word is being replaced by a multimedia, and even multisensory, approach to communication. To engage the senses in worship is laudable; to *replace* key biblical elements of worship with a blend of visual, oral, aural, and even olfactory stimuli borders on idolatrous.

Flowing from these four concepts on what blended worship is not, Lawrence and Dever eventually reveal that blended worship is "corporate worship that consists of its biblical elements (prayer, singing, reading and preaching God's Word, the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper) but in a variety of styles or forms."[207] Robert Webber, in a discourse on the origins of blended worship, reinforces and expands upon this definition with these words:

> Something was missing in both the traditional and contemporary worship renewals [of the twentieth century]. What was missing in one was the strength in the other. The traditional church was missing the sense of a real and vital experience with God. The contemporary movement was missing substance. Blended worship brought the content of the liturgical movement and the experience of the contemporary movement together.[208]

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[206] Lawrence and Dever, Loc 4270.

[207] Ibid., Loc 4293.

[208] Webber, "Blended Worship," 178.

Webber then proceeds to further exposit the distinguishing features of his concept of blended worship under three broad headings: Content, Structure, and Style.

First, content. Blended worship is about and for the triune God. First, we worship God the Father in the *language of mystery*. God cannot be understood by our finite minds nor grasped by our earthly thoughts or language. This mystery is what Rudolph Otto calls the *mysterium tremendum* or the numinous. Second, we worship God the Son in the *language of story*. While the essence of God is unknowable, God's actions in history are known. God has been revealed in history, in Israel, and in Jesus, and this revelation of His speech to humanity and His involvement in the history of the world, especially his incarnation in Jesus Christ, is intelligible. Lastly, we worship God the Spirit in the *language of symbol*. Symbol is how we experience the worship of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit has always been associated with God's presence in the world, from the Creation account of the Spirit hovering over the waters, to Jesus' conception in the womb of the virgin Mary via the Spirit, and even today we approach the throne of God in worship only by the indwelling Holy Spirit.[209]

Next, structure. The content of worship is inseparable from its structure or order. Webber identifies this structure or order of worship as "the fourfold pattern" because it does four things: 1) It gathers the people in God's presence; 2) It tells and proclaims the story in song, in Scripture, in preaching, in prayer, and in the kiss of peace; 3) It enacts the story in water, bread, wine, and oil (the symbols speak and act); and, 4) It sends God's people forth into the world to love and serve the Lord. This fourfold pattern is rooted in Scripture and attested in history. It is repeated in every covenant of the Old Testament; it is the pattern of New Testament worship described in Acts 2:42; it is the pattern of worship of all early Christian liturgies; and it is the

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[209] Webber, "Blended Worship," 179-182.

order advocated by Luther, Calvin, and some leading Anabaptists. The fourfold pattern provides a strong theological foundation for any liturgical structure.[210]

Finally, style. Whereas the first two features may apply not only to blended worship but to any biblical worship model, the style of worship is profoundly more diverse and culture-driven. Webber asks the question, "Is there a God-ordained style?" and then goes on to answer it with another question: "Perhaps it would be better to ask, 'Are there biblical principles that should affect the style of worship in every age and every geographical area?'" The answer is "yes," and Webber pinpoints two such principles.

The first biblical principle that should universally affect worship style is that of the Incarnation and the Christological thinking of the Church. The Bible reveals that Christ was fully divine (John 1:1-4; Col. 1:15-20; Heb. 1:3) and fully human (John 1:14; Gal. 4:4-5; Phil. 2:5-8). This recognition of the full divinity and the full humanity of our Lord united in one person is not incidental to the issue of style in worship. Worship is both divine and human—fully divine, fully human. Consequently, the fundamental issue of worship style is that worship must be *participatory.* Worship is a synergism of divine and human activity; it is dialogic.

The second biblical principle that should universally affect worship style is the theology of Creation. Because this is God's world, matter is the means through which the invisible God is made visible. Eschatology teaches that God will free matter from the power of evil, which has brought creation into "bondage to decay" (Rom. 8:18-22). Salvation is the rescue not only of people, but of the whole creation. This conviction of Scripture is the basis for the arts in worship.

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[210] Webber, "Blended Worship," 182-183.

Worship style demands the freedom of the artist to release creation through the use of the arts to proclaim God's redemption of the entire creation to the praise of God.[211]

Music in Blended Worship

In beginning this section, it is necessary to explicate a rift in the discussion of blended worship, which to some degree has already been revealed. The blended worship model has its share of detractors, as does every worship model examined in the previous pages. Beyond simple matters of preference or opinion, one of the most common critiques of blended worship is that the mixed-style format of blended worship "displeases everyone equally."[212] And although this thinking is flawed, it still maintains a measure of merit, which Webber aptly articulates:

> In the way that the word "blended" is generally used, [criticisms against it] are true. What most people usually mean by blended worship is "sing hymns and choruses and you've got it—blended worship" … I still agree with the critics: Blended worship that accents style is doomed to failure. With some exceptions, this kind of blended worship does not work, comes off as "blah," and offends most people. I have not defended and will not defend this popular notion of blended worship.[213]

Webber's reference to singing hymns and choruses hearkens back to the widespread worship wars referenced earlier in the contemporary worship section. Hymns represent a traditional worship mindset; choruses, a contemporary worship mindset. And certainly, if blended worship *only* denotes a blending of hymns and choruses—i.e., a blending of traditional and contemporary worship—then it functions to facilitate a "versus" mentality that is unhealthy, an atmosphere which continues to stoke the fires of ecclesiological worship wars. Webber's idea of blended worship is clearly linked to the convergence stream explored earlier in this section,

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[211] Webber, "Blended Worship," 184-185.

[212] Ortberg, 50.

[213] Webber, "Blended Worship," 175, 189.

which he affirms with these words: "I have asked you to consider another kind of blended worship, a worship that blends the fruit of the liturgical scholarship of the twentieth century and the concern for the immediacy of the Spirit called for in the best of contemporary worship."[214]

And yet, the concept of blended worship to which Lawrence and Dever subscribe is not a far cry from the stylistically-based model that Webber contends is "doomed to failure." In referencing Webber's convergence concept of blended worship, Lawrence and Dever readily admit, "We have presented a definition of blended worship that is more limited in scope and less revolutionary in design" than Webber's.[215] Furthermore, Lawrence and Dever include as an appendix to their chapter on blended worship five sample worship service plans, and by and large the sole "blended" element in each plan is the music chosen, which only serves to confirm that, at least in practice, the authors are effectively touting a "hymns versus choruses" paradigm.

So, there yet remains an abundance of variety from congregation to congregation and even from worshiper to worshiper regarding the specifics of a blended worship model. Nevertheless, although a variety of musical styles and genres may not, and perhaps should not, be the only worship elements incorporated into a blended worship format, it cannot be denied that a blending of music from traditional, contemporary, and in some cases other common worship styles is inherent in almost every paradigm and practice of blended worship. What prevents a blended worship format from falling into the trap of a "hymns versus choruses" mindset is *precision* and *purpose,* as well as a strong commitment to biblical worship. As Lawrence and Dever write, "If we are to pursue biblically faithful blended worship, we will need

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[214] Webber, "Blended Worship," 189.

[215] Lawrence and Dever, Loc 4865-4871.

to be able to think carefully and precisely about the various forms, so that our blended worship is truly acceptable worship, 'with reverence and awe'" [Heb. 12:28b].[216]

The Intergenerational Implications of These Five Worship Styles

Apart from heretical doctrine or adopting principles and practices that do not fully adhere to the character of Scripture, there is ultimately no "right" or "wrong" corporate worship method.[217] Each of these worship styles have merit, and each share certain aspects and elements which are common to all. Yet, each falls short of perfection. What is more, each method is, to a degree, caught between two opposing forces—on the one hand, desiring to remain counter-cultural and draw a sharp dividing line between the secular and the sacred, and on the other hand, acknowledging the need to contextualize its liturgy to the culture in which it is situated so as to be viewed as relevant and to draw converts and prospective converts into "full and right participation in the Christian mysteries."[218]

Also inherent in each model is the possibility of worship style or methodology becoming an idol in and of itself. Yet the object of worship, regardless of style, is God Himself. D. A. Carson expresses this well in his collaborative work, *Worship by the Book:* "You cannot find excellent corporate worship until you stop trying to find excellent corporate worship and pursue God Himself. Despite the protestations, one sometimes wonders if we are beginning to worship *worship* rather than worship *God* … it's a bit like those who begin by admiring the sunset and soon begin to admire themselves admiring the sunset."[219]

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[216] Lawrence and Dever, Loc 4943.

[217] Stetzer and Rainer, 159.

[218] Paul F. Bradshaw, *The Search for the Origins of Christian Worship: Sources and Methods for the Study of Early Liturgy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 229.

[219] D. A. Carson, "Worship Under the Word," in *Worship by the Book,* D. A. Carson, ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2002), 30-31.

In reality, any attempt to adequately convey the developments of the most common

corporate worship styles within the past two millennia in the space of about thirty pages is an

endeavor all but destined for failure. The Apostle John's words in the final verse of his Gospel,

though taken out of context, still ring true in this situation: "I suppose that even the whole world

would not have room for the books that would be written" (21:25b). But in hearkening back to

the purposes of this project, the goal in summarizing these worship models is to ascertain which

model is most likely to facilitate a true sense of intergenerationality, as well as which model is

specifically most beneficial for youth as it relates to the likelihood of active worship engagement

and spiritual development during and after the high-school years.

A fitting analogy to assist in determining the intergenerational implications of these

worship styles is that of the "Family Worship Table," a term coined by Ross Parsley, lead pastor

at ONEchapel in Austin, Texas. In his book, *Messy Church*, Parsley comments:

> "The family worship table" is a phrase that I began to use several years ago as I spoke at
> conferences and seminars on worship ministry. As a worship pastor for many years, I
> began to raise up a new generation of worship leaders at New Life Church in Colorado
> Springs, and our experience together began to form this analogy. "The family worship
> table" was a way to describe our multigenerational approach that would help every age-
> group embrace people at different points on the age continuum.[220]

Of course, the correlation here is that of a congregational family joining together for

worship as compared to a household family unit—mother, father, children, teenagers, and

perhaps grandparents and grandchildren—coming together to share and enjoy a meal at the

family dinner table. The family meal is interactive, communal, and selfless, and provides an

especially suitable illustration of God's family of believers. Taking precedence over all else is

the importance of family togetherness. Typically, careful consideration is given to the varieties

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[220] Parsley, Loc 703.

of foods and beverages enjoyed by the various members of the family. Yet although each family member maintains his or her own preferences, opinions, likes, and dislikes, the love shared and demonstrated between family members trumps the differences between them. At the family dinner table—as well as the family worship table—grandpas and grandmas, middle-aged moms and dads, young professionals, teenagers, and kids all find a place of belonging.[221]

This analogy is not perfect by any means, but it clearly conveys the concept and the importance of intentional intergenerationality in the corporate worship setting. Apart from the clear biblical precedent for IGW established at the outset of this Literature Review, the idea of the family worship table demonstrates that a persistent and purposeful practice of *blended worship* effectively validates and unites not only the best and most biblical styles, forms, and methodologies expressed in other worship models, but also lovingly accommodates and validates each generation, as well as serving to unite all generations in worship.

Many scholars, authors, pastoral ministers, and intergenerational specialists affirm that a blended worship model best serves to facilitate a true sense of intergenerationality in corporate worship. Gary McIntosh, president of The Church Growth Network and professor of Christian Ministry and Leadership at Talbot School of Theology in La Mirada, California, recommends a blended model to unite the generations in worship and beyond. He describes the blended church as one that combines two or more philosophies of ministry, typically resulting in the use of more than one style of music in a worship service, traditional and new ministries functioning simultaneously, and the fostering of common-ground experiences.[222] McIntosh goes on to write, "Blending generational styles in one service has proved a practical way to go. At the least,

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[221] Parsley, Loc 767-902.

[222] Gary L. McIntosh, *One Church, Four Generations: Understanding and Reaching All Ages in Your Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2002), 217-222.

blending allows a church to demonstrate the unity of the church, meet different needs, provide

diverse ministry opportunities, honor the past and the future, and give people time to change."[223]

Allen and Ross offer critical insight regarding the role that a blending of musical styles

and genres plays in uniting the generations in worship:

> It seems self-evident that becoming fully and intentionally intergenerational will call for some degree of blending styles. To insist on traditional hymnody entirely, ignoring all worship music written in the last several decades, assumes an elitist historical stance that ignores the fact that God is still at work among twentieth- and twenty-first-century believers, pouring out new songs about old truths. However, insisting that the exclusive use of contemporary music and lyrics is necessary to keep churches vital overlooks inescapably the needs of one or two generations as well as the powerful theological and aesthetic contributions of past spiritually gifted musicians and poets. It also unavoidably limits the worship music repertoire of future generations.[224]

And Lawrence and Dever capture the heart of the matter with these words: "When we

define our public worship by a single style or form, we inevitably train our hearts and our desires

to that form and so set the stage for division. When we refuse to define our worship by a single

style or form, we cut the nerve of the worship wars. The blending and variety of our forms

become unifying, precisely because they are no longer defining."[225]

The reason blended worship is most likely to facilitate an authentic sense of

intergenerationality is because within any group of people, even of the same age, there exists a

great diversity of preferences, opinions, likes, and dislikes.[226] And if this is true for an assembly

of people of a similar age group, it is considerably truer in reference to a gathering of varying

generational cohorts. God created and creates each human being with distinctive traits and a

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[223] McIntosh, *One Church, Four Generations,* 222.

[224] Allen and Ross, 196.

[225] Lawrence and Dever, Loc 4819.

[226] Basden, "Introduction," 17.

unique personality—our diversity is a gift from Him.[227] We are diverse in gender (Gen. 1:27), culture (Gen. 9:19), language (Gen. 11:6-8), socioeconomic status (Acts 11:19-26, 13:1-2), gifting (1 Cor. 12:12-30), race (Rev. 7:9), and yes, even in worship style preferences and methodologies (John 4:19-20). It is because of these organic differences inherent within each of us that a "blending and variety of our [worship] forms"[228] has the greatest potential to unite us.

An apt correlation to demonstrate these principles of diversity is again found in revisiting Parsley's family worship table analogy. Although at the family dinner table the love each family member possesses for the others at the table overcomes the differences between them, to completely ignore and trivialize these differences is the polar opposite of a genuine expression of love. As the Apostle Paul clearly communicates in 1 Corinthians 13, "Love is patient, love is kind … it does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking" (4a, 5b). Therefore, an equally visible expression of love acknowledged and actuated by those who are responsible for planning and facilitating the meal involves ensuring there are a variety of foods that will be enjoyed by all who gather at the table. Mom knows that grandpa enjoys eating cabbage, and she knows that her 10-year-old son, Billy, does not. She also knows that they both enjoy eating fried chicken. So, because mom understands these inherent likes and dislikes that are a part of the divine makeup of her family, for the family dinner gathering mom will prepare roasted cabbage, fried chicken tenders, and because she knows Billy likes it, macaroni and cheese.

Note that the solution for this loving and healthy family unit is not to send the children away to the "kids' table" where they will find a variety of cuisines prepared only to their liking, nor is it to send grandpa and grandma away to the assisted living facility where a nutritional

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[227] Christena Cleveland, *Disunity in Christ: Uncovering the Hidden Forces That Keep Us Apart* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2013), 22.

[228] Lawrence and Dever, Loc 4819.

specialist will only prepare foods most commonly enjoyed by senior citizens. The beauty in this picture is that although we each have our unique, God-given proclivities, we are able to intentionally and unselfishly come together at the family dinner/worship table and find elements satisfying not only to us, but also to the family around us that we love and treasure. Michael Bridges, one half of the musical duo *Lost and Found,* expresses this idea of a unified diversity with great clarity: "Congregational worship has to be a time when there is something for everyone. It is a truer picture of God and a truer picture of the Church."[229]

The Implications of Intergenerational Worship Engagement for Generation Z

Since this project is particularly concerned with the youth-specific benefits of an IGW model, it is judicious and necessary to explore the mindset and defining attributes of Generation Z, or for short, Gen Z[230]—that is, those born between approximately 1995 – 2015.[231] As of July 2020, Gen Z comprises 27.7% of the US population, or about 91.4 million people,[232] which makes them the single largest living generation as well as the largest generation in American History.[233] James Emery White, author, professor, and senior pastor of Mecklenburg Community Church in Charlotte, North Carolina, and Barna Group, along with the Impact 360 Institute (I360), have identified five defining characteristics of the Gen Z cohort.

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[229] Michael Bridges, personal email communication with Christine Ross, January 21, 2012, as quoted in Allen and Ross, 194.

[230] James Emery White, *Meet Generation Z: Understanding and Reaching the New Post-Christian World* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2017), 37.

[231] Ibid.; Twenge, Loc 122; and Barna Group and Impact 360 Institute, *Gen Z: The Culture, Beliefs and Motivations Shaping the Next Generation* (2018), 10. White advocates birth years between 1995 and 2010; Twenge advocates birth years between 1995 and 2012; and Barna Group and Impact 360 Institute advocate birth years between 1999 and 2015.

[232] United States Census Bureau, accessed August 07, 2020, https://www.census.gov/popclock/.

[233] Ibid.; White, *Meet Generation Z*, 37; and Alex Williams, "Move Over, Millennials, Here Comes Generation Z," *The New York Times,* September 18, 2015, accessed August 08, 2020, https://www.nytimes.com/2015/09/20/fashion/move-over-millennials-here-comes-generation-z.html?searchResultPosition=29.

First, Gen Z is recession marked. While the Millennial generation [born approximately 1982-2002][234] is marked by the economic crash of 2000 and the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, Gen Z came along in the aftermath of the war on terror and the Great Recession (December 2007 – June 2009).[235] As a result, members of Gen Z find themselves developing their personalities and life skills in a socioeconomic environment marked by chaos, uncertainty, volatility, and complexity.[236] Furthermore, this recession-marked reality is resulting in a widespread entrepreneurial mindset among the Gen Z cohort. This mindset is confirmed in that approximately 70% of Gen Z are now engaged in entrepreneurial, freelance jobs, and 60% expect to have multiple careers by the age of 30.[237]

Next, Gen Z is Wi-Fi enabled. Barna and I360 employ the term "screenagers" for Gen Zers, noting that more than half use screen media for at least four hours a day and that many experience "nomophobia," a feeling of anxiety any time they are separated from their mobile phone.[238] Twenge claims Gen Z could rightly be called "iGen" (the *i* representing *Internet*), since they grew up with cell phones, had an Instagram page before they started high school, and do not remember a time before the Internet.[239] And according to David Bell, professor of marketing at *The Wharton School*, University of Pennsylvania, Gen Z is the "Internet-in-its-

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[234] Peter P. Menconi, *The Intergenerational Church: Understanding Congregations from WWII to www.com* (Littleton, CO: Mt. Sage Publishing, 2010), 123; and Barna Group, *Making Space for Millennials: A Blueprint for Your Culture, Ministry, Leadership and Facilities* (2014), 10. Menconi advocates birth years between 1982 and 2000; Barna Group advocates birth years between 1984 and 2002.

[235] Federal Reserve History, "The Great Recession," November 22, 2013, accessed August 08, 2020, https://www.federalreservehistory.org/essays/great_recession_of_200709.

[236] White, *Meet Generation Z*, 39.

[237] Ibid., 47; and sparks & honey Cultural Forecast, *Gen Z 2025: The Final Generation* (New York: sparks & honey, LLC, 2015), 10.

[238] Barna Group and Impact 360 Institute, 12, 15.

[239] Twenge, Loc 53.

pocket" generation.[240] Barna and I360 divulge an especially troubling consequence of these iGen realities: 33% of the Gen Z cohort have reported being bullied online.[241]

Third, Gen Z is multiracial. White posits, "Gen Z is the most racially diverse of any generation to date" and "may be the first generation for which diversity is a natural concept."[242] This is a natural outflow of the fact that the US is currently in the midst of a rapidly-changing racial demographic, which Census Bureau data has shown for at least the past decade.[243] Not only is the total makeup of Gen Z more multiracial than any previous generation, but many members of Gen Z are themselves the product of racially-blended families.[244] But diversity within Gen Z goes well beyond race, which the following points address.

Fourth, White, Twenge, and Barna exposit Gen Z's views on sexuality and gender. In regard to matters of sexual orientation, the Gen Z cohort is largely sexually and relationally amorphous.[245] White points to influential statements by outspoken young celebrities such as Kristen Stewart, Miley Cyrus, and Cara Delevingne, which serve to reinforce this argument. For instance, Stewart, when asked about her sexuality, said, "I think in three or four years, there are going to be a whole lot more people who don't think it's necessary to figure out if you're gay or straight. It's like, just do your thing."[246]

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[240] David Bell, "'Millennials on Steroids': Is Your Brand Ready for Generation Z?", Knowledge@Wharton, September 28, 2015, accessed August 08, 2020, https://knowledge.wharton.upenn.edu/article/millennials-on-steroids-is-your-brand-ready-for-generation-z/, as quoted in White, *Meet Generation Z*, 41.

[241] Barna Group and Impact 360 Institute, 14.

[242] White, *Meet Generation Z*, 45.

[243] United States Census Bureau, accessed August 08, 2020, https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?q=race&hidePreview=false&tid=ACSDT1Y2018.B02001&vintage=2018.

[244] sparks & honey Cultural Forecast, 7.

[245] White, *Meet Generation Z*, 47.

[246] Ibid.

Twenge points to the following comments by Riley, a 17-year-old survey respondent, to further support this idea: "My view of LGBTQ is the same as on other people having sex before marriage: *I don't particularly care* (emphasis added). I wouldn't do it, but it has nothing to do with me, it doesn't affect me in the slightest, and I have no right to tell other people what to do or believe."[247] As White affirms, "The greatest value for this generation is nothing less than individual freedom."[248] Twenge also examines Gen Z's views of marital infidelity, writing: "As late as 2006, about 50% of 18- to 29-year-olds believed that sex between two unmarried adults was 'not wrong at all'—about the same as in the 1970s. Then approval of premarital sex shot upward, with 65% of young people in 2016 declaring it 'not wrong at all.'"[249] Yet iGen'ers are not *more* likely to have sex as teens and young adults; they are *less* likely, largely due to their tendencies of growing up slowly, individualism, and safety.[250]

Regarding issues of gender, Barna and I360 communicate that "Gen Z, more than older generations, considers their sexuality or gender to be central to their sense of personal identity."[251] Barna further informs that only 48% of today's teens believe one's sex at birth defines one's gender, and seven out of ten think it is *definitely* or *probably* acceptable to be born one gender and feel like another.[252] Gender issues, like a number of other issues they face, leave many members of Gen Z feeling both compassion and confusion.

Fifth and finally, Gen Z is post-Christian. White writes, "The most defining characteristic of Generation Z is that it is arguably the first generation in the West (certainly in the United

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247 Twenge, Loc 3176.

248 White, *Meet Generation Z*, 47.

249 Twenge, Loc 2809.

250 Ibid., Loc 2789.

251 Barna Group and Impact 360 Institute, 46.

252 Ibid.

States) that will have been raised in a post-Christian context."[253] Since the next section covers spirituality and religion among the Gen Z cohort, this fifth and final defining characteristic will be addressed in the next section and will serve as a suitable segue into it.

<center>Spirituality and Religion in the Lives of Teenagers and Emerging Adults</center>

That the influence of Christianity in the United States is waning is no longer breaking news. Data from Barna Group, among others, has shown that rates for church attendance, belief in God, religious affiliation, prayer, Bible-reading, and other faith-related matters and disciplines have been declining for decades.[254] These data sets only serve to confirm that we are quickly headed toward, or perhaps already living in, a post-Christian America. White confirms this in his book, *The Church in an Age of Crisis,* with these sobering words: "The most foundational understanding of the culture of our Western world and the future that it portends is that it is increasingly post-Christian. By post-Christian, I do not mean non-Christian. I do not mean anti-Christian. I mean we live in a country that is increasingly losing any memory of what it means to even *be* Christian."[255] If these words held true in 2012, when White's book was published, they are without a doubt exponentially more applicable and alarming as America begins its transition into the second decade of the twenty-first century.

More than any previous generation, many members of Gen Z are what Barna and I360 call "a spiritual blank slate."[256] By this, the authors are implying that Gen Z is drawn to spiritual things, but their starting point is vastly different from that of previous generations, which White

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[253] White, *Meet Generation Z*, 48.

[254] Barna Group and Impact 360 Institute, 24.

[255] James Emery White, *The Church in an Age of Crisis: 25 New Realities Facing Christianity* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2012), 19.

[256] Barna Group and Impact 360 Institute, 26.

also addresses in the quote above. Furthermore, White posits that Gen Z is the "first truly post-Christian generation"[257] and that "Generation Z will come to typify the new reality of a post-Christian world."[258] To inform what this "new reality" will look like, Barna Group and I360 explore how Gen Z relates and responds to three broad matters of religion.

First, faith. The "nones" [those who indicate 'nothing' or 'none' when asked about their religious identity or faith], including atheists and agnostics, are no longer the second largest religious group in the United States; they are the largest.[259] Though 59% of 13- to 18-year-olds indicate they are in some way connected to the Christian faith, this is markedly less than those of previous generations who identify as Christian. Furthermore, the percentage of teens who identify as atheists is double that of previous generations.[260] The top three barriers teens list to embracing a Christian faith are: 1) A struggle to find a compelling argument for how a good God would allow so much evil and suffering in the world; 2) Christians are hypocrites; and, 3) I believe science refutes too much of the Bible.[261]

Next, truth. For many teens, truth seems relative at best, or even altogether unknowable, which only serves to substantiate the post-Christian, highly relativistic America we live in today.[262] Nearly 60% of American teens hold to the belief that "one true religion" does not exist, and that many religions can lead to spiritual enlightenment and eternal life. When this universalistic mindset is paired with Gen Z's deep confusion about the nature of truth, assessing

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[257] White, *Meet Generation Z*, 11.

[258] Ibid.

[259] Ibid., 22; and Melinda Lundquist Denton and Richard Flory, *Back-Pocket God: Religion and Spirituality in the Lives of Emerging Adults* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2020), 92-93.

[260] Barna Group and Impact 360 Institute, 63-64.

[261] Ibid., 63.

[262] Ibid., 64-65.

the "truth" of one's own beliefs becomes all but impossible.[263] Moreover, as highlighted earlier in this section, there is a growing sense among those who belong to the Gen Z cohort that what's true for someone else may not be "true for me." For many teens today, sincerely believing something makes it "true." However, many teens still respect the Bible as a source of truth. 34% of Gen Z respondents—*more* than any previous generation, even Elders and Boomers—believe the Bible is the inspired word of God and has no errors, though some verses are meant to be symbolic rather than literal.[264] Nevertheless, Gen Z largely rejects a complementary view of science and the Bible. Only 28% of teens, *less* than any prior generation and almost half the percentage of Boomers, believe that science and the Bible can be used to support each other.[265]

Finally, church. Since the main objective of this section is to address the implications of IGW for Gen Z, these next few paragraphs are crucial to this section and project and will focus on Gen Z views of and engagement in the local church. The following developments will also bring to light Gen Z perspectives on family and the church, and how these perspectives reinforce the importance of an IGW paradigm for Gen Z.

While the bulk of this section on spirituality and religion in the lives of teenagers and emerging adults paints a rather bleak picture of the spiritual condition of the Gen Z cohort, perhaps the greatest glimmer of hope we find is in the area of church and family. Many Gen Z authors, thinkers, and researchers affirm the importance of family to today's teens. The sparks & honey Cultural Forecast notes that a full 58% of Gen Zers say their parents are their best friends.[266] Along this same line, Barna and I360 share that 56% of the Gen Z group indicate they

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[263] Barna Group and Impact 360 Institute, 64.

[264] Ibid., 66.

[265] Ibid., 65.

[266] sparks & honey Cultural Forecast, 51.

admire their parents and look to them as their primary role model—although only about a third

say their family is core to their own identity. Barna also notes that four out of five engaged

Christian teens ("engaged" signifies a level of participation that goes beyond merely attending a

worship service, such as taking part in a regular Bible study or attending youth group) agree with

this statement: "I can share my honest questions, struggles, and doubts with my parents."[267]

Twenge shares about 14-year-old Priya and 15-year-old Jack, both of whom are

increasingly typical of iGen teens in that they are less likely to go out *without* their parents, and

many enjoy spending time with their moms and dads.[268] Wesley Black notes that parents are

among the strongest influences on the faith formation of teenagers, and the evidence shows that

the single most important social influence on the religious and spiritual lives of adolescents is

their parents.[269] And as if to extract this concept from the research milieu and give it a name,

Robyn, a teen interviewee from the Fuller Youth Institute's College Transition Project, candidly

shares: "My parents are probably the biggest influence out of anybody."[270]

There are certainly some negative views of the Church among Gen Z, as there have been

in every generation. As one might assume, this is especially true for those who identify as

"nones." For instance, White notes that as it relates to the current culture of secularization,

privatization, and pluralization, "the church is losing its influence as a shaper of life and thought

in the wider social order, and Christianity is losing its place as the dominant worldview."[271]

Nearly 70% of unchurched Gen Z and emerging adults are significantly less likely than previous

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[267] Barna Group and Impact 360 Institute, 82.

[268] Twenge, Loc 314-336.

[269] Black, 29.

[270] Powell and Clark, *Sticky Faith,* 13.

[271] White, *Meet Generation Z*, 28-29.

generations to believe that a person's faith in God is meant to be developed by involvement in a local church.[272] And the majority of unchurched and even some churchgoing teens ("churchgoing" signifies those who have attended one or more worship services within the past month) see the church as hypocritical, judgmental, and irrelevant, and worse, just not important to them anymore, nor applicable to their lives.[273]

However, the statistics among most churchgoing and engaged Christian teens are very encouraging. For instance, 82% of churchgoing teens believe that the church is relevant to them and is a place to find answers to live a meaningful life. Among engaged Christian teens, this number jumps to 95%.[274] Regarding church attendance, 79% of engaged Christian teens indicate attending church is important to them, and 42% of churchgoing teens said church attendance was somewhat important to them.[275] Most churchgoing teens, and the overwhelming majority of engaged Christian teens, perceive their church to be a place of tolerance and relevance, and feel that their church is a "safe" place where they can authentically be themselves.[276]

These perspectives reveal at least four critical implications of IGW engagement and spiritual formation as it relates to the Gen Z cohort.

First, because parents are the primary influencers in a teen's life,[277] it is vital that they take their role as spiritual leaders and teachers in their homes seriously and not delegate this role wholesale to the church.[278] As has been previously established, Moses, in Deuteronomy 6:4-10,

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[272] Ken Ham and Brit Beemer, *Already Gone: Why Your Kids Will Quit Church and What You Can Do About It* (Green Forest, AR: Master Books, 2010), 117-118.

[273] Barna Group and Impact 360 Institute, 63-73.

[274] Ibid., 71.

[275] Ibid., 61.

[276] Ibid.

[277] Black, 29.

[278] Ham and Beemer, 50.

and the Apostle Paul, in Ephesians 6:1-4, are clearly exhorting parents to teach, disciple, and spiritually equip their own children. Faith formation must begin in the home, with the parents who are there when their children "lie down and when they rise up" (Deut. 6:7b), who are there with their children "when they sit down to eat or walk along the road" (Deut. 6:7a).[279] And if, as Barna posits, it is "very important to engaged Christian parents that their child develops a lasting faith,"[280] this parental task of teaching and equipping their children must go well beyond what the author of Hebrews refers to as the "milk" of Scripture,[281] an obvious reference to those who are still immature in their faith and spiritual understanding. This teaching and training must include "meaty" theological and apologetic equipping, so that post-high school teens will be able to intelligently and confidently defend their faith in the midst of a post-Christian society.[282]

Of course, it is relatively easy to ascertain the path that has led to Gen Z being considered a "spiritual blank slate."[283] We are headed toward, or living in, a post-Christian America not because of Gen Z, but rather, because of the parents and, to a lesser extent, the grandparents of Gen Z—i.e., because of the multitude of Gen Z teens today who were raised by "none" parents and grandparents. White elaborates: "A large and growing number of parents—particularly parents of Generation Z—are themselves in the nones category. So how does an underprotective parent who is religiously unaffiliated raise a child spiritually?"[284] White answers his own question: "Not well."[285] Which naturally leads into the next implication.

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[279] DeVries, 168.

[280] Barna Group and Impact 360 Institute, 82.

[281] Hebrews 5:12-14.

[282] Ham and Beemer, 95-116.

[283] Barna Group and Impact 360 Institute, 26.

[284] White, *Meet Generation Z,* 61.

[285] Ibid.

Second, acknowledging that parents are the primary influencers in a teen's life, churches and youth ministries which are concerned about producing spiritually mature teens should focus a great deal of their time, energy, and resources into purposefully producing spiritually mature parents. In other words, the church needs to reflect a practice of family-based ministry in which parents—and really, all adult members of the church—are equipped and empowered to be mature believers and spiritual mentors, for the purpose of training their own children and/or younger generations in the church to "Always be prepared to give an answer" (1 Pet. 3:15a) as to why they believe what they believe. Mark DeVries writes of this concept of ministry: "Family-based youth ministry [and churchwide family-based ministry] accesses the incomparable power of the nuclear family and connects students to an extended family of Christian adults to the end that those students grow toward maturity in Christ."[286] Herein lies a profoundly significant component in the solution to keep Gen Z actively engaged in church beyond high school.

Certainly, this ministry paradigm does not call for the abdication of the role the church and youth ministry play in the process of spiritual formation in the lives of younger generations. Parents, Christian educators, youth pastors, senior pastors, and other pastoral staff all have a role to play in the solution.[287] A crucial role for youth pastors involves consistently encouraging and facilitating parents' involvement in the spiritual formation of their teens, since Barna notes that the single greatest struggle in ministry for nearly three-quarters of youth pastors is parents not prioritizing the spiritual growth of their own teenagers.[288] A highly intentional collaboration and cooperation must exist not only between youth pastors and parents, but even between the various ministries and ministerial leadership represented within the scope of any given local church. As

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[286] DeVries, 183.

[287] Ham and Beemer, 143.

[288] Barna Group and Impact 360 Institute, 88.

Richard Ross, professor of youth ministry at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, affirms: "When church and home link arms in mutual support, teenagers are the most likely to prosper as adults with a lifetime faith."[289]

Third, churches and church leadership must acknowledge that only through an *intentional* IGW and ministry paradigm and practice are families, as well as younger and older generations, provided opportunities to consistently worship together and learn from each other. In revisiting Allen and Barnett's words earlier in this chapter, a plethora of Christian communities are realizing the devastating effect generationally-segregated worship and ministry has birthed in the lives of younger generations, and are beginning to ponder how to bring the generations back together.[290] But this must involve more than just facilitating multigenerational worship gatherings, although this is an important step in the process of becoming an intergenerational church. Churches desiring to fully embrace genuine intergenerationality must be purposeful about building a comprehensive framework of mutuality, equality, and reciprocity that makes individual or collective spiritual formation and transformation more likely.[291]

This is an opportune time to take a brief aside and discuss the difference between the terms *multigenerational* and *intergenerational* as they relate to corporate worship and church ministry. The most basic difference in the meaning of these two words is inherently expressed via their individual prefixes. The prefix *multi-* is defined as "more than one; many, especially variegated."[292] The prefix *inter-,* at least as it is used in this context, is defined as "mutually;

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[289] Richard Ross, *Accelerate: Parenting Teenagers toward Adulthood* (Nashville: LifeWay Press, 2015), 119.

[290] Allen and Barnett, 17.

[291] Ibid., 18.

[292] *Oxford English Dictionary, s.v.* "multi-," accessed August 15, 2020, https://www.lexico.com/en/definition/multi-.

reciprocally."[293] So, although multigenerational *and* intergenerational worship may both be understood as a corporate worship gathering in which a variety of generational cohorts are present, in IGW and ministry the gathering is in essence purposefully reciprocal. In other words, in an IGW model, each generation finds not only a place of belonging, but a place of connectedness in which there is a mutual sense of serving, sharing, and learning.[294]

Sociologist Peter L. Berger speaks of an individual's "anchor identity" as being how that individual has been shaped by the customs, behavioral patterns, and norms related to their culture of upbringing. Berger argues that this anchor identity is most successfully formed in the context of a highly connected, emotionally supportive environment that reinforces communal behavior.[295] In light of Berger's observation, consideration must be given as to how local church efforts toward spiritual formation in peer-oriented environments have failed to "anchor" a Christian identity, especially among younger generations. When spiritual development primarily occurs alongside one's own peers, a proper understanding of the church as the multigenerational Body of Christ is skewed. Individuals begin to perceive themselves at the center of the faith community rather than as part of the larger whole.[296] But when children and youth are raised in a truly intergenerational environment defined by a pattern of purposeful Christian practices, they gradually gain an awareness of their relationship to the larger body of faith. Furthermore, they

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[293] *Oxford English Dictionary, s.v.,* "inter-," accessed August 15, 2020, https://www.lexico.com/en/definition/inter-.

[294] Allen and Ross, 17.

[295] Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge* (New York: Open Road Integrated Media, 2011), 100, 149-153.

[296] Santos, "Why Now?", 45-46.

begin to see that their faith development doesn't end after high school, but rather, is a much longer journey, a spiritual journey mutually shared by every generation.[297]

This is not to say that *all* activities of a faith community should be conducted with all ages present. There are valid and significant reasons to gather by age or stage or interest; spiritual growth and development can and indeed does happen when teens gather separately, when the seniors meet for mutual support and care, and when the preschoolers join together and learn.[298] But if churches do not frequently and consistently provide cross-generational opportunities for worship, learning, outreach, service, and fellowship, they are effectively robbing their congregants of the distinctive spiritual benefits and blessings that can only be realized within the structure of an intergenerational concept of worship and ministry.[299]

These blessings and benefits are especially needful of those within the Gen Z cohort. Churches which purposefully practice IGW and ministry intentionally cultivate a strong sense of belonging for all involved, especially the younger generations.[300] Such churches also readily embrace a culture of accommodation, understanding that each generation matters and should have a voice and a place at the table where ministry planning and leadership take place.[301] When a church invests in its youth and allows them to help shape its worship culture, the result is a healthy congregation in which each generation may find value and meaning in worshiping together as the body of Christ.[302] Conversely, when youth are denied a place of service and are underrepresented in the planning and leadership process, they lack a sense of ministry ownership

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[297] Santos, "Why Now?", 46.

[298] Allen and Ross, 47.

[299] Ibid.

[300] Ibid., 48; and Santos, "Why Now?", 46.

[301] Crispin, 51.

[302] Allen and Ross, 123.

and buy-in.[303] In such situations, the likelihood of youth successfully transitioning from a youth service during high school to a fundamentally-changed adult service post-high school is low.[304] As Santos contends, "Perhaps our youth are abandoning church as young adults because it was never theirs to begin with … we've failed our young people and the church at large by not truly cultivating an *intergenerational* community of faith where they knew they belonged."[305]

Research done by the Fuller Youth Institute establishes that Gen Z teens desire *more* opportunities for connection with those who belong to older generations, and realize they need wisdom and guidance from those with more life experience.[306] But for Gen Z to experience opportunities for mentorship, meaningful intergenerational relationships, incorporation and ownership in the worship and liturgical life of the church, and connection with the entire church body, churches must be deliberate about fostering and facilitating authentic intergenerationality in worship and ministry. Only then will Gen Z—and really, all generations—find a true sense of inclusion within the Church. As Allen and Ross affirm, "Belongingness … is particularly important in the realm of spiritual care and formation … intergenerational faith communities provide experiences that foster this deep sense of belonging in children, teens and adults; all feel welcome and received."[307]

Finally, if churches are serious about reaching Gen Z and our post-Christian culture for Christ, it is vital that pastors, key church leaders, and congregations set aside nostalgia for

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[303] Stan Mast, "One Congregation's Story," in *The Church of All Ages: Generations Worshiping Together,* Howard Vanderwell, ed. (Herndon, VA: The Alban Institute, 2008), 136-137.

[304] Powell, "Is the Era of Age Segregation Over?", 44.

[305] Jason Brian Santos, "Foreword," in *Intergenerate: Transforming Churches Through Intergenerational Ministry,* Holly Catterton Allen, ed. (Abilene, TX: Abilene Christian University Press, 2018), 14.

[306] Kara Powell, Jake Mulder, and Brad Griffin, *Growing Young: 6 Essential Strategies to Help Young People Discover and Love Your Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2016), 48.

[307] Allen and Ross, 48.

ineffective, defunct programs and paradigms and become "cultural missionaries."[308] Churches and church leadership must learn all they can about the Gen Z culture, then plan and implement effective strategies for reaching the unchurched, the "nones," and, even at this early stage, Gen Z. White elaborates: "The rise of the nones and the coming force of Generation Z will inevitably challenge every church to rethink its strategy in light of a cultural landscape that has shifted seismically. If the heart of the Christian mission is to evangelize and transform culture through the centrality of the church, then understanding that culture is paramount."[309]

Thomas E. Bergler, Professor of Christian Thought and Practice at Huntington University in Huntington, Indiana, effectively communicates the challenges that churches committed to a model and practice of IGW worship and ministry face in reaching Gen Z for Christ:

> Generational differences challenge ministry leaders in ways that are similar to cultural differences, in that we are attempting to help individuals grow in faith who may have significantly different life experiences, beliefs, values, and habits than our own. The call to follow Jesus and to grow together to spiritual maturity is timeless, but disciples also live in particular cultural and historical circumstances that in some ways foster and in other ways inhibit their growth. We will be more effective in forming members of Generation Z into communities of mature disciples of Jesus if we adapt our methods to maximize the opportunities and overcome the challenges they face by virtue of their shared generational traits.[310]

Chapter Summary

IGW and ministry, especially as it relates to the corporate worship experience in the local church, is first and foremost a theological issue.[311] Therefore, it is essential for churches and pastors committed to building a culture of intergenerationality to begin by establishing a strong

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308 White, *Meet Generation Z,* 145.

309 Ibid., 11.

310 Thomas E. Bergler, "Generation Z and Spiritual Maturity," *Christian Education Journal: Research on Educational Ministry,* Vol. 17, Issue 1 (April 2020): 75.

