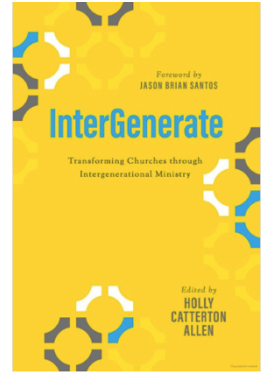


# Intergenerate Summary

Allen, H. (2018) *Intergenerate: Transforming Churches through Intergenerational Ministry*, Abilene Christian University Press, Texas US.



## SCOPE: BLOCK ONE

### Chapter One: Why Now?



- Van Gogh Mickey Mouse – the result has been the youth and children segregated from the main congregation. The impact of peer orientated efforts moved the spiritual formation of our youth and children from the multi-generational body to the fringes of our communities.
- The influence of Moral Therapeutic Deism, a far cry from the civic Christianity of the Silent Generation where faith formation was formed as a community
- We've forgotten the biblical notion of a covenant people who are intended to be intergenerational and communal.
- Anchoring and faith identity – much of faith formation has been peer-orientated, away from the 'anchored identity' formed in the context of highly connected, emotionally supportive culture, and a move towards individualisation. Individuals begin to see themselves as the centre of the faith community, rather than the part of the larger whole.

### Chapter Two: Intergenerational Communities and a Theology of Accommodation

- Accommodation simply means to make room for someone or something. Throughout history, we have seen God accommodating humanity (Exodus 33:20) – God, in sending Jesus, accommodates humanity (Philippians 2:6-8). A posture of coming down, stooping.
- As person's knowledge of God and authority within the church increases, so does their responsibility to accommodate – a principled posture for those within the church to continually review their communal life and practices.
- Leading with a posture of accommodation will impact the type and style of liturgy, music, media, participation, space, illustration and examples used.
- It is incumbent on the Christian with more knowledge to accommodate the Christian with less (Cor 8:1-11:1)
- Viewed from within, it is very hard to make a distinction between gospel and the church's own particular cultural expression of faith.
- Fostering a culture of mutual accommodation while also adopting a posture of accommodation that increases with knowledge and authority will greatly enhance the likelihood of a smoother transition to a more intergenerational church life.

### Chapter Three: Learning to Love Together

Intergenerational ministry intentionally facilitates and creates contexts where people of different ages and generations constructively interact and equip each other for ministry in a manner that fosters spiritual formation.

- Intergenerational outlook: acknowledges the gifts every generation brings to the spiritual formation of other generations strengthens the whole church
- Intergenerational ministry: uses these gifts, creating frequent opportunities for various generations to communicate in meaningful ways, to interact on a regular basis and to worship and serve together regularly.
- Intergenerational experiences: experiences in which multiple representatives of two or more generations are present, and those present are engaged in mutual activities.
- Intergenerational ministry is
  - