REIMAGING FAITH FORMATION FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

Topic 2
Intergenerational Faith Formation

Presenter: John Roberto

WHY INTERGENERATIONAL NOW?
Intergenerational houses bring seniors, 20-somethings together

Yuko Matsuo, a 21-year-old student at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, studies at an intergenerational center. Above,主打: Phillis, left, and Judy Quaint, take a look at the Fab Creche Board. I'm 90 years old. Fab Creche (Chicago Tribune)
Multigenerational Households Make Sense

Why more and more adults are living with their parents.

By Brian Deng

Living with the grandparents is back in style.

Photos by David Bacon/Redux Pictures

StoryCorps
(RE)EMERGENCE OF INTERGENERATIONAL

Response to...

1. age fragmentation
2. individualism & isolation in society
3. need for connection
4. need for mentors and guides of all ages
5. research on forming faith
6. five-generational society and church
7. the benefits that can come to each generation, to the whole church, and to society-as-a-whole

Throughout Scripture there is a pervasive sense that all generations were typically present when faith communities gathered for worship, for celebration, for feasting, for praise, for encouragement, for reading of Scripture, in times of danger, and for support and service. To experience authentic Christian community and reap the unique blessings of intergenerationality, the generations must be together regularly and often—infants to octogenarians.

(Allen and Ross, Intergenerational Christian Formation)
INTERGENERATIONAL FAITH FORMATION

Intergenerational faith formation and whole community faith experiences are at the center of lifelong faith formation – engaging all ages and generations in the life and events of church life and the Christian faith and participation in intergenerational faith experiences.

*How to become intentionally intergenerational in church life & faith formation as the foundation for lifelong faith formation and discipleship?*

UNDERSTANDING GENERATIONS & FAITH GROWTH
UNDERSTANDING GENERATIONS

Generational Differences

1. Relationship to Institutions
2. Relationship to Authority
3. Family Relationships
4. Work-Life Balance
5. Communication Style
6. Technology Usage
7. Learning Style
8. Religious Expression
9. Worship Style

FROM BUILDERS TO MILLENNIALS

Institutions/Organizations --------------- People/Causes/I Issues
Loyal to Institutions --------------- Suspicious/Critical of Institutions
Leader Influenced -------------------------- Peer Influence
Group-Centered -------------------------- Network-Centric
Local/Parochial -------------------------- Global / Inclusive
Word Culture -------------------------- Image Culture
Analog Culture -------------------------- Digital Culture
One Size Fits All -------------------------- One Size Fits One
# UNDERSTANDING FAITH DEVELOPMENT

## UNDERSTANDING FAITH DEVELOPMENT (JAMES FOWLER)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Characteristics</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Stage: Undifferentiated faith</td>
<td>Infant</td>
<td>Trust, hope, and love compete with environmental inconsistencies or threats of abandonment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 1: Intuitive-projective faith</td>
<td>Toddler-preschooler</td>
<td>Instincts parental behaviors and attitudes about religion and spirituality; has no real understanding of spiritual concepts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stage 2: Mythical-literal faith</td>
<td>School-aged child</td>
<td>Accepts existence of a deity; religious and moral beliefs symbolized by stories; appreciates others' viewpoints; accepts concept of reciprocal fairness</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stage 3: Synthetic-conventional faith</td>
<td>Adolescent</td>
<td>Questions values and religious beliefs in an attempt to form own identity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stage 4: Individuation-reflective faith</td>
<td>Late adolescent and young adult</td>
<td>Assumes responsibility for own attitudes and beliefs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stage 5: Conjunctive faith</td>
<td>Adult</td>
<td>Integrates other perspectives about faith into own definition of truth</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stage 6: Universalizing faith</td>
<td>Adult</td>
<td>Makes concepts of love and justice tangible</td>
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CHILDHOOD
(FAMILY & CHURCH)

- Primal Faith:
  - care, safety, trust, warmth
- Intuitive-Projective:
  - impressions of faith, stories, faith experiences, community, music, prayers, rituals, repetition
- Mythic-Literal:
  - faith a reflection of parents and the community, Bible stories and stories of faith and faith experiences—give a sense who they are and what it means to be the people of God