311 Davis, 10.

biblical precedent upon which to construct a framework of IGW and ministry. In the Old Testament, we find a number of passages affirming IGW and family-based spiritual formation, as well as narratives of at least three significant worship gatherings at which all generations were present.[312] We also find a precedent for an intergenerational model of worship and ministry in the New Testament. Since Christianity finds its roots in Judaism,[313] many of the Hebraic familial and liturgical customs naturally translated over to early Christian churches.[314] Although the New Testament writers do not specifically impart intergenerational principles or record specific IGW gatherings, the Gospels, the Book of Acts, and the Pauline Epistles nevertheless do offer some insight toward a precedent of IGW and ministry.[315]

For the vast majority of its roughly two-thousand-year existence, the Christian Church has largely practiced a sense of multigenerational inclusiveness within its congregations. In fact, it has only been within the last hundred years or so that societal and cultural changes have gradually fostered the practice of churches separating families and segregating generational cohorts in corporate worship.[316] These societal and cultural changes may be traced from the time of the formation of the American nation to the late twentieth century via four congregational models: The *comprehensive* congregation (1607-1789), the *devotional* congregation (1789-1870), the *social* congregation (1870-1950), and the *participatory* congregation (1950-1990).[317] It is within the realm of the participatory congregational model that concepts and terms such as

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[312] Deuteronomy 6:1-2, 6-9; 29:9-15; 2 Chronicles 20; Psalm 78:1-8; 145:4; Nehemiah 7:73b-8:12.

[313] Shelley, 4.

[314] Allen and Ross, 82.

[315] Matthew 19:13-14; Mark 10:15; Acts 2:46-47; 4:32-35; 12:12; 16:31-34, 40; Romans 16:3-5; Ephesians 5:22, 25; 6:5, 9; Colossians 3:20-21, 4:15; Philemon 1-2.

[316] Allen and Ross, 30.

[317] Holifield, 28-47.

"seeker-sensitive," "church marketing," and the "church-growth movement" originated.[318] It is also within this time frame that many churches, following the lead of a number of significant youth-based parachurch organizations, began segregating the youth cohort from the rest of the congregation,[319] making it all but impossible to successfully transition post-high school youth to a "normal" church experience.[320]

Although the tide is turning and churches of every stripe are lamenting the silos created by age-segregated ministries,[321] congregations and pastoral leaders must still be intentional about creating an atmosphere of intergenerationality in the corporate worship experience,[322] which necessarily involves a thoughtful examination and evaluation of a church's corporate worship style. Upon carefully exploring five of the most commonly-adopted corporate worship models— Liturgical Worship, Traditional Evangelical Worship, Contemporary Worship, Blended Worship, and Emerging Worship[323]—research reveals that a persistent and purposeful practice of *blended worship* most effectively facilitates an IGW paradigm.[324]

But in addition to considering worship style, churches committed to holistically incorporating every generation in worship and ministry must also demonstrate a willingness to effectively reach out to the latest generation, known as Generation Z (Gen Z), those born between approximately 1995 – 2015.[325] Although Gen Z has been labeled "a spiritual blank

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[318] McIntosh, "Why Church Growth Can't Be Ignored," Loc 63-387; and Hamilton, "Willow Creek's Place in History."

[319] Wright, "A Brief History of Youth Ministry," and DeVries, 42-43.

[320] Chap Clark, 17-18.

[321] Allen and Barnett, 17.

[322] Ibid., 23.

[323] Pinson, Loc 73.

[324] McIntosh, 217-222; Allen and Ross, 196; and Lawrence and Dever, Loc 4819.

[325] White, *Meet Generation Z,* 37; Twenge, Loc 122; and Barna Group and Impact 360 Institute, 10.

slate,"[326] many Gen Z thinkers and researchers affirm the importance of family to today's teens.[327] Furthermore, the vast majority of churchgoing and engaged Christian teens indicate that the church is relevant to them and is a place to find answers to live a meaningful life.[328]

These viewpoints regarding Gen Z's association to family and church reveal at least four critical implications of IGW engagement and spiritual formation: 1) Since parents are the primary influencers in a teen's life,[329] it is vital that they take their role as spiritual leaders and teachers in their homes seriously.[330] 2) Churches and youth ministries concerned about producing spiritually mature teens should focus a great deal of their time, energy and resources into purposefully producing spiritually mature parents.[331] 3) Churches and church leadership must acknowledge that only through an *intentional* IGW and ministry paradigm and practice are families, as well as younger and older generations, provided opportunities to consistently worship together, learn from each other, and find a place of belonging.[332] 4) Finally, if churches are serious about reaching Gen Z for Christ, it is vital that pastors, key church leaders, and congregations learn all they can about the Gen Z culture, then plan and implement effective strategies for reaching the unchurched, the "nones," and, even at this early stage, Gen Z.[333]

The literature referenced in this chapter contributes to a body of research which evaluates generational engagement within the local church, especially that of youth, or Gen Z. However,

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[326] Barna Group and Impact 360 Institute, 26.

[327] sparks & honey Cultural Forecast, 51; Twenge, Loc 314-336; and Barna Group and Impact 360 Institute, 82.

[328] Barna Group and Impact 360 Institute, 71.

[329] Black, 29.

[330] Ham and Beemer, 50.

[331] DeVries, 183.

[332] Allen and Barnett, 18.

[333] White, *Meet Generation Z,* 11, 145.

despite an increasing corpus of literature addressing intergenerationality in the corporate worship experience, there is an insufficiency of research concerning the youth-specific benefits of IGW and how youth who consistently participate in IGW may be more likely to stay in church as young adults. To address this gap in the literature and assess the most current research regarding IGW engagement for youth and emerging adults, additional research related to the perspectives of youth currently engaged in IGW and ministry in the local church, as well as current perspectives of emerging adults who were formerly engaged in IGW as youth, is needed.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this qualitative historical study was to identify the youth-specific benefits of an intergenerational paradigm of corporate worship. Additionally, this study set out to demonstrate that youth who consistently engage in IGW are more likely to stay in church as young adults because they understand the benefits of intergenerationality and have been regularly connected with other adults in worship. Finally, this study purposed to ascertain specific factors that may contribute to a lack of buy-in among youth toward an intergenerational corporate worship model. The purpose of this chapter is to explicate the methodology utilized to conduct this qualitative historical study. Per Creswell, this chapter includes sections on research design, the collection of data, and inductive data analysis, which yields several emerging trends.[334] This methodology leads toward a concerted effort to answer the research questions and corroborate the hypotheses,[335] all of which are restated here for clarity's sake.

Research Design

A qualitative historical approach was chosen as the research design. This research design is appropriate for two reasons. First, as Creswell imparts, qualitative historical research involves purposefully selecting documents or visual material that will best help the researcher understand the research problem and the research questions,[336] and as Chapter Two exemplifies, a significant amount of literature was indeed reviewed for this very purpose. Second, a qualitative study is appropriate because the research involves relying on the perspectives of a person's (or

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[334] Creswell, Loc 635-661.

[335] Ibid., Loc 634.

[336] Ibid., Loc 5470-5483.

people group's) experience in a given situation[337]—in this case, the perspectives of youth and emerging adults toward IGW.

The project process began by identifying and stating the research problem. Then, three research questions and three subsequent hypotheses were articulated. Next, the determination was made to design and electronically distribute anonymous survey instruments for the purpose of ascertaining the most current perspectives of youth ages 13-19 actively engaged in IGW, and young adults ages 20-35 formerly engaged in IGW as youth. In order to employ these surveys in the research process, it was necessary to procure approval from Liberty University's Institutional Review Board (IRB). Upon receipt of IRB approval (Appendix A), the surveys were distributed via a network of Protestant churches which practice an intergenerationally-based paradigm of worship and ministry. After all historical and qualitative data was collected, reviewed, and analyzed, the final conclusions and recommendations related to the research questions were formulated and documented.

Research Questions

This project addressed the following research questions:

RQ1: In what ways does an intergenerational corporate worship model benefit youth?

RQ2: In what ways might youth who consistently participate in IGW be more likely to stay in church as young adults?

RQ3: What factors contribute to lack of buy-in among youth toward an intergenerational corporate worship model?

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[337] Robert E. Stake, *Qualitative Research: Studying How Things Work* (New York: The Guilford Press, 2010), 11.

Hypotheses

The subsequent hypotheses of these research questions are as follows:

H1: The youth-specific benefits of an intergenerational model of corporate worship include opportunities for mentorship, meaningful relationships, intentional training in worship and liturgical leadership, and connection with the entire church body.

H2: Youth who consistently participate in IGW are more likely to stay in church as young adults because they recognize the benefits of such a model and have already adapted to being regularly connected with other adults in worship.

H3: Factors that contribute to a lack of buy-in among youth toward an intergenerational corporate worship model include an unbalanced approach in planning liturgical elements, as well as youth being denied a place of service and being underrepresented in the planning and leadership process.

The Collection of Data

The data collection process involved a two-pronged approach. First, scholarly sources addressing generational worship and ministry within the local church—including books, journal articles, theses and dissertations, religious periodicals, and the like—were identified, reviewed, and if found pertinent to this project, selected. After more in-depth explorations of each of these selected pieces of literature, the items most relevant to youth and emerging adult engagement (or lack of engagement) in IGW and ministry were chosen and thoroughly reviewed. To ensure the integrity of the project, each literature source was analyzed using Creswell's recommended reliability and validity measures, with great care taken to avoid any internal or external threats to

validity.[338] Furthermore, throughout the process of collecting and assessing literature, a triangulation approach was followed. Creswell instructs: "Triangulate different data sources by examining evidence from the sources and using it to build a coherent justification for themes. If themes are established based on converging several sources of data … then this process can be claimed as adding to the validity of the study."[339]

Second, and as previously communicated, to ascertain the most current perspectives of youth and young adults regarding IGW and ministry engagement, anonymous surveys were formulated and, after final approval from Liberty University's IRB, electronically distributed. This included two separate survey instruments: One for youth ages 13-19 actively engaged in IGW during the survey (Appendix B), and one for young adults ages 20-35 formerly engaged in IGW as youth (Appendix C). The surveys contained a mixture of open and closed-ended questions which focused on the perspectives of youth and young adults regarding the past and present benefits of being part of a church which practices IGW and ministry. Each survey was designed to be completed within a timeframe of 15-20 minutes. The purpose of the surveys was to gain valuable insight into the youth-specific benefits of IGW and show that youth who consistently participate in IGW may be more likely to stay in church as young adults.

Eligible participants included youth ages 13-19 who, during the survey, were actively involved in a church that conformed to an IGW paradigm, and young adults ages 20-35 who were actively involved as youth in a church that conformed to an IGW paradigm. Both surveys incorporated screening questions at the beginning with skip logic which served to automatically disqualify all who did not meet these eligibility requirements. The following ten churches agreed

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[338] Creswell, Loc 5049-5132.

[339] Ibid., Loc 5826.

to participate in the surveys: First Baptist Church, Live Oak, Florida; Glen Baptist Church, Glen St. Mary, Florida; Antioch Baptist Church, Live Oak, Florida; First Baptist Church, Jasper, Florida; Mt. Olive Baptist Church, Live Oak, Florida; Lighthouse Christian Fellowship, Antioch, Tennessee; Westwood Baptist Church, Live Oak, Florida; First Baptist Church, Bonifay, Florida; First Baptist Church, High Springs, Florida; and, Anastasia 16 Church, St. Augustine, Florida. There were 75 participants in all: 44 youth and 31 young adults. The survey was active from June 19, 2020 to August 19, 2020.

The consent process was facilitated thusly: The survey links/recruitment emails for minor youth (ages 13-17) were forwarded by the senior pastors, worship pastors, and/or administrative assistants of the participating churches directly to the parents/guardians of those youth with an attached parental consent form. After parents/guardians read the parental consent form, they could choose to forward the survey link to their child/ward ages 13-17 or allow their child/ward to complete the survey in their presence. Doing either would indicate that they had read the parental consent information and would allow their child/ward to take part in the survey. The survey links/recruitment emails for youth ages 18-19, and the survey links/recruitment emails for young adults ages 20-35, were forwarded by the senior pastors, worship pastors, and/or administrative assistants of the participating churches directly to those youth and young adults. A general consent form comprised the first two pages of each survey. All who wished to participate in the survey were directed to select the "Yes" box below the general consent form, thereby indicating their desire and granting their consent to participate in the survey.

Data Analysis

An inductive approach was used in analyzing the data yielded by the survey instruments. The process and purposes for using an inductive approach are imparted by David R. Thomas,

Professor Emeritus at the University of Auckland, New Zealand, and include: 1) Condensing raw textual data into a brief, summary format; 2) Establishing clear links between the evaluation or research objectives and the summary findings derived from the raw data; and, 3) Developing a framework of the underlying structure of experiences or processes that are evident in the raw data.[340] Thomas goes on to state that the general inductive approach "provides a convenient and efficient way of analyzing qualitative data that can produce reliable and valid findings."[341]

Creswell adds, "Those who engage in this form of inquiry [a qualitative research approach] support a way of looking at research that honors an inductive style, a focus on individual meaning, and the importance of reporting the complexity of a situation."[342] Furthermore, Creswell writes, "Researchers recognize that their own backgrounds shape their interpretation, and they position themselves in the research to acknowledge how their interpretation flows from their personal, cultural, and historical experiences. The researcher's intent is to make sense of (or interpret) the meanings others have about the world … [and in doing so] inquirers generate or inductively develop a theory or pattern of meaning."[343] After thoroughly examining and inductively analyzing the survey data from both the youth and young adult survey instruments, the resultant findings are fully developed in the next chapter.

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[340] David R. Thomas, "A General Inductive Approach for Analyzing Qualitative Evaluation Data," *American Journal of Evaluation,* Vol. 27, No. 2 (June 2006): 237.

[341] Ibid., 246.

[342] Creswell, Loc 639.

[343] Ibid., Loc 736.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH FINDINGS

Research Summary

This chapter presents the findings of research conducted in an effort to explore the youth-specific benefits of IGW, ascertain ways that youth who consistently participate in IGW might be more likely to stay in church as young adults, and identify factors that may contribute to a lack of buy-in among youth toward an IGW model. The research data gleaned from reviewed literature, as well as the youth and young adult anonymous electronic survey instruments, fundamentally supported the hypotheses. Furthermore, the surveys yielded qualitative data and personal insights which overwhelmingly confirm that both youth and young adult cohorts do indeed recognize the benefits of an IGW model—which include opportunities for mentorship, meaningful relationships, intentional training in worship and liturgical leadership, and connection with the entire church body—and are more likely to stay in church as young adults because they have already adapted to being regularly connected with other adults in worship.

In the remainder of this chapter, the survey data for both the youth and young adult surveys will be systematically elucidated, and will include a careful selection of the most relevant answers and personal reflections of youth and young adult respondents.

Research Overview: Youth Survey

General Consent

Question 1: This question served to confirm or deny the respondent's general consent to participate in the survey. If the respondent chose "Yes," this indicated the respondent's desire to participate in the survey. If the respondent chose "No," the converse was true and the respondent was eliminated as a survey participant.

Eligibility Verification

Questions 1 – 3: These questions served to verify the respondent's eligibility to participate in the survey. Respondents for the youth survey must have been between 13-19 years of age, must have regularly attended worship at their current church (at least twice a month), and must have been attending a church which practiced IGW.

Main Questions

Question 1: This question sought to ascertain the participant's perspective regarding the main purpose of Sunday morning worship ("Sunday morning" denotes a church's main corporate worship gathering). Six choices were offered, including an "Other" answer with a 50-word maximum dialogue box to specify. 81% of respondents chose "Worship and glorify God," with the remaining percentage of respondents choosing "Help Christians grow in their walk with Jesus" and "Win the lost to Jesus" (See Appendix B, Page 5 and Appendix D, Figure 1).

Question 2: The purpose of this question was to determine which elements in any given worship service were most meaningful to those youth surveyed. Nine worship elements common to a broad spectrum of worship and liturgical styles were included: Praying, preaching/teaching, music/singing, being with friends, the Lord's Supper/Communion, Baptism, the reading of Scripture, personal testimonies, and drama ministry (see Appendix B, Page 6). Respondents were to rank each element in order of importance to them personally. Appendix D, Figure 2 reveals the respondents' rankings in descending order, from most important to least important.

Question 3: This question was a follow-up to the previous question, and asked participants to list why they ranked the nine worship elements as they did. Some of the more relevant and meaningful responses include:

Respondent #44: "Worshipping is about giving glory to God and we should talk and listen to Him throughout that process." (*Praying* was ranked highest).

Respondent #23: "The preaching carries meaning because Jesus was constantly teaching and preaching to His disciples." (*Preaching/Teaching* was ranked highest).

Respondent #2: "Worship through music/singing prepares my heart for all the next things & it is my favorite way of glorifying God." (*Music/Singing* was ranked highest).

Respondent #8: "Reading the scripture helps me have a better understanding of [the] overall lesson and helps me remember the lesson I can look back on or follow up on it later on." (*The Reading of Scripture* was ranked highest).

Question 4: This question was specifically designed to inform all of the research questions, but especially RQ1 and RQ3. Furthermore, it directly relates to the thesis project title. As such, it was one of the more significant questions included in the survey, if not the single most important. Respondents were provided a list of six of the most distinguishable benefits that can be fully realized only within the scope of an IGW and ministry paradigm: 1) Being mentored by those older than me; 2) Opportunities to mentor those younger than me; 3) Worshiping with my family (siblings, parents, grandparents, etc.); 4) Connection with the entire church body; 5) A variety of worship elements that are mutually meaningful to all; and, 6) Opportunities to serve in worship leadership roles. An "Other" answer was included as a seventh choice, with a 50-word maximum dialogue box to specify (See Appendix B, Page 7). Then, participants were asked to check all benefits that they enjoy as a youth involved in IGW at their current church. The results may be viewed in Figure 3 (Appendix D) in descending order, and will be more fully developed and communicated in the subsequent section on emerging trends.

Question 5: Respondents were asked to indicate any worship leadership roles in which they currently serve at their church. Figure 4 (Appendix D) reveals the answers in descending order. **Please Note:** "Other," which is listed as the highest response, may be largely disregarded in that most of the specificities given by respondents were along the line of, "None of the above." Although these findings do not clearly validate H1 or H3, they do serve as a key reminder that one of the specific benefits of IGW—intentional training in worship and liturgical leadership—is being experienced among approximately 25% of all respondents.

Questions 6 and 7: These two questions are grouped because they represent opposing viewpoints in relation to peer-segregated worship models versus generationally-variegated worship models. Question 6 asks participants to respond to the following statement: "It is important for youth to worship with children and adults." Respondents could strongly agree, agree, remain neutral, disagree, or strongly disagree. 56% of respondents chose "Strongly Agree," 41% chose "Agree," and 3% chose "Neutral." Using the same five responses, participants were asked to react to the following statement in Question 7: "I would rather worship only with others of my own age group." In descending order, 34% of respondents chose "Neutral," 25% chose "Disagree," 22% chose "Agree," and 19% chose "Strongly Disagree."

These findings yield at least two suppositions. First, over twice as many respondents indicated that it is more important for youth to worship with other generations than it is for youth to only worship with their peers, which would appear to indicate that a majority of youth acknowledge the importance of the generations worshiping together. Also, while 22% of respondents indicated that they would rather worship only with peers, no youth whatsoever disagreed to any extent with the statement, "It is important for youth to worship with children and adults." This is certainly encouraging news.

Questions 8 – 10: These three questions all relate to teens' perspectives on worshiping together with the various members of their families—specifically, with younger siblings (Question 8), older siblings (Question 9), and parents and grandparents (Question 10). As with the two previous questions, the same five responses—strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, or strongly disagree—were offered as options. Discounting neutral responses, 57% indicated they strongly agree or agree there is value in worshiping together with younger siblings, and 53% indicate the same regarding worshiping together with older siblings. Curiously, one respondent strongly disagreed that they found any value in worshiping with their younger or older siblings. Sibling rivalry in action, perhaps?

The most remarkable responses were to Question 10. A full 84% of youth surveyed agreed they found value in worshiping together with parents and grandparents, which again supports the place of parents as primary influencers in their children's lives.[344]

Question 11: Question 11 is included to gauge the biblical perspectives of respondents toward IGW. The question is expressed in this statement: "I believe the Bible speaks to the importance of the generations worshiping together." The same five responses—strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, or strongly disagree—were offered as answer options. The vast majority of respondents (94%) strongly agree or agree that the Bible speaks to the importance of the generations worshiping together. The specific results may be viewed in Figure 5 (Appendix D).

Questions 12 – 14: This grouping of questions sought to determine how many adults (other than parents or grandparents) the respondents knew fairly well and interacted with on a regular basis at their church, and how many of these adults had effected a positive spiritual influence in their lives. Then, Question 14 asked respondents to specifically share how one or

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[344] Black, 29.

more of these adults had positively influenced them spiritually. As Figures 6 and 7 show (Appendix D), 59% of youth respondents indicated they knew and interacted with more than 10 adults, and profoundly significant is that 88% of these respondents feel at least one of these adults had positively influenced them spiritually.

In response to Question 14, many respondents shared specifically how these adults had influenced them spiritually, and these comments served to be the most moving and memorable of the entire survey, at least for the researcher. They speak powerfully toward the IGW benefits of opportunities for mentorship, meaningful relationships, and connection with the entire church body. Some of the more relevant and meaningful responses are shared below:

Respondent #38: "They have been great accountability partners to and with me."

Respondent #41: "Leading a Bible study that helped me grow spiritually and stay accountable."

Respondent #25: "By being a [*sic*] example of being a Christian at every stage of life; they have already went [*sic*] through what I may go through and can help."

Respondent #2: "They have helped me deepen & grow in my walk in Christ. They have given me a godly example & are an inspiration to me."

Respondent #35: "They have helped me in my walk with Jesus and have helped me better understand the importance of Christianity."

