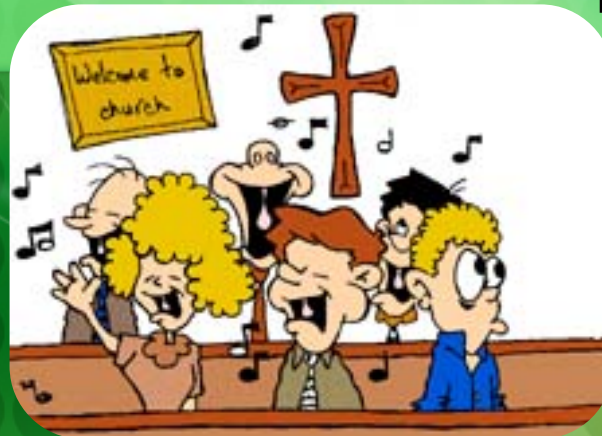




Intergenerational Worship



Linda Mei Lin Koh
GC Children's Ministries

What is Wrong?



Psalm 78:1-4



“We will not hide them from our children; we will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord, His power, and the wonders He has done. 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. “

Intergenerational Worship-- All Ages Present

- Intergenerational worship has all ages present – embodying the truth that the whole church is the body of Christ. “Unity is a gift of Christ and it needs to be maintained,”



Have You Ever Wondered ...

- Nobody ever talks or debates about whether adults should be in worship. But we do debate whether children should be heard or seen in worship.



God is not Age Specific

- God's continuing self-revelation is not age-specific. Your children may experience a relationship with God long before they can articulate it,"



Steve Burger

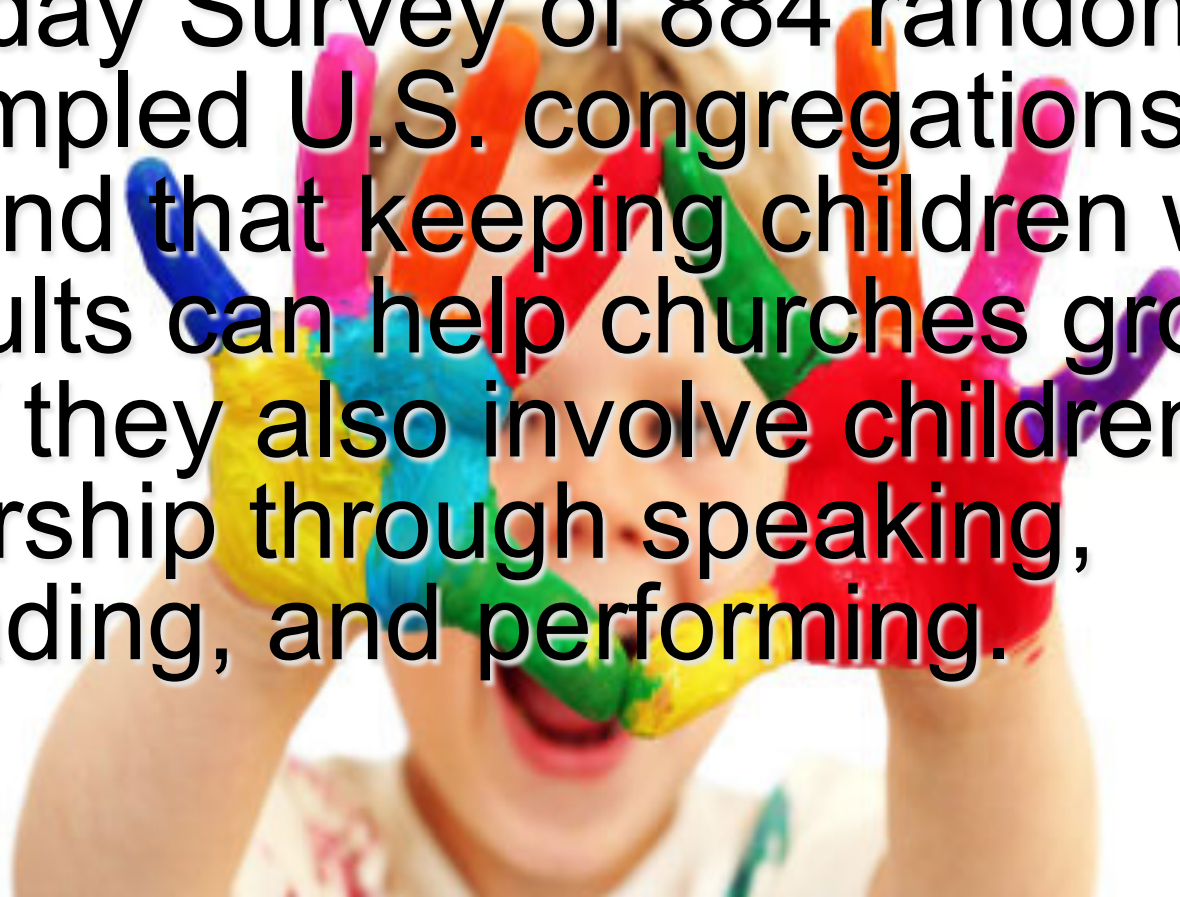
Director of Children & Family Min
Evangelical Covenant Church