PRIMAL FAITH

This first stage is a pre-language disposition, a total emotional orientation of trust off-setting mistrust, which takes form in the mutuality of one's relationships with parents and others. This enables us to overcome or offset the anxiety resulting from separations which occur during infant development. Piaget has helped us understand infant development as a succession of cognitive and emotional separations toward individuation from those who provide initial care. Earliest faith is what enables us to undergo these separations without undue experiences of anxiety or the fear of the loss itself. One can readily see how important the family is in the nurturing and incubation of this first Primal stage of faith.
INTUITIVE-PROJECTIVE FAITH

This is a style of faith that emerges in early childhood with the acquisition of language. Here imagination, stimulated by stories, gestures, and symbols, and not yet controlled by logical thinking, combines with perception and feelings to create long-lasting faith images. These images represent both the protective and threatening powers surrounding one's life. If we are able to remember this period of our lives, we have some sense of how important, positively and negatively, it is in the formation of our life-long orientations in faith. When conversion occurs at a later stage in one's life, the images formed in this stage have to be re-worked in some important ways.

MYTHIC-LITERAL FAITH

This emerges in the childhood elementary school years and beyond. Here the developing ability to think logically, through concrete operational thinking, helps one to order the world with categories of causality, space, time, and number. This means we can sort out the real from make-believe, the actual from fantasy. We enter into the perspectives of others. We become capable of capturing life and meanings in narrative and stories.
ADOLESCENCE
(AND BEYOND)

- Synthetic-Conventional faith:
  - identify formation
  - seeing from the perspective of others
  - abstract thought—putting faith stories into a larger story of faith
  - struggle between desire for independence and desire to belong to a group (friends, church); faith is not merely a reflection of someone else’s faith
  - movement of authority from external (parents) to internal, but authority for their faith is outside themselves (faith community)

SYNTHETIC-CONVENTIONAL FAITH

This stage characteristically begins to take form in early adolescence. Here new cognitive abilities make possible mutual, interpersonal perspective-taking. We begin to see ourselves as others see us. We begin to construct the interiority of ourselves and others. A new step toward interpersonal intimacy and relationship emerges. A personal and largely unreflective synthesis of beliefs and values evolves to support identity and to unite one in emotional solidarity with others. This is a very important stage of faith, one which can continue well into adulthood and throughout a person’s life.
YOUNG ADULTHOOD (AND BEYOND)

- Individuative-Reflective faith:
  - internal locus of authority predominates
  - making sense of the particular narrative of their own experience
  - engaging in critical reflection on (inherited) faith/beliefs (Does this work for me? What really matters?)
  - questioning faith (tradition) and if the Christian faith has depth that holds up to questions
  - expressing faith in their own way and seeking a community that embraces them; reinvent faith
  - discovering vocation

INDIVIDUATIVE-REFLECTIVE FAITH

With young adulthood or beyond, one begins to critically reflect on the beliefs and values formed in previous stages. In this stage, persons begin to rely upon third person perspective-taking. This means constructing a perspective that is neither just that of the self or reliant upon others, but is somehow above them both—a transcendental ego, if you will. The third person perspective brings objectivity and enables us to understand the self and others as part of a social system. Here we begin to see the internalization of authority. This stage brings a new quality of responsibility for the self and for one's choices. It marks the assumption of the responsibility for making explicit choices of ideology and lifestyle. These open the way for more critically self-aware commitments in relationships and in vocation.
MIDDLE ADULTHOOD (AND BEYOND)

- Many still in Synthetic Conventional and Individuative-Reflective faith styles
- Conjunctive Faith:
  - embracing and integration of opposites or polarities
  - authority of faith is internal
  - renewed appreciation of the religious rituals and traditions of one’s faith of origin, and from other traditions
  - coming into the fullness of one’s own unique personality and gifts; developing generativity and care
  - growing ability to look beyond the pressures of the present moment toward an appreciation of the deeper meanings symbolized in religious traditions