Respondent #27: "They have shown me how to [be] like Christ each day and to keep him my number one priority."

Respondent #13: "All of the music leaders have been so encouraging and kind to me when I started giving my talents to God."

Questions 15 – 19: The findings for these five questions speak toward the latter half of H3, and to a lesser degree, H1. Question 15 specifically sought to determine whether or not the participating churches included youth in the worship planning and leadership process. Answer choices were Yes, No, or Unsure. Question 16 asked participants to respond to the following statement: "I believe that serving in one or more worship leadership roles gives me a better appreciation for intergenerational worship." Question 17 then followed up on this statement with, "If I were not given the opportunity to serve in any worship leadership roles at my church, I would be less likely to attend church or want to attend church." Questions 16 and 17 included the same five responses used for previous questions (strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, or strongly disagree). Questions 18 and 19, which were closely related to Question 15, asked respondents whether they felt the pastoral leaders at their church took their thoughts, opinions, and ideas about worship into consideration. Again, the answer choices were strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, or strongly disagree. The findings for these questions may be viewed in Figures 8 – 12 (Appendix D).

These five questions returned somewhat of a "mixed bag" of findings. First, there is encouragement in the results of Question 15, which reveal that well over half of the participating churches do include youth in the worship planning and leadership process, a strong indicator of a truly intergenerational church. As Parsley writes, churches committed to an intergenerational concept of worship and ministry "respect their younger co-laborers by allowing them to give input, carry responsibility, and accept a place at the table where new ideas and creativity can improve our effectiveness as the church."[345] The findings from Question 16 are also

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[345] Parsley, Loc 1051.

encouraging, and show that 62% of the respondents either strongly agree or agree that serving in one or more worship leadership roles has given them a better appreciation for IGW.

Question 17 yielded interesting responses. Disregarding the 28% of neutral responses (which may be from participants who do not serve in any worship leadership roles at their respective churches), slightly over half of the respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that they would be less likely to attend church or want to attend church if not given the opportunity to serve in any worship leadership roles. There are several possible conclusions for these findings:

1) It may indicate that these youth are highly committed to regular church attendance regardless of whether or not they are allowed to serve in worship leadership roles.

2) These findings may show that youth being denied a place of service and being underrepresented in the planning and leadership process are actually *not* factors that contribute to a lack of buy-in among youth toward an intergenerational corporate worship model, which would appear to discount the latter portion of H3 to an extent.

3) It is possible that even though the survey was clearly established as being anonymous in the general consent document, some respondents may have been concerned about negative or critical answers somehow being discovered by parents or church leaders.

4) Or, as findings from Questions 18 and 19 clearly indicate, it may show that, at least in the case of these youth participants, there is a strong perception that their thoughts, opinions, and ideas about worship are taken into consideration by the pastoral leadership at their churches, which in itself evokes a strong sense of buy-in and trust.

Questions 20 – 23: The inclusion of these four questions encompassed a specific effort to support H2 and corroborate the first part of H3, which theorizes one of the factors that

contributes to a lack of buy-in among youth toward an intergenerational corporate worship model may be an unbalanced approach in planning liturgical elements, especially musical elements. For Questions 20 – 22, participants could strongly agree, agree, remain neutral, disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statements:

Question 20: Experiencing a wide range of musical styles, such as hymns and modern worship songs, choirs and praise teams, bands and orchestras, etc. enhances my worship.

Question 21: I prefer worship music specifically tailored to my age group and wish my church included more of the styles of music I like.

Question 22: I am willing to give up some of what I prefer in worship so that others of different age groups may also experience meaningful worship.

Question 23 was designed to reveal whether or not participants felt that musical style is one of the main elements of corporate worship that causes divisions and disagreements, and in all honesty is simply a measure of determining the respondents' perspectives on the worship wars of the past several decades. And even though, according to Mike Harland, former Director of LifeWay Worship, worship wars have waned or altogether ceased in most churches,[346] 56% of these youth respondents indicated they believe that musical style is indeed still a divisive and contentious subject among congregations. The findings for Questions 20 – 23 may be viewed in Figures 13 – 16 (Appendix D).

Although at first glance the findings for Questions 20 and 21 may seem to conflict with one another, in reality this is not the case. Answers to Question 20 revealed that 72% of youth

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[346] Aaron Earls, "Most Churches Aren't Engaged in a Worship War Over Music," *LifeWay Research,* August 28, 2019, accessed September 07, 2020, https://lifewayresearch.com/2019/08/28/most-churches-arent-engaged-in-a-worship-war-over-music/.

surveyed agreed or strongly agreed their worship was enhanced by a wide range of musical styles—i.e., by a blended or balanced worship format. Findings from Question 21 showed that nearly 60% of respondents preferred music specifically tailored to their age group and wished their churches included more of the styles of music they like. The explanation for this is straightforward, and has previously been explored in this project.

First, we are a people of diverse and broad cultural backgrounds, life experiences, and personal preferences.[347] God creates each human being with distinctive traits and a unique personality,[348] and this certainly includes likes and dislikes related to music. So, in one sense, it is only natural that youth, or for that matter, any generation, would want to hear and sing more of the music they enjoy. Indeed, if this question had been asked of a different generational group, the answer would almost certainly have been the same.

However, the dark side of the answer to these two questions has to do with the foundation upon which every other sin is fashioned—idolatry of self. David Wells powerfully expounds this truth in his book, *Losing Our Virtue:* "Much of the Church today, especially that part of it which is evangelical, is in captivity to this idolatry of the self. This is a form of corruption far more profound than the list of infractions that typically pop into our minds when we hear the word 'sin.' We are trying to hold at bay the gnats of small sins while swallowing the camel of self."[349]

The bright spot in this series of questions is found in Question 22. In response to this question, 78% of the respondents indicated they agree or strongly agree to a willingness to give up some of what they prefer in worship so that others of different age groups may also

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[347] Whaley, 15.

[348] Cleveland, 22.

[349] David F. Wells, *Losing Our Virtue: Why the Church Must Recover Its Moral Vision* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1998), 203-204.

experience meaningful worship. This is surely one of the more significant findings of the surveys—first, because it strikes a powerful blow at the very heart of the issue of self-idolatry, and second, because it is yet another reminder that a persistent and purposeful practice of blended worship best serves to facilitate an IGW paradigm.

Questions 24 – 26: Questions 24 and 25 were formulated to ascertain respondents' perspectives on likes and dislikes regarding IGW and ministry in general, and the final survey question sought to discover the one thing respondents would change about the main worship service at their church. These viewpoints not only inform all of the research questions, but in actuality, they speak toward the gist of the entire project. A sampling of the most noteworthy and relevant responses are included below:

Question 24: "As a youth who regularly participates in intergenerational worship at your church, what are some aspects of intergenerational worship you like?"

Respondent #43: "It proves that age doesn't define the strength of your relationship with God."

Respondent #41: "Getting to play [music] with people of a higher skill level to enhance my ability … and sound good as a unit."

Respondent #10: "How it brings the generations together."

Respondent #35: "People coming together as one body in Christ, with no judgement and the same intention only to worship God."

Respondent #32: "The ability to bond with people of different ages."

Question 25: "As a youth who regularly participates in intergenerational worship at your church, what are some aspects of intergenerational worship you do not like?"

Respondent #16: "Older/wiser people looking down upon students only because of age."

Respondent #17: "Music that I don't understand."

Respondent #21: "Sometimes hard to follow the message and get things out of it."

Respondent #44: "I wish modern and up-tempo music were used more often."

Respondent #33: "The older songs and not enough variety."

Question 26: "If you could change one thing about the main worship service at your church, it would be:"

Respondent #43: "To have more passion, it's so dry. Instead of singing with just their voices they should also sing with their hearts."

Respondent #21: "More visual teaching methods (i.e., videos / pictures) during services."

Respondent #19: "Less time spent singing."

Respondent #38: "More contemporary music."

Respondent #16: "Have more youth involved actually encourage them to be apart [*sic*] of the church."

Respondent #26: "I wish it would be easier to understand for younger people."

<div align="center">

Research Overview: Young Adult Survey

General Consent

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Question 1: This question served to confirm or deny the respondent's general consent to participate in the survey. If the respondent chose "Yes," this indicated the respondent's desire to

participate in the survey. If the respondent chose "No," the converse was true and the respondent was eliminated as a survey participant.

<div align="center">Eligibility Verification</div>

Questions 1 – 3: These questions served to verify the respondent's eligibility to participate in the survey. Young adult survey participants must have been between 20-35 years of age and must have been actively involved in IGW at the church they attended as a youth.

<div align="center">Main Questions</div>

The young adult survey findings will be less detailed than the youth survey findings, especially on questions that were also asked of the youth respondents. The primary goal of the young adult survey questions was to inform RQ2 and support H2. To that end, the majority of this section will focus on the survey findings specifically related to RQ2 and H2.

Questions 1 – 3: The first three questions of the young adult survey mirrored those of the youth survey. All of these questions may be viewed in Appendix C, Pages 5-6. Findings from Question 1, which sought to ascertain respondents' perspective on the main purpose of Sunday morning worship, reveal that only 62% of young adult respondents chose "Worship and glorify God," as opposed to 81% of youth. In Question 2, participants were asked to rank nine common worship elements in order of importance to them personally. Specific findings for Questions 1 and 2 may be viewed in Appendix E, Figures 1 and 2. Question 3 was a follow-up to Question 2, and asked respondents why they ranked the nine worship elements as they did. Some of the more notable responses are below:

> Respondent #30: "I believe teaching/preaching scripture is the primary purpose of a gathering of believers—true worship involves knowing God, and that's accomplished in teaching & preaching scripture." (*Preaching/Teaching* was ranked highest).

<div align="center">110</div>

Respondent #8: "I grew up with a Grandfather who led the music portion of our worship service and my Father sang in a gospel quartet. I guess because I was immersed in music early and throughout my life it speaks to me." (*Music/Singing* was ranked highest).

Respondent #15: "I believe that communion with each other is important both mentally and spiritually." (*Being with Friends* was ranked highest).

Questions 4 – 7: These questions directly relate to the primary purpose of the young adult survey, which was to verify that youth who consistently participate in IGW are more likely to stay in church as young adults. To make this determination, it was necessary to survey young adults aged 20-35 who were actively involved in IGW at the church they attended as a youth. Since these questions speak directly to this purpose, and are pointedly relevant to RQ2 and H2, each of them will be developed separately.

Question 4: "I attend the same church today I attended as a youth." 46% of respondents answered "Yes;" 54% answered "No."

Question 5: "I feel that a primary reason I regularly attend church today as a young adult is because I attended a church which practiced intergenerational worship as a youth." 69% of respondents indicated they agree or strongly agree, 23% chose "neutral," and only 8% disagreed (see Appendix E, Figure 3). These findings serve to support H2.

Question 6: "I believe that if I had not attended a church which practiced intergenerational worship as a youth, I would be less likely to regularly attend church now as a young adult." 65% of respondents indicated they agree or strongly agree, 15% chose "neutral," and 19% disagreed or strongly disagreed (see Appendix E, Figure 4). Although these findings are not quite as convincing as those of Question 5, nevertheless, well over half the respondents indicated that attending a church as a youth which held to

an intergenerational scope and practice of worship was a primary factor in their church attendance today.

Question 7: "At the church which practiced intergenerational worship I attended as a youth, I feel that I enjoyed the following benefits." This question largely mirrors Question 4 of the youth survey, and like the youth respondents, these young adult responses show that the two benefits most enjoyed were worshiping with their families and connection with the entire church body.

However, while the youth survey findings showed a 72% return for "Worshiping with my family," a remarkable 81% of the young adult respondents indicated worshiping with family was enjoyed as a benefit. Even more significant, 85% of young adult respondents indicated that connection with the entire church body was an IGW benefit enjoyed, making it the number one response of the young adult participants (see Appendix E, Figure 5).

Questions 8 – 10: These three questions mirror Questions 8-10 in the youth surveys, which relate to respondent perspectives on worshiping together with the various members of their families—specifically, with younger siblings (Question 8), older siblings (Question 9), and parents and grandparents (Question 10). Notable is the finding that young adults, even more so than youth, strongly agreed (46%) or agreed (38%) they found value in worshiping together with parents and grandparents (see Appendix E, Figures 6 – 8).

Questions 11 – 13: These three questions mirror Questions 12-14 in the youth survey, which sought to determine how many adults (other than parents or grandparents) the respondents knew fairly well and interacted with on a regular basis at their church, as well as how many of these adults had exhibited a positive spiritual influence in their lives. Then, Question 13 asked respondents to specifically share how one or more of these adults had positively influenced them

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spiritually. Findings for Questions 11 and 12 may be viewed in Appendix E, Figures 9 and 10. A few of the most relevant young adult responses garnered from Question 13 are listed below:

Respondent #25: "I went to a very small church and spoke to almost everyone each week … I think as a whole the interconnectedness of that church and all the members of the body helped to create who I am in Christ today."

Respondent #13: "I was guided through the rough teenage years I experienced by multiple older women in the church. I was also prayed for devoutly by multiple people in my church."

Respondent #2: "I was shy with my parents when it came to anything spiritual so the other adults were the ones I went to when I had questions. The adults on the worship team and band were also like mentors to me and often encouraged me to step out in faith. I was terrified of singing in public as a teen, but their encouragement helped me grow in boldness."

Respondent #7: "I spent age 7 through age 22 in the same church, where my father's sister's families and my paternal grandmother attended. I did not have a grandfather on either side, so I had many older couples who ministered to me as grandparents, and I enjoyed listening to them talk about their life experiences and why it was important to honor the Lord in your life."

Questions 14 – 17, and Question 22: Question 22 mirrors Question 15 in the youth survey, and was inadvertently placed incorrectly in the young adult survey. Questions 14-17 here mirror Questions 16-19 in the youth survey. Each question will be briefly expounded below (full findings in Appendix E: Figures 11-14).

Question 22: "The church I attended as a teenager included youth in the worship planning and leadership process." The young adult response to this question was very different from that of the youth. Whereas 56% of youth respondents answered this question affirmatively, only 35% of the young adult respondents answered "Yes." What is more, a sizeable percentage (42%) of the young adult respondents indicated that the church they attended as teenagers did *not* include youth in the worship planning and leadership process, whereas this figure for the youth respondents was significantly lower, at only 16%.

Question 14: "I believe that serving in one or more worship leadership roles as a youth has given me a better appreciation for intergenerational worship today as a young adult." 80% of the young adult participants indicated they strongly agree or agree with this statement, with the remaining 20% choosing neutral.

Question 15: "If I had not been given the opportunity to serve in any worship leadership roles at the church I attended while a youth, I probably would not be actively involved in church today as a young adult." If youth who consistently participate in IGW are more likely to stay in church as young adults because they recognize the benefits of IGW, including training in worship and liturgical leadership, then findings for this question relate specifically to H2. Although 47% of young adult respondents agreed or strongly agreed with this statement, 31% disagreed and 23% remained neutral. These percentages would appear to point to the same conclusions regarding the findings for Question 17 in the youth survey (see Page 102), with the possible exception of Conclusion 3.

Questions 16 and 17: These questions were included to ascertain whether or not the young adult respondents felt the pastoral leaders at the church they attended as a youth took their thoughts, opinions, and ideas about worship into consideration. The response choices were

strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, or strongly disagree. Whereas 60% of the youth

respondents strongly agreed or agreed that the pastoral leaders at their church did take their

thoughts, opinions, and ideas about worship into consideration, these numbers were considerably

lower for the young adults, with only 43% agreeing or strongly agreeing.

Questions 18 – 21: These questions mirrored Questions 20-23 in the youth survey. Each

question will be briefly expounded below (full findings in Appendix E: Figures 15-18). Response

choices for Questions 18-20 were strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, or strongly disagree.

Question 21 responses were Yes, No, or Not Sure.

Question 18: "Experiencing a wide range of musical styles, such as hymns and modern

worship songs, choirs and praise teams, bands and orchestras, etc. enhances my worship." While

72% of the youth respondents strongly agreed or agreed, 9% disagreed and a surprising 19%

chose "Neutral." The results for the young adult respondents were appreciably more positive, in

that nearly every respondent (96%) strongly agreed or agreed, and no one disagreed.

Question 19: "I prefer worship music specifically tailored to my age group and wish my

current church included more of the styles of music I like." These findings were also markedly

different between the youth and young adult respondents. Whereas 28% of the youth participants

strongly agreed with this statement, *none* of the young adult participants strongly agreed, and

only 27% agreed. Even more telling is the percentage difference in the "disagree" response. Only

9% of youth respondents disagreed with this statement, but a remarkable 42% of the young adult

group disagreed. Although a number of conclusions may be drawn from these findings, two are

developed below:

1) The spiritual, and for that matter, the emotional and psychological maturity of the young

adult participants served to shape their responses. Along these same lines, the intellectual

maturity of the young adults likely helped them see the "big picture" of this series of questions more so than the youth cohort.

2) As a fellow worship pastor conveyed after walking his church through a transition from a generationally-segregated worship model to an IGW model, the youth contingent in his own congregation "indicated a preference for worship designed for their own age group" and "favored contemporary music heavily."[350] Another worship pastor who likewise led his church through a similar transition shared with the researcher via a phone conversation that the majority of the youth in his congregation were very resistant to a shift away from a peer-driven worship format to an IGW format.[351]

An initial response for some regarding this might be to shift blame to the youth themselves and attribute it to their selfishness and unwillingness. However, church leaders who have long cultivated and facilitated a veritable buffet of generationally-segregated worship styles need look no further than in the mirror to realize where the blame lies. The truth is, in the decades-long wake of churches systematically separating teens from adults in worship, a self-centered paradigm of worship and ministry has become the norm for many youth.[352] Rather than working to connect teens to the total body of Christ so they learn how to be mature Christian adults by being around people who exhibit such maturity themselves, many churches have created the very pattern of worship and ministry that exacerbates such behavior.[353] And in doing so, we have

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[350] Davis, 91.

[351] Anonymous.

[352] DeVries, 36.

[353] Ibid., 37-43.

conditioned our youth to be resistant to a worship model many of them have never even known or experienced.[354]

Question 20: "I am willing to give up some of what I prefer in worship so that others of different age groups may also experience meaningful worship." Some of the same matters regarding the findings of the previous two questions also apply to this question. 78% of youth respondents strongly agreed or agreed with this statement, which is an encouraging finding, to be sure. Nevertheless, 13% chose to remain neutral, and 9% disagreed. In comparison, nearly all of the young adult respondents (93%) strongly agreed or agreed, only 8% remained neutral, and none disagreed. Although the majority of both surveyed groups acknowledge a willingness to forego some of their worship preferences, which is a profoundly significant finding, the young adults' response was especially striking.

Question 21: "Would you agree musical style is one of the main elements of corporate worship that tends to cause divisions and disagreements?" Although percentages for both youth and young adults on this question were similar, it is noteworthy that 73% of the young adult participants answered affirmatively and only 12% negatively, versus 56% of youth answering affirmatively and 25% negatively. Most compelling is that the majority of both youth and young adults recognize that musical style in worship can be and often is a contentious subject.

Questions 23 – 25: These questions mirrored Questions 24 – 26 of the youth survey, which were devised to establish respondents' perspectives on likes and dislikes regarding IGW and ministry in general. Question 25, the final young adult survey question, sought to discover

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[354] Chap Clark, "The Strategy of Adoptive Youth Ministry," 17.

the one thing respondents would have changed about the main worship service at the church they attended as a youth. A sampling of the most relevant and meaningful responses are below:

Question 23: "As a young adult who regularly participated in intergenerational worship as a youth, what are some aspects of intergenerational worship you liked?"

Respondent #27: "Seeing people of all ages worship encouraged me."

Respondent #19: "Worshipping as a multi-generational family!"

Respondent #6: "I loved seeing the older generation connect with the truths of songs that they grew up singing."

Question 24: "As a young adult who regularly participated in intergenerational worship as a youth, what are some aspects of intergenerational worship you did not like?"

Respondent #24: "Music was somewhat 'aged' sometimes, not as much 'contemporary' music and sometimes the style was not right for the song."

Respondent #11: "I did not like singing songs that I did not understand the words to. Some of the older hymns do not have meaning to me because of the older language or the message being unclear. It was not necessarily the genre as much as it was the lyrics."

Respondent #4: "The organ."

Question 25: "If you could have changed one thing about the main worship service at the church you attended as a youth, it would have been:"

Respondent #9: "Simply the introduction of more modern worship songs; growth in the areas of worship instead of the same worship service as the previous decade."

Respondent #2: "Having church leadership address the differences in how youth view church and worship vs how adults do. This issue caused unnecessary division in our church in part because of the silence of our leadership on the topic."

Respondent #27: "Having the pastoral staff consult with the youth as to what they would like to hear in the main service."

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS

This chapter includes a brief summary of the study, including a synopsis of its purpose and research methodology. A summary of the research findings is also incorporated. After briefly developing the limitations of the study, the bulk of this chapter explicates five emerging trends from both the reviewed literature and the survey findings, along with conclusions and implications for churches regarding each of these emerging trends. Finally, the chapter and this project concludes with suggestions for future research in this area.