- **Worshipping with different generations – singing together, holding hands during prayer, sharing communion – helps children form an identity as people who want to celebrate and glorify God together.**

Values of Intergenerational Worship

- The 2005 Faith Communities Today Survey of 884 randomly sampled U.S. congregations found that keeping children with adults can help churches grow – if they also involve children in worship through speaking, reading, and performing.



Church Growth



- Families are looking for creative, responsible and caring approaches to including children in the life of the church.
- Helping to teach values and important lessons in memorable ways.

2. BELONGINGNESS

- Children and youth feel belonged to the faith community when they participate with the church at worship-- they feel valued.



3. RELATIONSHIP BUILDING



- Often provides one of the only avenues for interaction and integration between older and younger members of a community.
- Getting to know old & young in more engaging ways.

4. CHARACTER BUILDING

- Worship forms character that lasts, according to George Aupperlee, who leads worship in dementia units at Holland Home in Grand Rapids, Michigan.





The phrase 'all generations' appears 91 times in the Bible. God does not form our character all at once or all by himself. Nor does he expect us to unilaterally form our own character. God acts on us through others. Interaction among generations is necessary for forming faith and character. Each age learns from another,"

Vanderwell says

5. EVERYONE PARTICIPATES, EVERYONE LEARNS

- Intergenerational worship takes humility as well as intention. Older ones can't lord it over the rest with a "this is how we've always done it" attitude.
- Neither should worship leaders focus on one or two age-groups and ignore others.



6. EVERY MEMBER A MINISTER

- Congregations learn to value what every age offers. This includes being willing to learn together and including all ages in worship leading and worship content.



7. LEARNING ALONGSIDE CHILDREN



- Helps younger members understand our values and articulate them – Learning, especially for the young, is more effective in experiential settings and through stories.

8. TRAINING GROUND FOR LEADING SKILLS

- Making worship age-inclusive requires that you value participation more than performance.
- Children learn skills in leading worships.



INVOLVE DIFFERENT AGES IN LEADING WORSHIP



A preschooler turns pages while her father plays violin

Two teens and a 90-year-old former pastor read Scripture at the same service.

Whole families sing together on praise teams. Other vocal or instrumental teams have mixed ages of unrelated people.

Evening services sometimes begins with a short sanctuary service. Then all ages gather around tables in the narthex to discuss the morning sermon.

The Living Word Christian Fellowship, Hamilton, Ontario (SDA)



A NEW CELL: Charter members of the Living Word Christian Fellowship gather at the front of the church during the official opening of the cell church on May 19, 2001.

The Living Word Christian Fellowship Praise Team



- Children and teens lead out in the praise team on the inaugural Sabbath on May 19, 2001.

HOW DO WE DO INTERGENERATIONAL WORSHIP?

- See God in His Glory and Grace.
- Hear God in His Word.
- Share God in Your World.



Participation in Sermon

- Engage young and old in the message through a bridging activity.
- Let the kids interact with God's Word-- try call and response; look up Bible texts, provide answers.
- Lead them to make a faith decision.



Responsive

Reading



The leader says a few words (“Lord, our Lord.”)

The kids repeat the phrase. The worshipers echo back. And so it goes in three parts through the whole psalm – “Lord, our Lord...how wonderful ... is your name ...”

Responsive reading guaranteed to help everyone experience the psalm’s exuberance.