CONJUNCTIVE FAITH

At Mid-Life or beyond, frequently, we see the emergence of Conjunctive Faith. This stage involves the embrace and integration of opposites, or polarities, in one's life. It means realizing, in mid-life, that one is both young and old, that young-ness and old-ness are held together in the same life. It means recognizing that we are both masculine and feminine, with all of the meanings those characterizations have. It means coming to terms with the fact that we are both constructive people and, inadvertently, destructive people. St. Paul captured this in Romans 7. He said, "The good I would do I do not do, the evil I would not do I find myself doing. Who will save me from this body of death?"
UNIVERSALIZING FAITH

Beyond paradox and polarities, persons in this stage are grounded in a oneness with the power of being or God. Their visions and commitments seem to free them for a passionate yet detached spending of the self in love, devoted to overcoming division, oppression and violence, and in effective anticipatory response to an in-breaking commonwealth of love and justice, the reality of an in-breaking Kingdom of God.

INTERGENERATIONAL FOUNDATIONS
INTERGENERATIONAL FAITH FORMATION

Intergenerational faith formation and whole community faith experiences are at the center of lifelong faith formation – engaging all ages and generations in the life and events of church life and the Christian faith and participation in intergenerational faith experiences.

*How to become intentionally intergenerational in church life & faith formation as the foundation for lifelong faith formation and discipleship?*

CONGREGATIONAL CULTURE

*It is the culture of the whole church that is most influential in nurturing a vital Christian faith.*
CONGREGATIONAL CULTURE

1. Congregation’s Biblical Emphasis
2. Congregation Teaches Core Christian Concepts
3. Congregation’s Moral Guidance
4. Worship Services’ Positive Characteristics
5. Congregation Promotes Service
6. Congregation’s Mission Effectiveness
CONGREGATIONAL QUALITIES

1. Warm, Challenge Congregational Climate
2. Welcoming Atmosphere
3. Satisfied with the Congregation
4. Importance of this Church to Me
5. Congregation’s Moral Guidance
6. Congregation’s Social Interaction
7. Congregation’s Openness to Change
8. Members Experience Love and Support

CONGREGATIONAL CULTURE

The congregation’s basic ministries are thoroughly intergenerational.
- Young people are welcomed and expected to participate.
- Young people lead in church-wide ministries:
  - Worship
  - Education
  - Fellowship
  - Service and Outreach
  - Decision-making
INTERGENERATIONAL CONNECTION

Intergenerational connection and involvement during high school promotes mature faith in both high school and college – a “sticky faith.”

- Welcoming and valuing young people’s participation in the life of the church
- Worshipping with all of the generations
- Serving and building relationships with younger children
- Having significant relationships with adults in the church and having the community show interest in them
INTERGENERATIONAL CONNECTION

Churches and families wanting to instill deep faith in youth should help them build a web of relationships with committed and caring adults.

**Becoming a 5:1 Church**

5 Adults to 1 Young Person in Worship, Teaching, Mentoring, Rituals, and all of Community Life

IMMERSION INTO THE INTERGENERATIONAL FAITH COMMUNITY

*The best curriculum for forming children, youth, and anyone else in Christian faith is guided participation in a community of practice where people are vibrantly, passionately risking themselves together in lives of faith in a world crying out for the love of Christ.*

(Joyce Mercer)
IMMERSION INTO THE INTERGENERATIONAL FAITH COMMUNITY

We invite people into the way of life that embodies God’s love, justice, compassion, and reconciliation, by being, doing, and thinking about it together. The best curriculum for forming children, youth, and anyone else in Christian faith is guided participation in a community of practice where people are vibrantly, passionately risking themselves together in lives of faith in a world crying out for the love of Christ.

(Joyce Mercer)

Guided participation in a community of practice puts a premium on both participation and practice. . . . We become Christian, taking on the identity of one who is a disciple of Jesus, by acting the way Christians act, and by talking the way Christians talk. Over time through practice, even our hearts and minds are formed in this way of life.

(Joyce Mercer)
INTERGENERATIONAL PARTICIPATION
DYNAMIC

Preparation:
knowledge & practices
for participating fully

Reflection:
on the experience and
living its meaning in
daily life

Guided Participation:
in the events of church
life & the Christian Faith

IMPORTANCE OF INTERGENERATIONALITY

A faith-forming education requires the interdependence
of the generations.