Summary of the Study

Although there is a hopeful trend toward bringing the generations back together in corporate worship,[355] many churches still choose to practice generationally-segregated models of worship and ministry,[356] thereby severely limiting or even altogether eliminating opportunities for youth to experience the benefits of mentorship, meaningful relationships, intentional training in worship and liturgical leadership, and connection with the entire church body. Therefore, a qualitative historical study was undertaken for the purpose of ascertaining how an intergenerational corporate worship model specifically benefits youth, as well as whether or not youth who consistently participate in IGW might be more likely to stay in church beyond high school. Additionally, factors which may contribute to a lack of buy-in among youth toward an intergenerational corporate worship model were examined and evaluated. Finally, since this project was youth-focused, a brief but pensive study of the implications of IGW and spiritual formation for Gen Z was carried out. The two-pronged research approach involved purposefully consulting and assessing the most scholarly and relevant literature available, as well as

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[355] Allen and Barnett, 17.

[356] Allen and Ross, 30-31.

formulating and electronically distributing youth and young adult survey instruments via ten participating local evangelical churches.

Summary of Findings

The research data gleaned from reviewed literature, as well as the findings from the youth and young adult survey instruments, fundamentally supported the hypotheses. Moreover, the surveys yielded qualitative data and personal insights which overwhelmingly confirm that both youth and young adults do recognize the benefits of an IGW model, including opportunities for mentorship, meaningful relationships, intentional training in worship and liturgical leadership, and connection with the entire church body. Furthermore, the survey data, and especially that collected from the young adult cohort, strongly supports that youth are more likely to stay in church as young adults because they have already adapted to being regularly connected with other adults in worship. The most relevant and meaningful data, as well as conclusions drawn from the data, will be fully developed later in this chapter.

Limitations of the Study

The researcher acknowledges the following limitations of this study:

1. Although the body of literature regarding Gen Z and IGW is on the rise, there is still a dearth of research concerning the youth-specific benefits of IGW and how youth who consistently participate in IGW may be more likely to stay in church as young adults. As a natural result of this insufficiency of literature, the supply of sources to draw from that were precisely focused on the research objectives was limited.

2. Those who were born within Gen Z's timeline (1995 – 2015)[357] include today's preschoolers and preteens, all the way through emerging adults in their early to mid-20s. Therefore, research regarding Gen Z, which some call "the last generation,"[358] is ever-emerging. Nevertheless, considering that the majority of existing research on Gen Z demonstrates a consistent coherency and is generally in agreement regarding its data and inferences, the researcher is confident that sources used for explicating the implications of IGW and spiritual formation for Gen Z in this project are valid and relevant.

3. While the surveys were effective in yielding findings that essentially supported the hypotheses, especially H1 and H2, the researcher admits that the number of respondents for both instruments fell woefully short of the goal of 250 youth and 250 young adult participants. This is true even though the researcher contacted well over 100 worship pastors and/or senior pastors in the months leading up to the distribution of the surveys.

    A likely reason for the low number of respondents is that the surveys were carried out during the height of the Coronavirus pandemic, specifically, from June 19, 2020 to August 19, 2020. During this time, thousands of churches shifted from gathering physically for worship to solely meeting online. The researcher was informed by worship pastors from several churches consulted for potential inclusion in the survey process, including the two largest, that their churches would not be able to participate because the congregations were not physically meeting for corporate worship, and because the

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[357] White, *Meet Generation Z,* 37; Twenge, Loc 122; and Barna Group and Impact 360 Institute, 10.

[358] White, *Meet Generation Z,* 38.

pastoral leadership of those churches were in the midst of navigating through the "new normal" of COVID-19 and needed to devote their full attention toward that. Nonetheless, the researcher is confident that the survey findings, especially those from which the following emerging trends flow, are valid and meaningful for this project.

Emerging Trends

The survey findings yield five clear emerging trends:

1. 81% of youth and 62% of young adult respondents indicated that the main purpose of Sunday morning worship is to worship and glorify God. This trend is reassuring in that it indicates a biblical understanding of the purpose of corporate worship in the local church among a majority of younger generations.

   Ligon Duncan expounds: "If one has any other goal in gathered worship than engaging with God, coming into the presence of God to glorify and enjoy Him—any other aim than to ascribe His worth, commune with Him, and receive His favor—then one has yet to understand worship. For in biblical worship, we focus on God Himself and acknowledge His inherent and unique worthiness."[359]

2. Surveyed youth indicated that the two benefits most enjoyed in an IGW setting were "Worshiping with my family" (72%) and "Connection with the entire church body" (69%). Upon reviewing data from the young adult cohort, these numbers rose to 81% for "Worshiping with my family" and a remarkable 85% for "Connection with the entire church body." These findings serve to corroborate hypotheses one and two, as well as

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[359] Duncan, Loc 2067.

fundamentally supporting the four critical Gen Z implications of IGW engagement and spiritual formation explicated toward the end of Chapter 2.

These findings also directly correlate with Allen and Ross' words about "belongingness."[360] Nearly three-quarters of the youth respondents, and well *over* three-quarters of the young adult respondents, indicated that connection with the entire church body—a benefit inherent only within IGW and ministry—is important to them. These results are profoundly meaningful toward the premise of this entire project, as well as to local congregations of every ilk.

Karen Rask Behling, pastor at Our Savior's Lutheran Church in Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin, reflects on her memories of growing up in a church that purposefully facilitated IGW and ministry: "It was significant to be known. I knew I *belonged* (emphasis added) in that community of believers; I knew that my life mattered to others."[361] As Allen and Ross impart, "To be received by a multigenerational body of believers is to belong at a deeply satisfying level."[362]

3. Closely linked with the previous trend, and further supporting the Gen Z implications of IGW engagement and spiritual formation from Chapter 2—as well as the importance of family to today's teens and the role of parents as primary influencers in their lives[363]—

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[360] Allen and Ross, 48.

[361] Karen Rask Behling and Carol Rask, "Ordinary Time: Intergenerational Ministry," in *Ordinary Ministry, Extraordinary Challenge: Women and the Roles of Ministry,* Norma Cook Everist, ed. (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2000), 75.

[362] Allen and Ross, 48.

[363] sparks & honey Cultural Forecast, 51; Barna Group and Impact 360 Institute, 82; Twenge, Loc 314-336; Black, 29; and Powell and Clark, *Sticky Faith,* 13.

84% of youth, and the same percentage of young adults, strongly agreed or agreed that they find/found value in worshiping together with their parents and grandparents.

4. Among youth surveyed, the vast majority (94%) strongly agree or agree that the Bible speaks to the importance of the generations worshiping together. In light of this, and the fact that 61% of churchgoing teens and 99% of engaged Christian teens believe that the Bible is totally accurate in all of the principles it teaches,[364] one may assume that most teens engaged in IGW and ministry believe there is a biblical precedent for it, as opposed to generationally-segregated worship and ministry models.

5. Finally, and perhaps most encouraging, are the results of this question: "Besides your parents and grandparents, how many other adults do you (youth) / did you (young adults) know fairly well and interact with on a regular basis at your church?" 59% of youth respondents and 65% of young adult respondents indicated they knew and interacted with more than 10 adults. The follow-up to this question was, "Do you feel that one or more of these adults have had a positive spiritual influence in your life?" In response, 88% of both youth and young adults answered "Yes." Many shared specifically how these adults had a positive spiritual influence in their lives, and these comments speak compellingly toward the IGW benefits of opportunities for mentorship, meaningful relationships, and connection with the entire church body.

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[364] Barna Group and Impact 360 Institute, 78.

Conclusions and Implications for the Local Church

Emerging Trend 1: The Purpose of Worship

Emerging Trend (ET) 1 clearly demonstrates a biblical understanding of the purpose of corporate worship in the local church among a majority of younger generations. Based on these findings, the suggestions for pastors, teachers, and leaders in the local church include affirming and encouraging their congregants' own biblical exploration of corporate worship, and consistently keeping biblical teaching about the purpose and essence of corporate and personal worship at the forefront, both sermonically and via the church's various teaching ministries. When congregants are systematically reminded of the biblical scope of worship, which at its heart is about what we can give to God rather than what we can "get" out of the various liturgical elements, then worshipers in our churches will become less focused on worship style and more focused on the true object of worship—God Himself.[365] As John MacArthur conveys, "A solid, biblical understanding of true worship would be the perfect antidote to the pragmatic, program-driven, prosperity-obsessed mentality so many evangelical churches now cultivate."[366]

Emerging Trend 2: Connection with the Body

Perhaps more so than any other finding or trend of this project, ET 2 establishes that youth and young adults highly value connection with the entire church body and recognize this as a significant benefit of IGW and ministry. Whether intentionally or not, pastors and church leaders who have fostered and facilitated a consumeristic, peer-oriented worship paradigm—usually recognizable via the various labels ascribed to services such as traditional, contemporary, postmodern, seeker, blended, and a plethora of others—have given their congregations exactly

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[365] Carson, "Worship Under the Word," 30-31.

[366] John MacArthur, *Worship: The Ultimate Priority* (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2012), 10.

what they wanted. But in the process of doing so, they have also succeeded in breeding a church culture of disunity and selfishness,[367] and consequently, have profoundly failed at connecting the generations in worship. Such matters are distinctly denounced in Scripture. Indeed, interlaced throughout the tapestry of the New Testament is a universal appeal for the church to be one in spirit and purpose. The Apostle Paul's words in Romans 12:4-5 provide one of the best examples of this: "For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others."

Conversely, pastors and church leaders who have committed to intergenerationality in the corporate worship experience do so precisely because they understand the benefits of a cross-generational, connective body life. And since connection with the *entire* church body is a benefit that can only be fully realized within the scope of an IGW and ministry model, the recommendation for pastors, church staff, church leadership, and congregations encompasses a holistic commitment to an intergenerational model of worship and ministry. Such a commitment will serve to strengthen the unity of the body, provide cross-generational opportunities for mentorship, give youth the option to be trained in worship and liturgical leadership, and connect teens with the entire church body through meaningful intergenerational relationships.[368]

<div align="center">Emerging Trend 3: Families Worshiping Together</div>

ET 3 is inextricably linked to ET 2, in that connection with the entire church body also incorporates connection within family units, including parents and grandparents. Therefore, the

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[367] Page and Gray, Loc 410-447.

[368] Allen and Ross, 26; Parsley, Loc 337-344; and Lynn Barger Elliott, "Generational Theory and Faith Communities," in *Intergenerate: Transforming Churches Through Intergenerational Ministry,* Holly Catterton Allen, ed. (Abilene, TX: Abilene Christian University Press, 2018), 73.

same implications for ET 2 foundationally apply toward ET 3 as well.

However, the findings communicated in this third ET also speak to parents and grandparents. Barna notes that over 90% of engaged Christian parents indicate it is extremely important to them that their children develop a lasting faith, are well-equipped to explain the Christian faith, and are engaged in service.[369] Many if not all of these matters of spiritual formation are addressed and facilitated to some degree within the purview of corporate worship in the local church. Therefore, these findings are significant for parents and grandparents in at least two ways: First, to offer them assurance that the vast majority of their teenage children find value (and their young adult children found value as teens) in worshiping together with them; and second, to encourage parents that as heads of the household and the primary decision makers in the family, they thoughtfully choose to connect their families with a church family that intentionally promotes and facilitates intergenerational engagement in worship and ministry.

<div align="center">Emerging Trend 4: IGW is Biblical Worship</div>

Scripture is clear that IGW is biblical worship. Pages 17-29 of this project seek to present a well-defined precedent for this very concept, and ET 4 overwhelmingly indicates that engaged Christian teens believe this. *Before* ensuring a church's corporate worship is practical, effective, or fashionable, senior pastors, worship pastors, and other church leaders must by design ensure that it is scriptural. Otherwise, just as with Aaron's sons Nadab and Abihu, we are guilty of "unauthorized fire" (Leviticus 10:1-2) by designing worship based on our own understanding and preferences rather than following God's own precepts as revealed in Scripture. So, the implication for local churches and church leadership is plain: Pastors and congregations who desire to facilitate and engage in biblical worship *must* facilitate and engage in an IGW format.

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[369] Barna Group and Impact 360 Institute, 82.

It is appropriate to mention here that if one is striving toward a biblical precedent for any worship paradigm which separates the generations in primary corporate worship gatherings, one will find no such precedent.[370] On the other hand, those looking for biblical support for the generations worshiping together will find it patently woven throughout the Old Testament,[371] and clearly implied in the New Testament—especially in the Gospels, the Book of Acts, and the Pauline Epistles.[372] Indeed, the faith communities of both the Old Testament and New Testament were naturally intergenerational communities,[373] and inherent in these communities was a radical mutuality and interdependence which crossed age boundaries.[374]

<div align="center">Emerging Trend 5: IGW and Spiritual Formation</div>

Allen and Barnett write, "Intergenerational experiences contribute uniquely to sustainable, long-term faith formation across all ages."[375] ET 5 convincingly supports H1 and H2 and strongly demonstrates that youth need interaction with older generations for a successful, enduring process of spiritual formation beyond the high-school years. Teenagers need to see what a walking, talking, adult Christian is like. They need consistent opportunities for interacting and dialoguing with a number of caring, spiritually-mature adults.[376] This trend corroborates that meaningful cross-generational relationships, not programs, are still the heart and soul of an

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[370] Allen and Ross, 77-84.

[371] Deuteronomy 4-6; 11-12; 14-15; 29; 2 Chronicles 20; Psalm 78:1-8, 145:4; Proverbs 1:8, 6; Nehemiah 7-8.

[372] Matthew 19:13-14; Mark 10:15; Acts 2:46-47; 4:32-35; 12:12; 16:3-5, 31-34, 40; Romans 16:3-5; Colossians 4:15; Philemon 1-2.

[373] Harkness, 123.

[374] Allen and Ross, 82.

[375] Allen and Barnett, 17.

[376] Black, 44.

intergenerational community.[377] Therefore, church leaders should consider ways to facilitate relationships between every generation represented in the church body, including children, teens, college students, singles, couples, parents, and seniors. Despite its inherent challenges,[378] embracing an intergenerational concept of ministry and worship is essential for the spiritual formation, leadership training, and connection of the younger generations of the church with those who might play a mentoring, discipling, and/or parenting role in their lives.[379]

Suggestions for Future Research

Based on the research findings and limitations of this study, the following four suggestions are presented as future research possibilities:

1. Findings to support H3 were somewhat inconclusive, as pages 102 and 110 of this project explain. A survey-based study involving more in-depth research into factors that might contribute to a lack of buy-in among youth toward an intergenerational corporate worship model may offer more insight for churches and church leaders toward successfully incorporating their teenage congregants into an IGW and ministry format.

2. Suggestion 2 is closely connected to the previous suggestion and is specifically related to Question 17 (Page 101; Appendix B, Page 10; and Appendix D, Figure 10) and *why* the youth respondents answered this question as they did. Hindsight is always 20/20, and in retrospect, it might have been helpful to include one or more follow-up questions to further ascertain the findings from Question 17, and really, from Questions 15 – 19, all of

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[377] Snailum, 173.

[378] Conway, 123.

[379] Allen and Ross, 30, 55; Black, 44; Parsley, Loc 261, 859; Powell, "Is the Era of Age Segregation Over?", 44-45; Green, 44; and Laura and Robert J. Keeley, "Intergenerational Connectors in Worship," in *The Church of All Ages: Generations Worshiping Together,* Howard Vanderwell, ed. (Herndon, VA: The Alban Institute, 2008), 147.

which are interrelated in scope and purpose. Unfortunately, since the surveys were by design anonymous, there is no avenue of future research with any of the respondents linked to this project. However, as a part of the survey-based study recommended in the first suggestion for future research, it could be beneficial to exhaustively explore other engaged Christian youth and emerging adult perspectives toward this question, perhaps even through a personal interview format.

3. Research projects based on the specific benefits of IGW for other generational cohorts— e.g., "The Specific Benefits of IGW for Mature Adults"— might allow for a comparison of the commonalities and variations between the IGW benefits for different generations.

4. Based on Gen Z research in this project, it would appear that the trend of teens dropping out of church or at least taking a long hiatus through their college careers will continue and perhaps even worsen. Therefore, any IGW-based research projects which may help "stop the bleeding" and keep teens in church as emerging adults would likely be welcomed with open arms by churches across the board.

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APPENDIX A: IRB Approval Document

IRB-FY19-20-65 - Initial: Initial - Expedited

irb@liberty.edu
Fri 6/19/2020 4:37 PM
To: Lott, James Alan; Coates, Jamie (Dept. of Music and Worship)

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY.
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

June 19, 2020

James Lott
Jamie Coates

Re: IRB Approval - IRB-FY19-20-65 The Intergenerational Worship Model: Youth-Specific Benefits

Dear James Lott, Jamie Coates:

We are pleased to inform you that your study has been approved by the Liberty University Institutional Review Board (IRB). This approval is extended to you for one year from the date of the IRB meeting at which the protocol was approved: June 19, 2020. If data collection proceeds past one year, or if you make modifications in the methodology as it pertains to human subjects, you must submit an appropriate update submission to the IRB.
These submissions can be completed through your Cayuse IRB account.

Your study falls under the expedited review category (45 CFR 46.110), which is applicable to specific, minimal risk studies and minor changes to approved studies for the following reason(s):

7. Research on individual or group characteristics or behavior (including, but not limited to, research on perception, cognition, motivation, identity, language, communication, cultural beliefs or practices, and social behavior) or research employing survey, interview, oral history, focus group, program evaluation, human factors evaluation, or quality assurance methodologies.

Your stamped consent form can be found under the Attachments tab within the Submission Details section of your study on Cayuse IRB. This form should be copied and used to gain the consent of your research participants. If you plan to provide your consent information electronically, the contents of the attached consent document should be made available without alteration.

Thank you for your cooperation with the IRB, and we wish you well with your research project.

APPENDIX B: Youth Survey

The Intergenerational Worship Model: Youth-Specific Benefits (Youth)

Welcome to My Survey

Thank you for participating in my survey! Your feedback is important.

Consent Form

Title of the Project: The Intergenerational Worship Model: Youth-Specific Benefits

Principal Investigator: J. Alan Lott, Doctor of Worship Studies student at Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA

Invitation to Be Part of a Research Study

You are invited to participate in a research study. In order to participate, you must be between 13-19 years of age and you must be actively involved in intergenerational corporate worship at your current church. Taking part in this research project is voluntary.

Please take time to read this entire form and ask questions before deciding whether to take part in this research project.

What Is the Study about and Why Is It Being Done?

The purpose of the study is to determine how an intergenerational model of corporate worship specifically benefits youth. Intergenerational worship is loosely defined as multiple generations intentionally uniting and interacting together in the corporate worship experience. The perspectives collected from this study may offer valuable insight into the youth-specific benefits of intergenerational worship, and show that youth who consistently participate in intergenerational worship may be more likely to stay in church as young adults.

What Will Happen If You Take Part in This Study?

If you agree to be in this study, I would ask you to complete this anonymous electronic survey, which should take approximately 20 minutes.

How Could You or Others Benefit from This Study?

Participants should not expect to receive a direct benefit from taking part in this study.

This research study may be beneficial to pastoral church leaders and lay leaders—especially youth pastors and worship pastors—in considering the strengths of an intergenerational worship model over an age-segregated worship model, and how such a culture of intergenerationality significantly benefits youth. It may also prove beneficial for parents, grandparents, and other family members of youth who consider the spiritual formation of teenagers and the continuation of youth in active church participation beyond the high school years to be important matters.

What Risks Might You Experience from Being in This Study?

The risks involved in this study are minimal, which means they are equal to the risks you would encounter in everyday life.

How Will Personal Information Be Protected?

The records of this study will be kept private. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher will have access to the records.

Participant responses will be anonymous. Aside from age, the survey itself contains no requests for personal identifiers (e.g., name, address, phone numbers, email, etc.).

Data will be stored on a password-locked computer and may be used in future presentations. After three years, all electronic records will be deleted.

How Will You Be Compensated for Being Part of the Study?

Each participant that completes the survey may choose to be entered into a drawing for a $100 amazon.com gift card. At the end of the survey, participants who so choose will be directed to provide an email address for notification purposes. Email addresses will not be linked to participant survey responses.

Consent Form, Page 2

Is Study Participation Voluntary?

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Liberty University. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time prior to submitting the survey without affecting this relationship.

What Should You Do If You Decide to Withdraw from the Study?

If you choose to withdraw from the study, please exit the survey and close your internet browser. Your responses will not be recorded or included in the study.

Whom Do You Contact If You Have Questions or Concerns about the Study?

The researcher conducting this study is Alan Lott. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you are encouraged to contact him at (386) 688-1913 and/or jalott@liberty.edu. You may also contact the researcher's faculty sponsor, Dr. Jamie Coates, at jcoates1@liberty.edu.

Whom Do You Contact If You Have Questions about Your Rights as a Research Participant?

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, you are encouraged to contact the Institutional Review Board, 1971 University Blvd., Green Hall Ste. 2845, Lynchburg, VA 24515 or email at irb@liberty.edu.

Your Consent

Before agreeing to be a part of the research, please be sure you understand what the study is about. You can print a copy of this document for your records, if you wish. If you have any questions about the study, you can contact the researcher using the information provided above.

* 1. Do you agree to the above terms? By clicking Yes, you consent that you are willing to answer the questions in this survey.

◯ Yes

◯ No

The Intergenerational Worship Model: Youth-Specific Benefits (Youth)

Information Verification

These questions help to determine if you qualify to participate in this survey. You must be between the ages of 13-19 years, and you must be actively involved in intergenerational corporate worship at your current church.

* 1. What is your age?