- “A sermon on young Daniel can be a time to remind those who are no longer young what it’s like, the needs youth face, and their need of encouragement from adults.
- Similarly, a message about the death of Abraham can be a time to speak to adolescents and young parents about concerns older folks have as they reach their declining years.”



Congregational Prayers

- Congregational prayers can be led by different ages, or groups, and include joys and struggles from each generation.



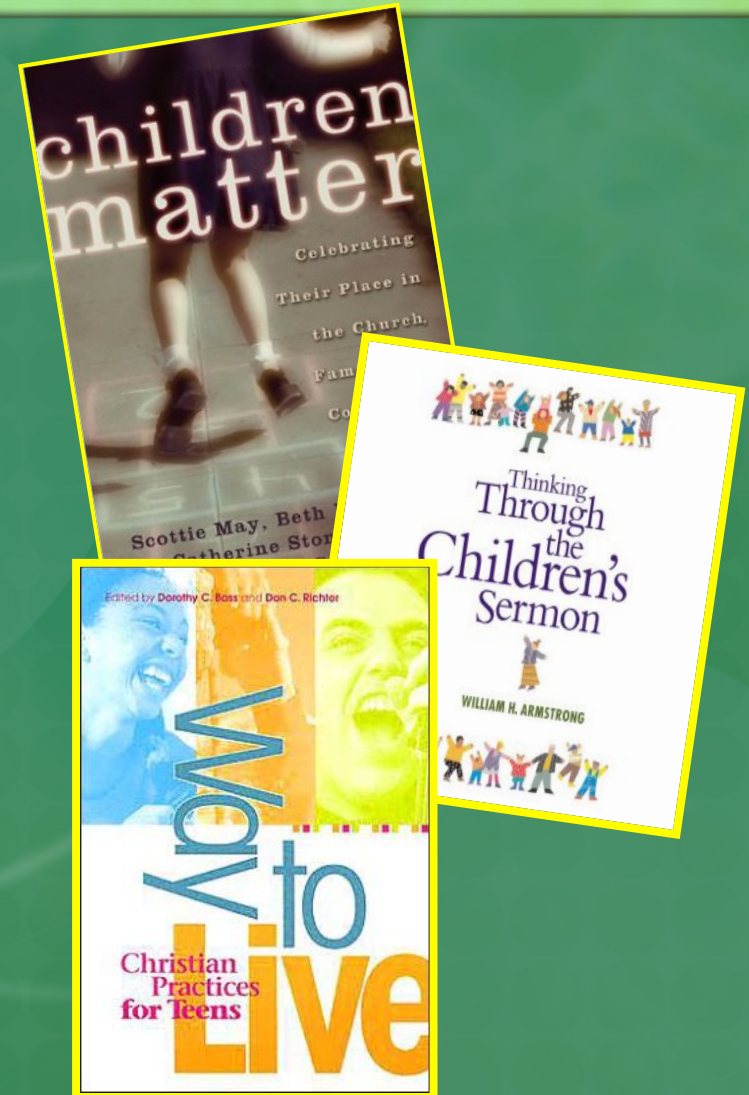
Adventist Home, p. 281



“He does not despise, neglect, or leave behind the children of the flock. He has not bidden us move forward and leave them. He has not travelled so hastily as to leave us with our children behind. Oh, no; but He has evened the path to life, even for children. And parents are required in His name to lead them along the narrow way. God has appointed us a path suited to the strength and capacity of children.

Books That Give Insight Into Outlooks and Concerns of the Young

- **Children Matter: Celebrating Their Place in the Church, Family and Community** by multiple authors
- **Thinking Through the Children's Sermon** by William H. Armstrong
- **Way to Live: Christian Practices for Teens** edited by Dorothy Bass and Don Richter



Books That Give You Insight Into Concerns of the Young and Old

- **Growing Up Christian** by Karl Graustein
- **Embracing Midlife: Congregations as Support Systems** by Lynne Baab
- **Settling In: My First Year in a Retirement Community** by Richard L. Morgan



New Resources Coming

- Plan to read and discuss a forthcoming book on intergenerational worship by Karen Holford.



Learn More from Others

- Intergenerational Worship by Don MacLafferty.
- The Multigenerational Congregation: Meeting the Leadership Challenge by Gilbert Rendle.