This involves developing sustained patterns of intergenerational
learning, relationships, and mentoring that develop young
people’s identification with the faith community, give them
memories of hope to enliven their future, and create their sense
of responsibility for the well-being of the community and the
earth. (Charles Foster)
IMPORTANCE OF INTERGENERATIONALITY

The responsibility of mentoring the faith of children and youth belongs to the whole congregation in the full range of its ministries.

The clearest way of learning to be Christian is to participate with others in the practices of being Christian. Each member of a faith community may potentially mentor someone at the threshold of expertise in some shared community practice.

(Charles Foster)

IMPORTANCE OF INTERGENERATIONALITY

Christian commitment is formed and strengthened as persons develop relationships and actively participate in intergenerational faith communities that teach, model, and live our the communities’ beliefs.
IMPORTANCE OF INTERGENERATIONALITY

Intergenerational experiences strengthen and create new relationships among people of all ages, enhances their sense of belonging in the faith community, and increases participation in church life.

IMPORTANCE OF INTERGENERATIONALITY

Intergenerational experiences support families by surrounding them with a community of faith and engaging the whole family in a variety of faith-forming experiences together.

Intergenerational experiences strengthen the ability (confidence and competence) of parents and grandparents to promote religious socialization at home; be role models of faithful practice; and engage in faith practices at home.
INTERGENERATIONAL PRACTICES

CORE STRATEGIES FOR BECOMING INTENTIONALLY INTERGENERATIONAL

Create - intergenerational experiences
Infuse intergenerational experiences & relationships into existing ministries & programs
Connect generations
EIGHT FAITH FORMING PROCESSES

CULTIVATING CARING RELATIONSHIPS ACROSS GENERATIONS IN THE CONGREGATION AND COMMUNITY, BECOMING A LIFE-GIVING SPIRITUAL COMMUNITY OF FAITH, HOPE, AND LOVE.

- Intergenerational Caring Conversations
- Intergenerational Community Building
- Intergenerational Relationships in Existing Programs
- Intergenerational Storytelling
- Intergenerational Relationships through Mentoring
MT. VERNON BAPTIST CHURCH
COLUMBUS MS

For the past decade, I’ve been a part of a very special event that you wouldn’t expect to see in a Baptist church: a prom. Baptists and dancing have had a long and storied history, but this is different, I assure you. Every spring for the past decade the church I’ve had the privilege of serving at has thrown a Joy Prom, a prom for the special needs community. It’s an opportunity for folks from all ages in the special needs community to come together and have a night where they are the kings and queens. Other churches and businesses throughout the community partner with our high school students (who serve as dates) to prepare this incredible event. (Josh Daffern)

CELEBRATING

Worshiping God together through Sunday worship, rituals, sacraments, and the liturgical seasons that involves all of the ages and generations.

✓ Intergenerational Sunday Worship
✓ Whole Community Sacramental Celebrations
✓ Milestones throughout Life
✓ Church Year Feasts & Seasons
MESSY CHURCH

1. A flexible, relaxed arrival time with drinks and snacks
2. Creative exploration of a Bible story/theme through creative experiences for people of different learning styles and of all ages. Children and adults are not separated and are encouraged to explore the story/theme together
3. A short but explicit time of worship with story, music and prayers that builds on the creative exploration.
4. A generous welcome and hospitality is expressed through a delicious home-cooked, sit-down meal with others

MESSY CHURCH VALUES

- **Christ-centered**: Messy Church is a church, not a craft club, that helps people encounter Jesus as Lord & Savior.
- **All-age**: It is for adults and children to enjoy together - every element should be relevant and accessible to all.
- **Creativity**: It uses hands-on activities to explore Bible stories, to reflect a God of creativity and to give people a chance to play together.
- **Hospitality**: It reflects a God of unconditional love and is a church for people outside church, providing an oasis of welcome and a safe space in which to thrive.
- **Celebration**: It reflects a God of joy who wants his people to have life in all its fullness.
LEARNING

Engaging all ages and generations together in learning experiences that teach scripture and the Christian tradition, informing and forming disciples of all ages in Christian identity.