[   ]

2. Do you regularly attend worship services at your current church (on average at least twice a month)?

◯ Yes

◯ No

* 3. Intergenerational worship involves multiple generations (children, youth, young adults, median adults, senior adults) intentionally uniting and interacting together in the corporate worship experience. This may include not only the congregation, but also multiple generations serving together in worship leadership roles on stage. **According to this definition, is the main worship service at your current church intergenerational?** By "main" worship service, I mean the primary weekly gathering of your church members for worship. For most churches, this would be the Sunday morning service(s).

◯ Yes

◯ No

4

The Intergenerational Worship Model: Youth-Specific Benefits (Youth)

* 1. The main purpose of Sunday morning worship is to (check only one):

◯ Attract new church members

◯ Win the lost to Jesus

◯ Build relationships and fellowship with others

◯ Worship and glorify God

◯ Help Christians grow in their walk with Jesus

◯ Other (please specify)

```
[                                        ]
```

* 2. What makes a worship service meaningful for you? Please rank the following worship elements in order of importance. For instance, if "Preaching/Teaching" is most meaningful, choose "1" from the drop-down menu or drag it to the top of the list; if "Being with Friends" is next, choose "2" from the drop-down menu; and so forth.

≡

[⬍]

Praying

≡

[⬍]

Preaching/Teaching

≡

[⬍]

Music/Singing

≡

[⬍]

Being with Friends

≡

[⬍]

The Lord's Supper/Communion

≡

[⬍]

Baptism

≡

[⬍]

The Reading of Scripture

≡

[⬍]

Personal Testimonies

≡

[⬍]

Drama Ministry

* 3. Please share why the worship element you ranked highest is so meaningful to you:

[   ]

* 4. As a part of a church which practices intergenerational worship, I feel that I enjoy the following benefits (check all that apply):

☐ Being mentored by those older than me

☐ Opportunities to mentor those younger than me

☐ Worshiping with my family (siblings, parents, grandparents, etc.)

☐ Connection with the entire church body

☐ A variety of worship elements that are mutually meaningful to all

☐ Opportunities to serve in worship leadership roles

☐ Other (please specify)

[   ]

* 5. I serve in the following worship leadership roles (check all that apply):

☐ Usher

☐ Greeter

☐ Worship Vocalist (choir, praise team, soloist, etc.)

☐ Worship Instrumentalist (band, orchestra, accompanist, etc.)

☐ Preaching/Teaching

☐ Praying

☐ Drama Ministry

☐ The Reading of Scripture

☐ Audio/Visual Technician

☐ Other (please specify)

[   ]

* 6. It is important for youth to worship with children and adults:

○ Strongly Agree

○ Agree

○ Neutral

○ Disagree

○ Strongly Disagree

7

* 7. I would rather worship only with others of my own age group:

◯ Strongly Agree

◯ Agree

◯ Neutral

◯ Disagree

◯ Strongly Disagree

* 8. I find value in worshiping together with my younger siblings:

◯ Strongly Agree

◯ Agree

◯ Neutral

◯ Disagree

◯ Strongly Disagree

* 9. I find value in worshiping together with my older siblings:

◯ Strongly Agree

◯ Agree

◯ Neutral

◯ Disagree

◯ Strongly Disagree

* 10. I find value in worshiping together with my parents and grandparents:

◯ Strongly Agree

◯ Agree

◯ Neutral

◯ Disagree

◯ Strongly Disagree

* 11. I believe the Bible speaks to the importance of the generations worshiping together:

◯ Strongly Agree

◯ Agree

◯ Neutral

◯ Disagree

◯ Strongly Disagree

* 12. Besides your parents and grandparents, how many other adults do you know fairly well and interact with on a regular basis at your church?

○ None

○ 1-5 Adults

○ 6-10 Adults

○ More than 10 Adults

* 13. Do you feel that one or more of these adults have had a positive spiritual influence in your life?

○ Yes

○ No

○ Not Sure

* 14. If you checked "Yes" on the previous question, please share specifically how one or more of these adults have had a positive spiritual influence in your life:

[   ]

* 15. My church includes youth in the worship planning and leadership process:

○ Yes

○ No

○ Not Sure

* 16. I believe that serving in one or more worship leadership roles gives me a better appreciation for intergenerational worship:

○ Strongly Agree

○ Agree

○ Neutral

○ Disagree

○ Strongly Disagree

* 17. If I were not given the opportunity to serve in any worship leadership roles at my church, I would be less likely to attend church or want to attend church:

○ Strongly Agree

○ Agree

○ Neutral

○ Disagree

○ Strongly Disagree

* 18. I feel that my thoughts, opinions and ideas about worship are taken into consideration by the pastoral leadership at my church:

○ Strongly Agree

○ Agree

○ Neutral

○ Disagree

○ Strongly Disagree

* 19. I feel that my thoughts, opinions and ideas about worship are not taken into consideration by the pastoral leadership at my church:

○ Strongly Agree

○ Agree

○ Neutral

○ Disagree

○ Strongly Disagree

* 20. Experiencing a wide range of musical styles, such as hymns and modern worship songs, choirs and praise teams, bands and orchestras, etc. enhances my worship:

○ Strongly Agree

○ Agree

○ Neutral

○ Disagree

○ Strongly Disagree

* 21. I prefer worship music specifically tailored to my age group and wish my church included more of the styles of music I like:

◯ Strongly Agree

◯ Agree

◯ Neutral

◯ Disagree

◯ Strongly Disagree

* 22. I am willing to give up some of what I prefer in worship so that others of different age groups may also experience meaningful worship:

◯ Strongly Agree

◯ Agree

◯ Neutral

◯ Disagree

◯ Strongly Disagree

* 23. Would you agree musical style is one of the main elements of corporate worship that tends to cause divisions and disagreements?

◯ Yes

◯ No

◯ Not Sure

* 24. As a youth who regularly participates in intergenerational worship at your church, what are some aspects of intergenerational worship you like?

[   ]

* 25. As a youth who regularly participates in intergenerational worship at your church, what are some aspects of intergenerational worship you do not like?

[   ]

* 26. If you could change one thing about the main worship service at your church, it would be:

[   ]

APPENDIX C: Young Adult Survey

The Intergenerational Worship Model: Youth-Specific Benefits (Young Adult)

Welcome to My Survey

Thank you for participating in my survey! Your feedback is important.

Consent Form

Title of the Project: The Intergenerational Worship Model: Youth-Specific Benefits

Principal Investigator: J. Alan Lott, Doctor of Worship Studies student at Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA

Invitation to Be Part of a Research Study

You are invited to participate in a research study. In order to participate, you must be between 20-35 years of age and you must have been actively involved in intergenerational worship at the church you attended as a youth. Taking part in this research project is voluntary.

Please take time to read this entire form and ask questions before deciding whether to take part in this research project.

What Is the Study about and Why Is It Being Done?

The purpose of the study is to determine how an intergenerational model of corporate worship specifically benefits youth. Intergenerational worship is loosely defined as multiple generations intentionally uniting and interacting together in the corporate worship experience. The perspectives collected from this study may offer valuable insight into the youth-specific benefits of intergenerational worship, and show that youth who consistently participate in intergenerational worship may be more likely to stay in church as young adults.

What Will Happen If You Take Part in This Study?

If you agree to be in this study, I would ask you to complete this anonymous electronic survey, which should take approximately 20 minutes.

How Could You or Others Benefit from This Study?

Participants should not expect to receive a direct benefit from taking part in this study.

This research study may be beneficial to pastoral church leaders and lay leaders—especially youth pastors and worship pastors—in considering the strengths of an intergenerational worship model over an age-segregated worship model, and how such a culture of intergenerationality significantly benefits youth. It may also prove beneficial for parents, grandparents, and other family members of youth who consider the spiritual formation of teenagers and the continuation of youth in active church participation beyond the high school years to be important matters.

What Risks Might You Experience from Being in This Study?

The risks involved in this study are minimal, which means they are equal to the risks you would encounter in everyday life.

How Will Personal Information Be Protected?

The records of this study will be kept private. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher will have access to the

records.

Participant responses will be anonymous. Aside from age, the survey itself contains no requests for personal identifiers (e.g., name, address, phone numbers, email, etc.).

Data will be stored on a password-locked computer and may be used in future presentations. After three years, all electronic records will be deleted.

How Will You Be Compensated for Being Part of the Study?

Each participant that completes the survey may choose to be entered into a drawing for a $100 amazon.com gift card. At the end of the survey, participants who so choose will be directed to provide an email address for notification purposes. Email addresses will not be linked to participant survey responses.

Consent Form, Page 2

Is Study Participation Voluntary?

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Liberty University. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time prior to submitting the survey without affecting this relationship.

What Should You Do If You Decide to Withdraw from the Study?

If you choose to withdraw from the study, please exit the survey and close your internet browser. Your responses will not be recorded or included in the study.

Whom Do You Contact If You Have Questions or Concerns about the Study?

The researcher conducting this study is Alan Lott. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you are encouraged to contact him at (386) 688-1913 and/or jalott@liberty.edu. You may also contact the researcher's faculty sponsor, Dr. Jamie Coates, at jcoates1@liberty.edu.

Whom Do You Contact If You Have Questions about Your Rights as a Research Participant?

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, you are encouraged to contact the Institutional Review Board, 1971 University Blvd., Green Hall Ste. 2845, Lynchburg, VA 24515 or email at irb@liberty.edu.

Your Consent

Before agreeing to be a part of the research, please be sure you understand what the study is about. You can print a copy of this document for your records, if you wish. If you have any questions about the study, you can contact the researcher using the information provided above.

* 1. Do you agree to the above terms? By clicking Yes, you consent that you are willing to answer the questions in this survey.

   ◯ Yes

   ◯ No

3

Information Verification

These questions help to determine if you qualify to participate in this survey. You must be between the ages of 20-35 years, and you must have been actively involved in intergenerational worship at the church you attended as a youth.

* 1. What is your age?

[   ]

2. Do you regularly attend worship services at your current church (on average at least twice a month)?

○ Yes

○ No

* 3. Intergenerational worship involves multiple generations (children, youth, young adults, median adults, senior adults) intentionally uniting and interacting together in the corporate worship experience. This may include not only the congregation, but also multiple generations serving together in worship leadership roles on stage. **According to this definition, did you attend a church that practiced intergenerational worship in its main worship service while you were a youth (approximately 13–19 years of age)?** By "main" worship service, I mean the primary weekly gathering of your church members for worship. For most churches, this would be the Sunday morning service(s).

○ Yes

○ No

* 1. The main purpose of Sunday morning worship is to (check only one):

○ Attract new church members

○ Win the lost to Jesus

○ Build relationships and fellowship with others

○ Worship and glorify God

○ Help Christians grow in their walk with Jesus

○ Other (please specify)

[   ]

* 2. What makes a worship service meaningful for you? Please rank the following worship elements in order of importance. For instance, if "Preaching/Teaching" is most meaningful, choose "1" from the drop-down menu or drag it to the top of the list; if "Being with Friends" is next, choose "2" from the drop-down menu; and so forth.

≡

⬍

Praying

≡

⬍

Preaching/Teaching

≡

⬍

Music/Singing

≡

⬍

Being with Friends

≡

⬍

The Lord's Supper/Communion

≡

⬍

Baptism

≡

⬍

The Reading of Scripture

≡

⬍

Personal Testimonies

≡

⬍

Drama Ministry

* 3. Please share why the worship element you ranked highest is so meaningful to you:

[   ]

* 4. I attend the same church today that I attended as a youth:

◯ Yes

◯ No

* 5. I feel that a primary reason I regularly attend church today as a young adult is because I attended a church which practiced intergenerational worship as a youth:

◯ Strongly Agree

◯ Agree

◯ Neutral

◯ Disagree

◯ Strongly Disagree

* 6. I believe that if I had not attended a church which practiced intergenerational worship as a youth, I would be less likely to regularly attend church now as a young adult:

◯ Strongly Agree

◯ Agree

◯ Neutral

◯ Disagree

◯ Strongly Disagree

* 7. At the church which practiced intergenerational worship I attended as a youth, I feel that I enjoyed the following benefits (check all that apply):

☐ Being mentored by those older than me

☐ Opportunities to mentor those younger than me

☐ Worshiping with my family (siblings, parents, grandparents, etc.)

☐ Connection with the entire church body

☐ A variety of worship elements that are mutually meaningful to all

☐ Opportunities to serve in worship leadership roles

☐ Other (please specify)

[ ]

Thinking back on your experience as a youth involved in a church which practiced intergenerational worship, please answer the following:

* 8. I found value in worshiping together with my younger siblings:

○ Strongly Agree

○ Agree

○ Neutral

○ Disagree

○ Strongly Disagree

* 9. I found value in worshiping together with my older siblings:

○ Strongly Agree

○ Agree

○ Neutral

○ Disagree

○ Strongly Disagree

* 10. I found value in worshiping together with my parents and grandparents:

○ Strongly Agree
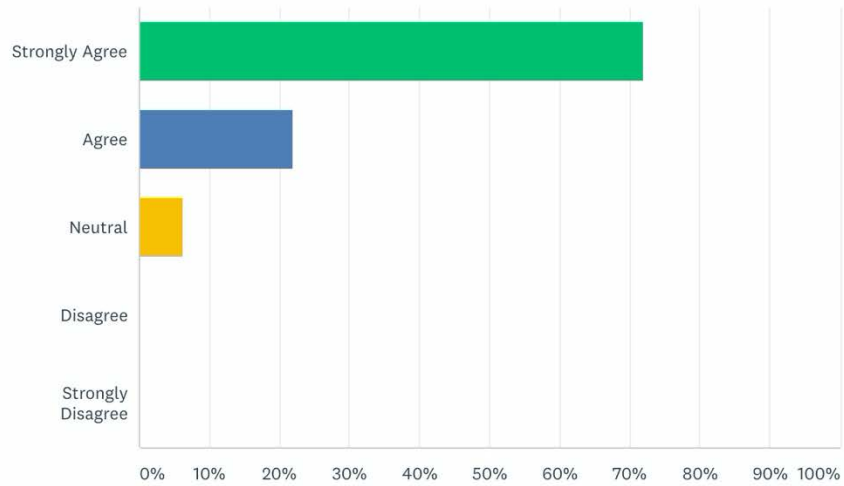
○ Agree

○ Neutral

○ Disagree

○ Strongly Disagree

* 11. Besides your parents and grandparents, how many other adults did you know fairly well and interact with on a regular basis at your church?
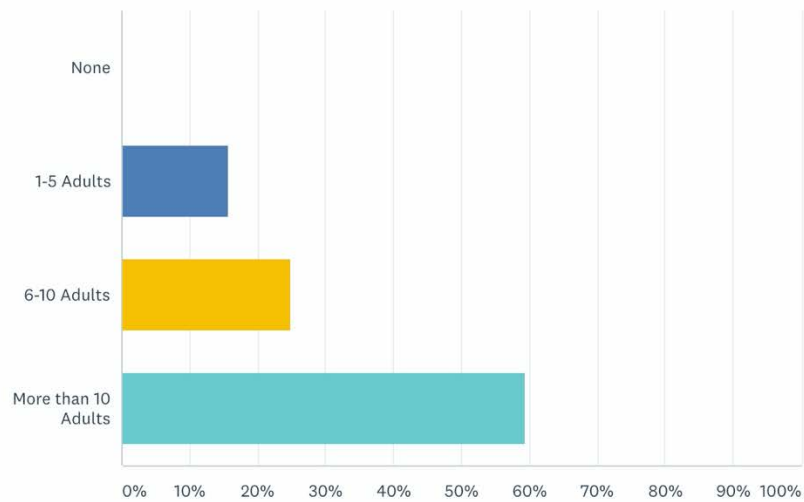
○ None

○ 1-5 Adults

○ 6-10 Adults

○ More than 10 Adults

* 12. Do you feel that one or more of these adults had a positive spiritual influence in your life?

○ Yes

○ No

○ Not Sure

* 13. If you checked "Yes" on the previous question, please share specifically how one or more of these adults had a positive spiritual influence in your life:
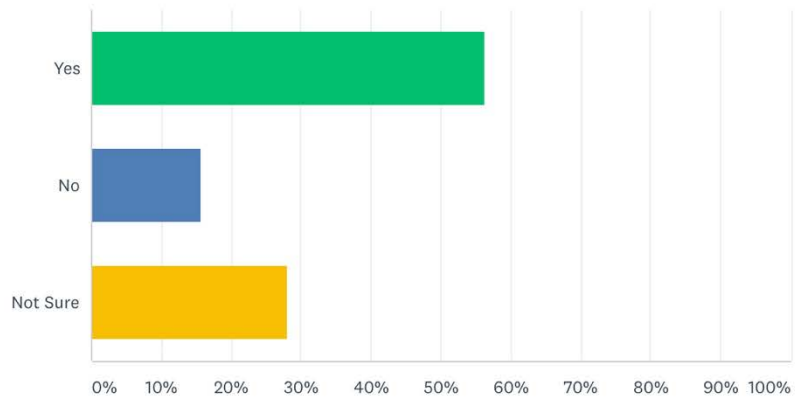
<div style="border:1px solid #ccc; height:40px;"></div>

* 14. I believe that serving in one or more worship leadership roles as a youth has given me a better appreciation for intergenerational worship today as a young adult:

- ○ Strongly Agree
- ○ Agree
- ○ Neutral
- ○ Disagree
- ○ Strongly Disagree

* 15. If I had not been given the opportunity to serve in any worship leadership roles at the church I attended while a youth, I probably would not be actively involved in church today as a young adult:

- ○ Strongly Agree
- ○ Agree
- ○ Neutral
- ○ Disagree
- ○ Strongly Disagree
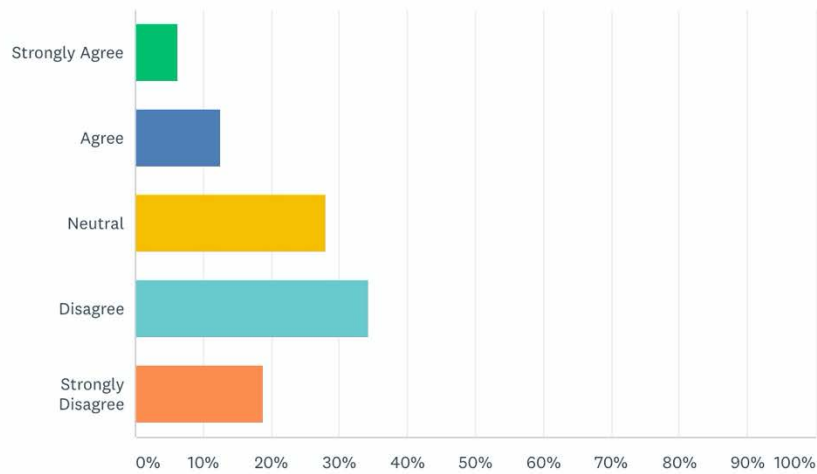
* 16. I feel that my thoughts, opinions and ideas about worship were taken into consideration by the pastoral leadership at the church I attended as a youth:

- ○ Strongly Agree
- ○ Agree
- ○ Neutral
- ○ Disagree
- ○ Strongly Disagree
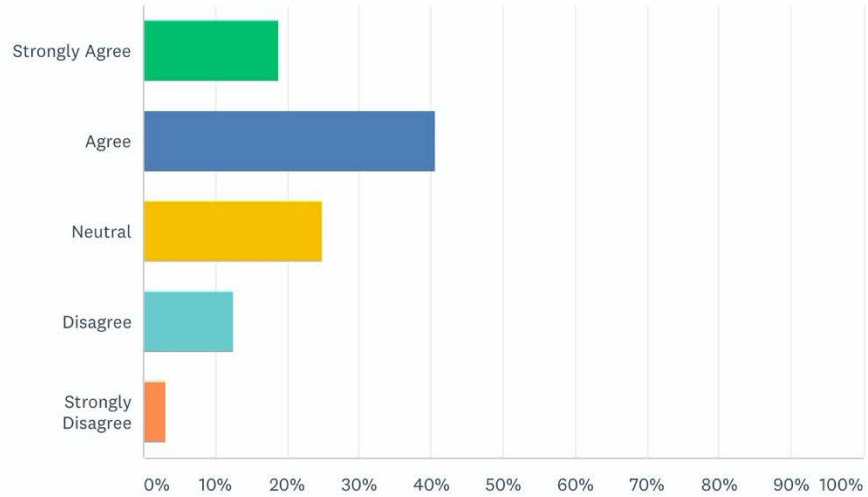
* 17. I feel that my thoughts, opinions and ideas about worship were not taken into consideration by the pastoral leadership at the church I attended as a youth:

- ○ Strongly Agree
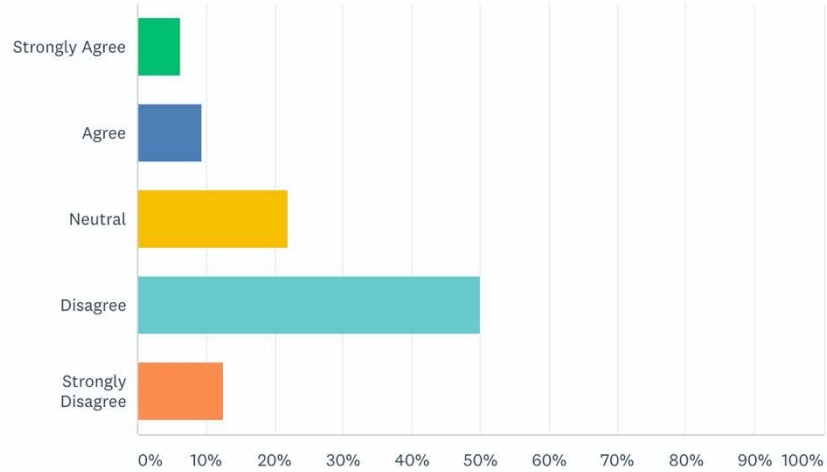- ○ Agree
- ○ Neutral
- ○ Disagree
- ○ Strongly Disagree