- Intergenerational Learning (James White)
  1. In-Common All Ages Experiences
  2. Parallel Learning
  3. Contributive Occasions
  4. Interactive Sharing

- Weekly, Bi-Weekly, and Monthly Models
- Small Group & Large Group Models
INTERGENERATIONAL LEARNING

Meal and Community Building
Part 1. Gathering and Prayer
Part 2. All Ages Learning Experience
Part 3. In-Depth Learning Experience
  Option 1. Whole Group (together)
  Option 2. Age Group (parallel)
  Option 3. Activity Center
Part 4. Sharing Learning Experiences and Home Application
Part 5. Closing Prayer

INTERGENERATIONAL LEARNING

1. As the faith formation curriculum for the whole community
2. In Lectionary-based catechesis
3. In sacramental preparation
4. In Vacation Bible School
5. In parent-child and parent-teen programs
6. In milestone celebrations
7. In intergenerational service projects
8. In liturgical season celebrations
9. In a retreat experience or parish mission
INTEGRATED MODELS: LOGOS

1. Bible Study
2. Family Time
3. Worship Skills
4. Recreation

GenOn Ministries
www.genonministries.org
WORSHIP & LECTIONARY APPROACH
(St. Elizabeth of Hungary Parish, Acton, MA)

September: 24th Sunday in Ordinary Time
October: 28th Sunday in Ordinary Time
November: 32nd Sunday in Ordinary Time
December: 2nd Sunday of Advent
January: Baptism of the Lord Sunday
February: 1st Sunday of Lent
March: Palm Sunday
April: 4th Sunday of Easter
May: Holy Trinity Sunday

INTERGENERATIONAL THEMES

1. Seasons of the Church Year
2. Scripture
3. Christian Beliefs
4. Liturgy & Sacraments
5. Morality
6. Justice
7. Prayer
8. Christian Practices
SEASONS & FAITH THEMES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Season</th>
<th>Theme</th>
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<tr>
<td>Advent</td>
<td>Jesus the Messiah</td>
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<tr>
<td>Christmas – Epiphany</td>
<td>Divinity of Jesus</td>
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<td>Lent</td>
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<td>Easter Season</td>
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<td>Pentecost</td>
<td>Mission of the Christian</td>
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<td>Sunday Readings</td>
<td>Ministry of Jesus</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sunday Readings</td>
<td>Identity of Christ</td>
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PRAYING

*Nurturing the spiritual life of the whole community through the congregation’s prayer services, rituals, and blessings throughout the year.*

- Intergenerational Formation in Spiritual Practices
- Intergenerational Prayer Stations
- Intergenerational Prayer Partners & Spiritual Guides
- Intergenerational Prayer Groups
INTERGENERATIONAL PRAYER STATIONS: EASTER-ASCENSION (THERESA CHO)

https://theresaecho.com

SERVING

*Involving all ages and generations in service and mission to the world, especially to the poor and vulnerable, and in the works of justice and advocacy.*

- Intergenerational Mission Trips
- Churchwide Service Day
- Intergenerational Monthly Project
- Intergenerational Service Nights
- Intergenerational Service Projects
INTERGENERATIONAL SERVICE

✓ Make the activities meaningful, so that every person, regardless of age, can contribute in a significant way.
✓ Supply mentors to individuals or families that have had little or no experience in service.
✓ Offer various options to suit individuals and families with different ages, interests, time constraints, and locations.
✓ Include preparation and reflection as part of any church-sponsored service activity.
✓ Organize regular intergenerational service days/events.
✓ Organize an annual intergenerational mission trip.
✓ Celebrate what church members are already doing

DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICE INVOLVEMENTS

1. Local mission projects lasting anywhere from a few hours to one day in length
2. Short-term mission trips lasting anywhere from two to five days and requiring an overnight stay on location
3. Weeklong mission trips within the United States as well as to foreign countries, designed for those who are ready to take the next big step in service
4. Global expedition trips of ten to fourteen days that provide the opportunity to be immersed for a longer period in the targeted community and culture
5. Personalized small group mission trips, organized around the interests and time of the group