* 18. Experiencing a wide range of musical styles, such as hymns and modern worship songs, choirs and praise teams, bands and orchestras, etc. enhances my worship:
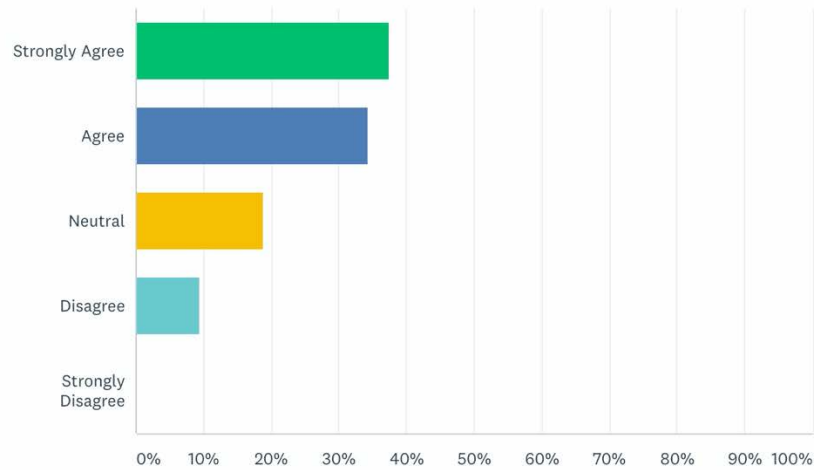
○ Strongly Agree

○ Agree

○ Neutral

○ Disagree

○ Strongly Disagree

* 19. I prefer worship music specifically tailored to my age group and wish my current church included more of the styles of music I like:

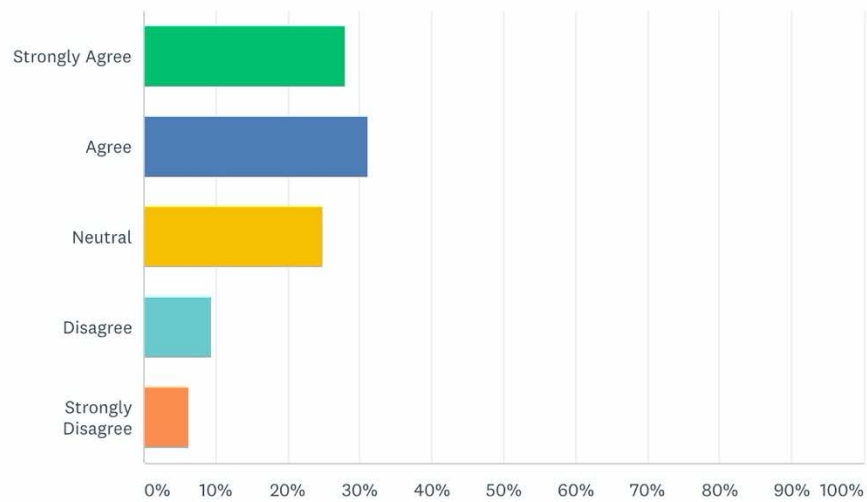○ Strongly Agree

○ Agree

○ Neutral

○ Disagree

○ Strongly Disagree

* 20. I am willing to give up some of what I prefer in worship so that others of different age groups may also experience meaningful worship:

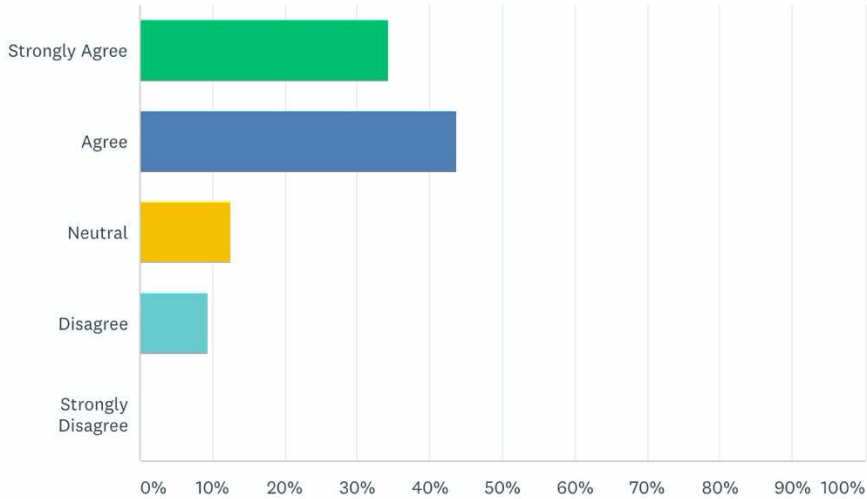○ Strongly Agree

○ Agree

○ Neutral

○ Disagree

○ Strongly Disagree

* 21. Would you agree musical style is one of the main elements of corporate worship that tends to cause divisions and disagreements?

○ Yes

○ No

○ Not Sure

* 22. The church I attended as a teenager included youth in the worship planning and leadership process:

○ Yes

○ No

○ Not Sure

* 23. As a young adult who regularly participated in intergenerational worship as a youth, what are some aspects of intergenerational worship you liked?

[   ]

* 24. As a young adult who regularly participated in intergenerational worship as a youth, what are some aspects of intergenerational worship you did not like?

[   ]

* 25. If you could have changed one thing about the main worship service at the church you attended as a youth, it would have been:

[   ]

APPENDIX D: Youth Survey Data Images[1]

The main purpose of Sunday morning worship is to (check only one):

Attract new church members

Win the lost to Jesus

Build relationship...

Worship and glorify God

Help Christians g...

Other (please specify)

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

Figure 1

Preaching/Teaching

Praying

The Reading of Scripture

Music/Singing

Baptism

The Lord's Supper/Commu...

Personal Testimonies

Being with Friends

Drama Ministry

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
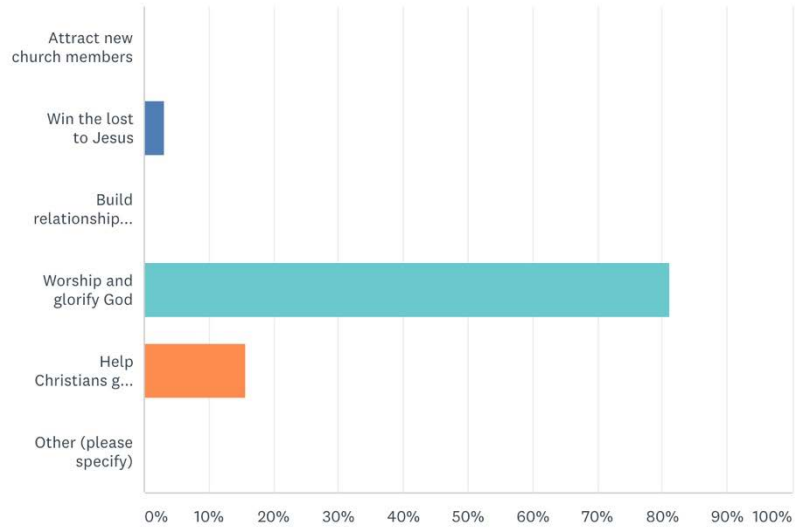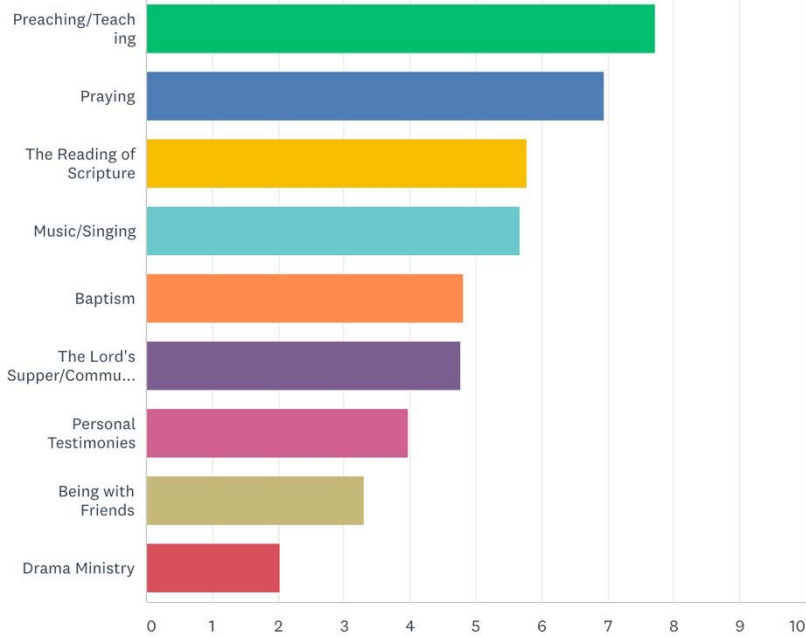
Figure 2

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[1] All Youth Survey Data Images are from surveymonkey.com.

As a part of a church which practices intergenerational worship, I feel that I enjoy the following benefits (check all that apply):
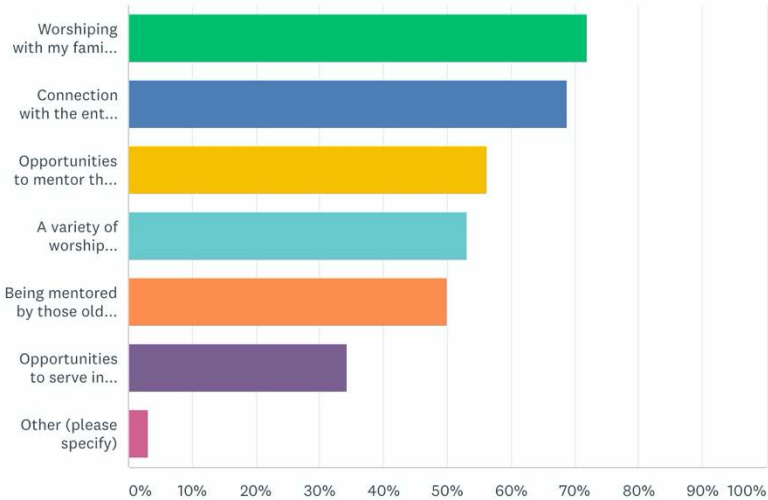
Figure 3

I serve in the following worship leadership roles (check all that apply):
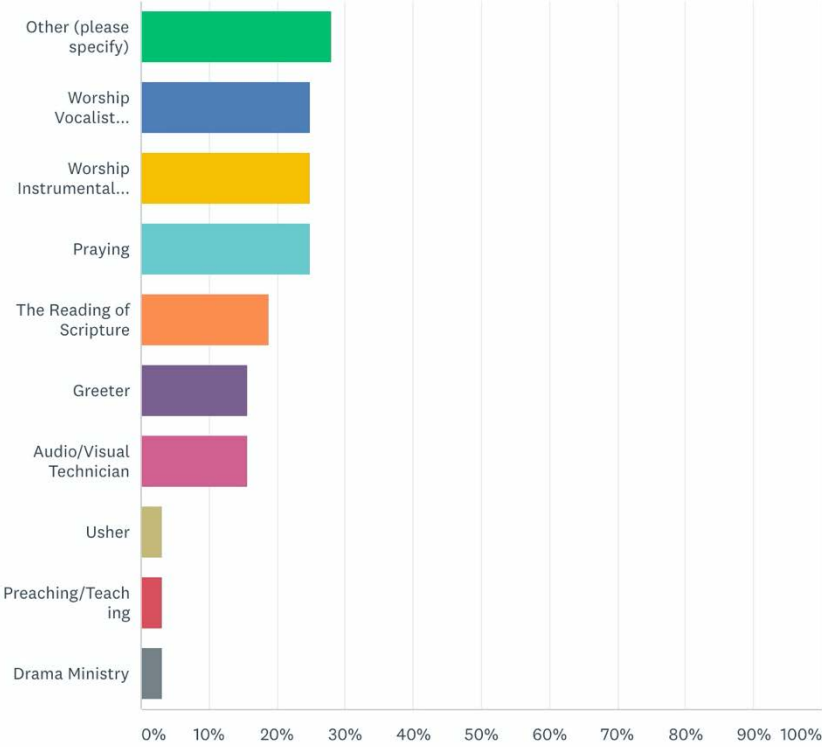
Figure 4

I believe the Bible speaks to the importance of the generations worshiping together:

Figure 5

Besides your parents and grandparents, how many other adults do you know fairly well and interact with on a regular basis at your church?

Figure 6

Do you feel that one or more of these adults have had a positive spiritual influence in your life?
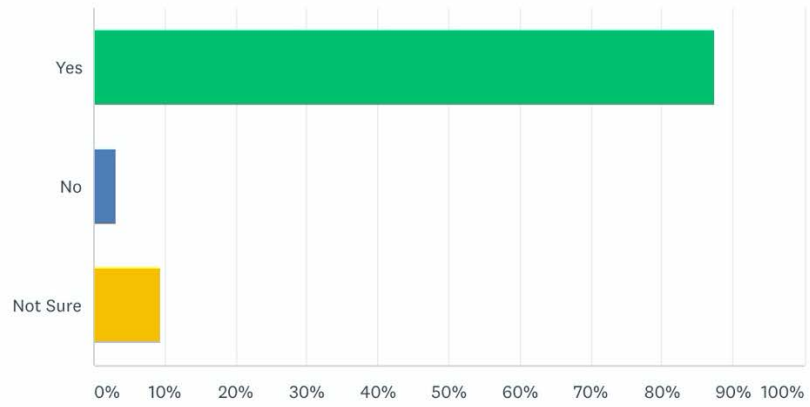
Figure 7

My church includes youth in the worship planning and leadership process:

Figure 8

I believe that serving in one or more worship leadership roles gives me a better appreciation for intergenerational worship:
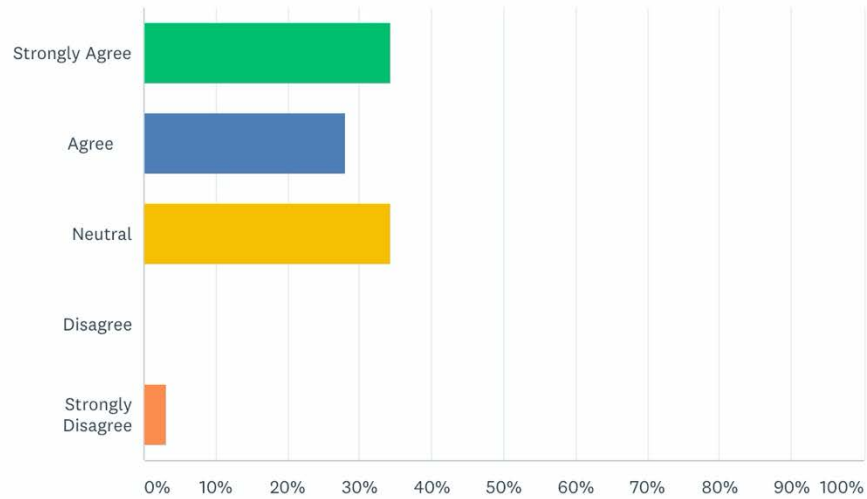
Figure 9

If I were not given the opportunity to serve in any worship leadership roles at my church, I would be less likely to attend church or want to attend church:

Figure 10

I feel that my thoughts, opinions and ideas about worship are taken into consideration by the pastoral leadership at my church:

Figure 11

I feel that my thoughts, opinions and ideas about worship are not taken into consideration by the pastoral leadership at my church:

Figure 12

Experiencing a wide range of musical styles, such as hymns and modern worship songs, choirs and praise teams, bands and orchestras, etc. enhances my worship:

Figure 13

I prefer worship music specifically tailored to my age group and wish my church included more of the styles of music I like:

Figure 14

I am willing to give up some of what I prefer in worship so that others of different age groups may also experience meaningful worship:

Strongly Agree
Agree
Neutral
Disagree
Strongly Disagree

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

Figure 15

Would you agree musical style is one of the main elements of corporate worship that tends to cause divisions and disagreements?

Yes
No
Not Sure

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%
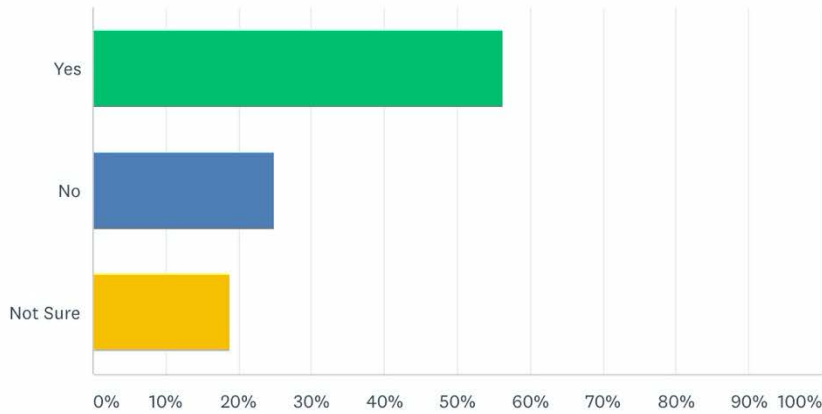
Figure 16

APPENDIX E: Young Adult Survey Data Images[1]
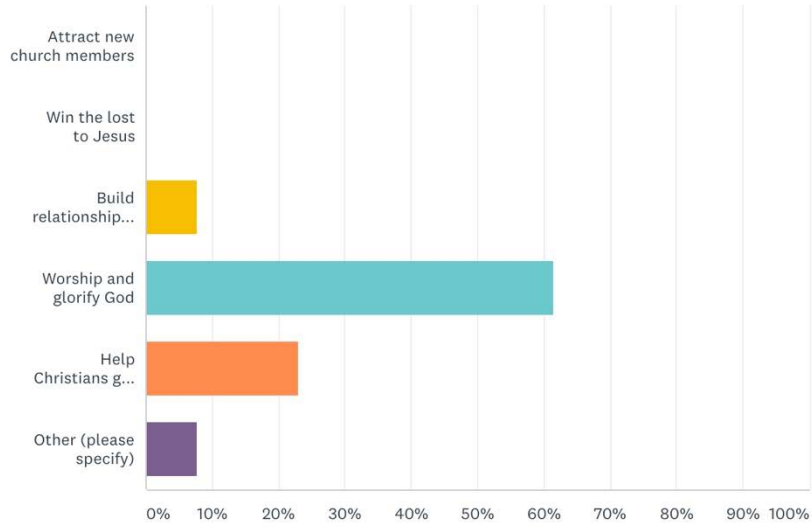
The main purpose of Sunday morning worship is to (check only one):

Attract new church members
Win the lost to Jesus
Build relationship...
Worship and glorify God
Help Christians g...
Other (please specify)

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

Figure 1

Preaching/Teaching
Music/Singing
Praying
The Reading of Scripture
Baptism
The Lord's Supper/Commu...
Being with Friends
Personal Testimonies
Drama Ministry

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Figure 2

I feel that a primary reason I regularly attend church today as a young adult is because I attended a church which practiced intergenerational worship as a youth:

Strongly Agree
Agree
Neutral
Disagree
Strongly Disagree

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%
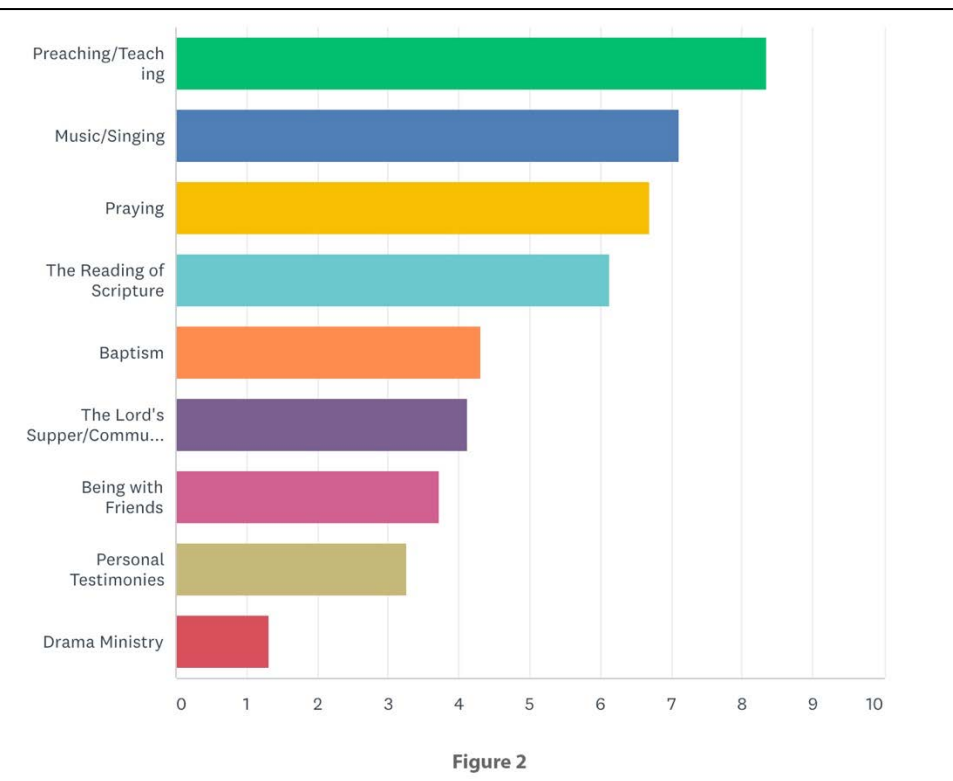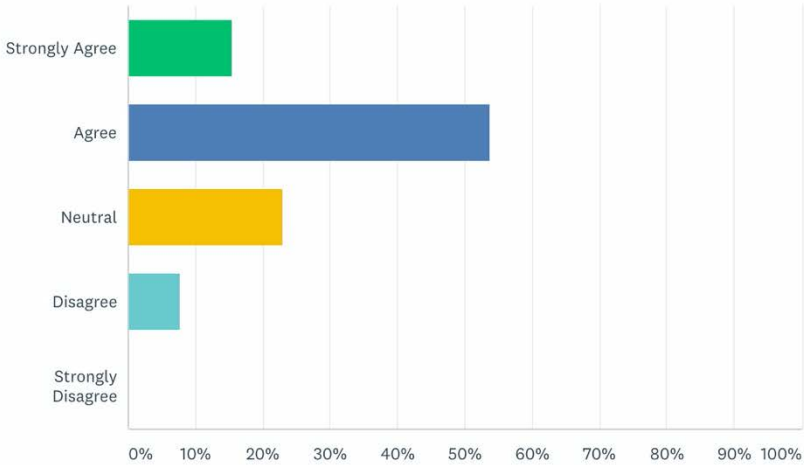
Figure 3

I believe that if I had not attended a church which practiced intergenerational worship as a youth, I would be less likely to regularly attend church now as a young adult:

Strongly Agree
Agree
Neutral
Disagree
Strongly Disagree

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%
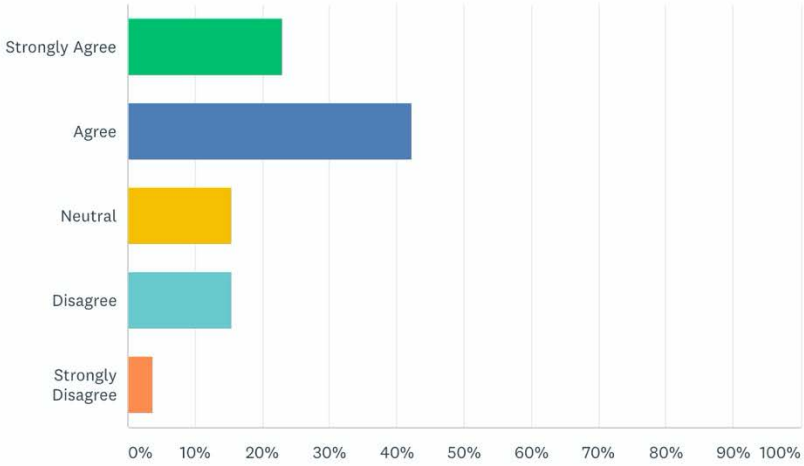
Figure 4

At the church which practiced intergenerational worship I attended as a youth, I feel that I enjoyed the following benefits (check all that apply):

Figure 5

I found value in worshiping together with my younger siblings:
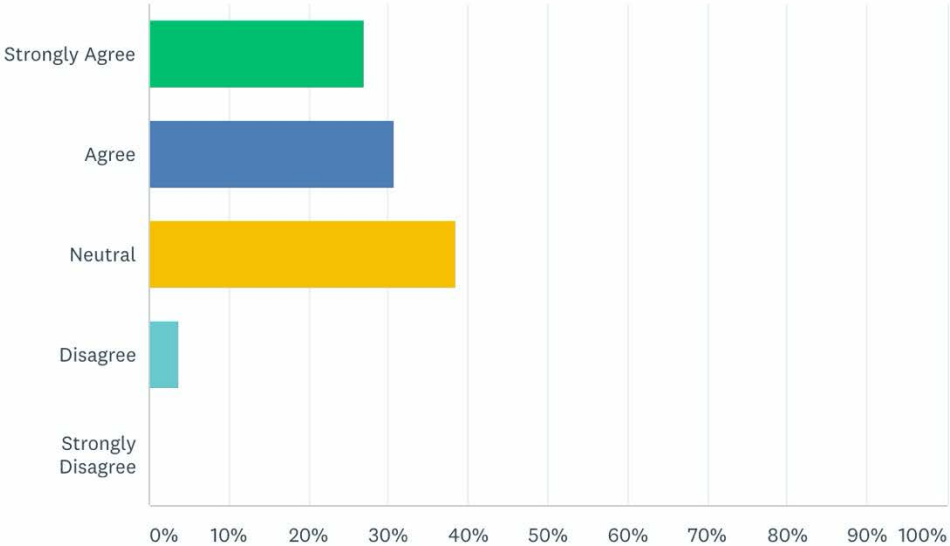
Figure 6

I found value in worshiping together with my older siblings:
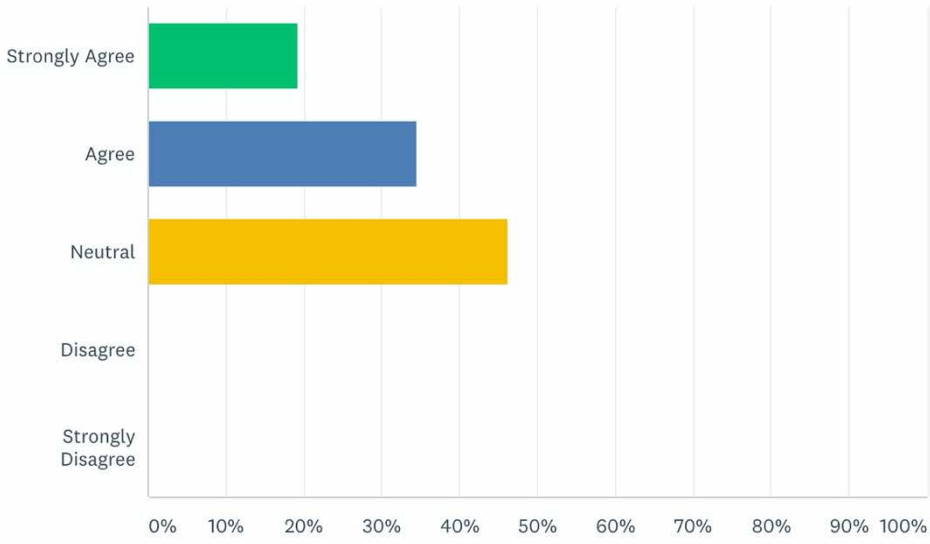
Figure 7

I found value in worshiping together with my parents and grandparents:
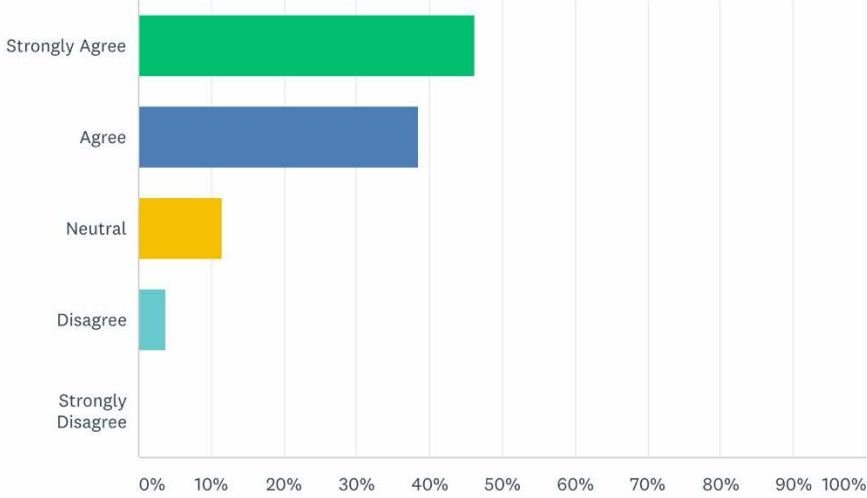
Figure 8

Besides your parents and grandparents, how many other adults did you know fairly well and interact with on a regular basis at your church?
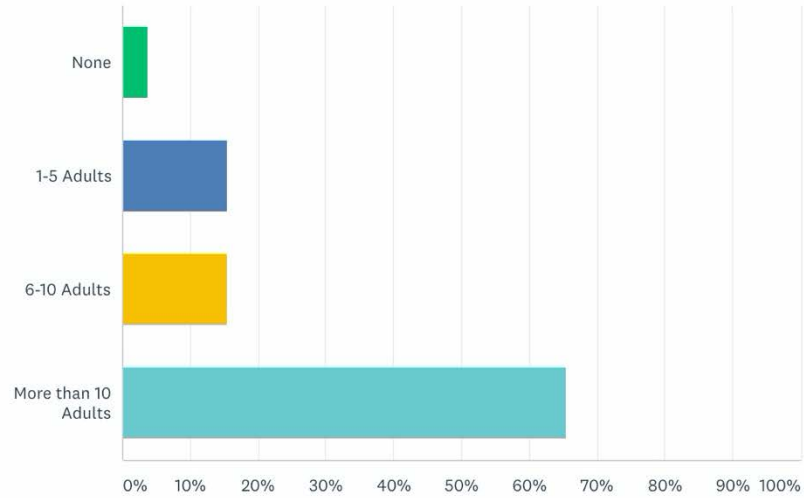
Figure 9

Do you feel that one or more of these adults had a positive spiritual influence in your life?
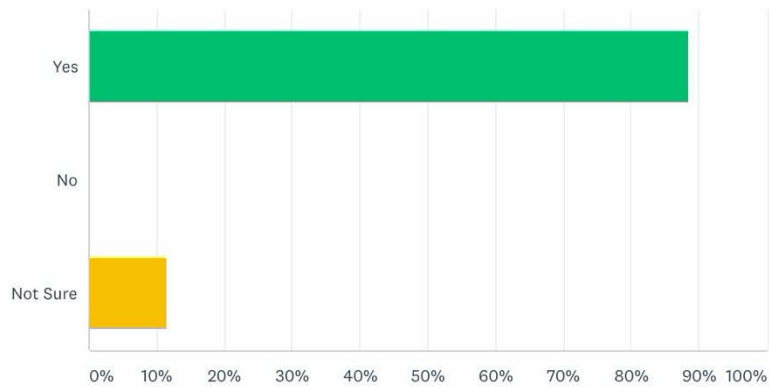
Figure 10

I believe that serving in one or more worship leadership roles as a youth has given me a better appreciation for intergenerational worship today as a young adult:
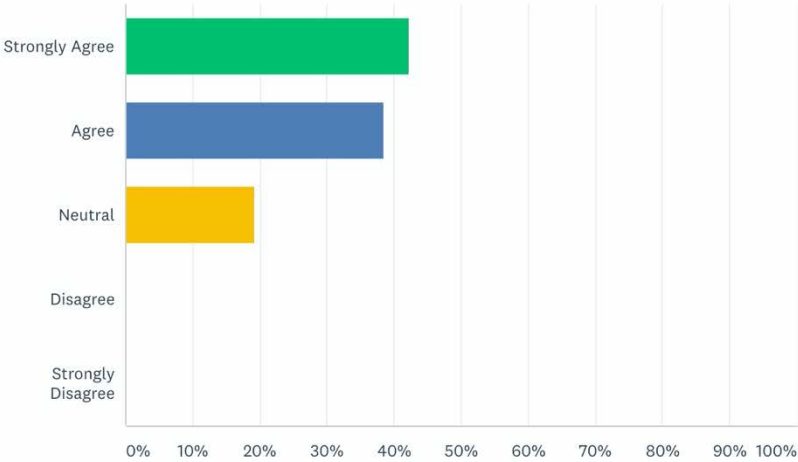
Figure 11

If I had not been given the opportunity to serve in any worship leadership roles at the church I attended while a youth, I probably would not be actively involved in church today as a young adult:
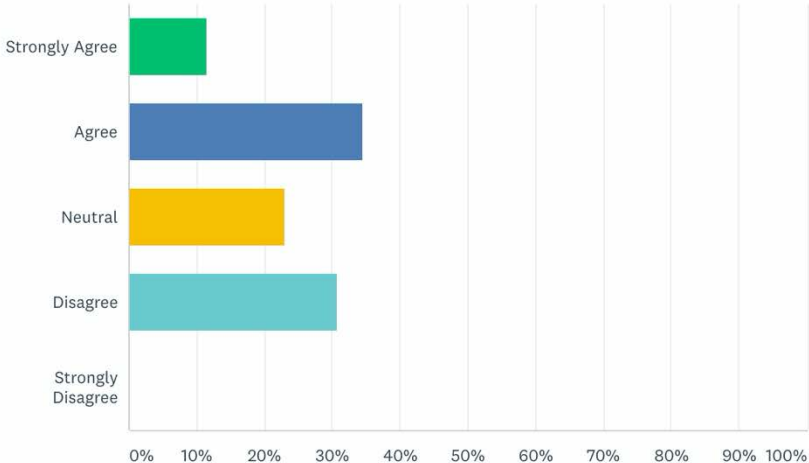
Figure 12

I feel that my thoughts, opinions and ideas about worship were taken into consideration by the pastoral leadership at the church I attended as a youth:
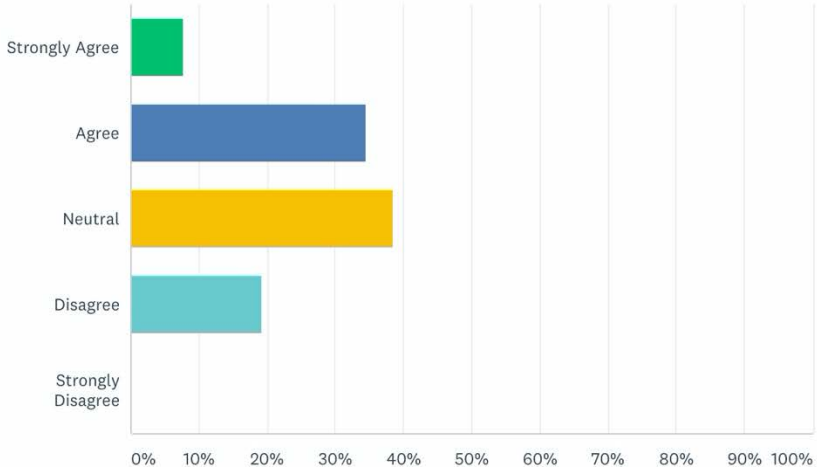
Figure 13

I feel that my thoughts, opinions and ideas about worship were not taken into consideration by the pastoral leadership at the church I attended as a youth:
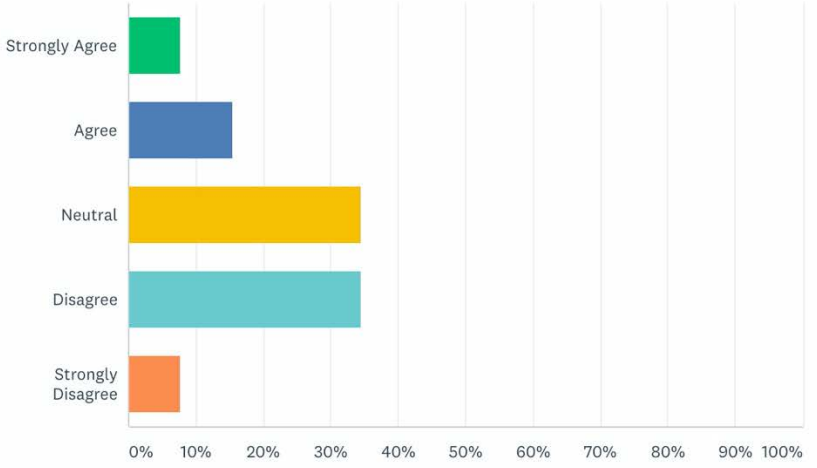
Figure 14

Experiencing a wide range of musical styles, such as hymns and modern worship songs, choirs and praise teams, bands and orchestras, etc. enhances my worship:
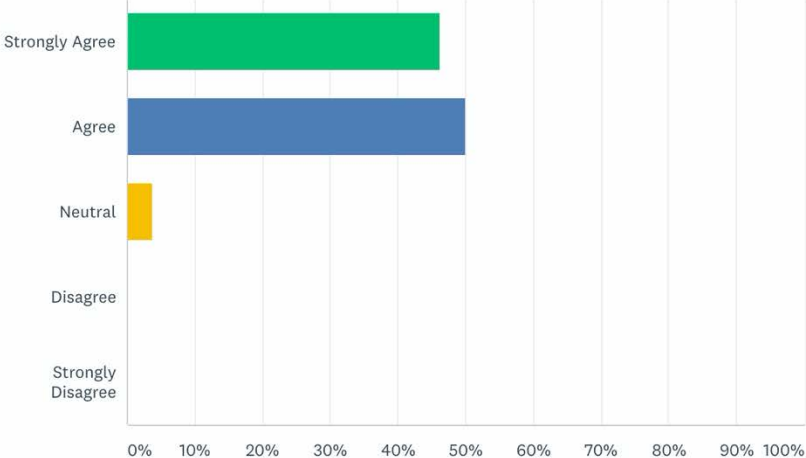
Figure 15

I prefer worship music specifically tailored to my age group and wish my current church included more of the styles of music I like:
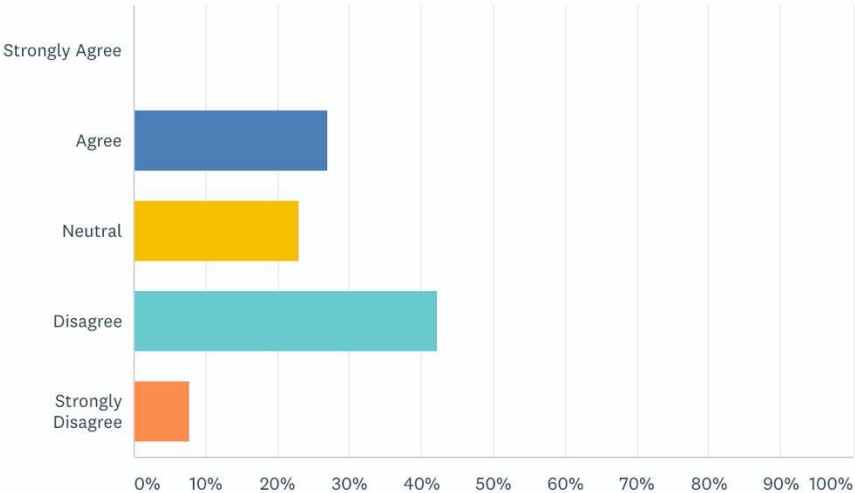

Figure 16

I am willing to give up some of what I prefer in worship so that others of different age groups may also experience meaningful worship:
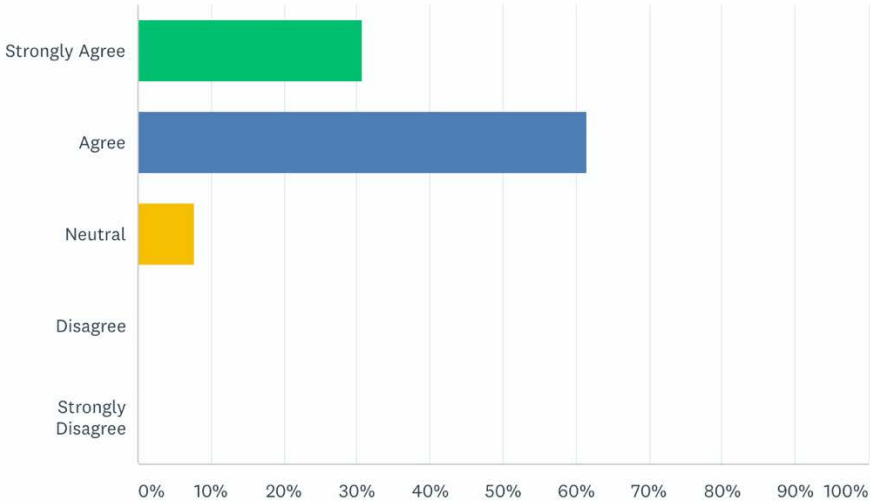

Figure 17

Would you agree musical style is one of the main elements of corporate worship that tends to cause divisions and disagreements?
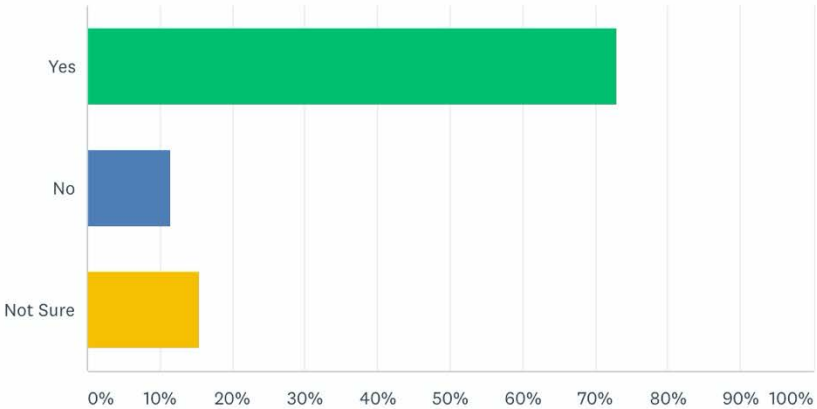

Figure 18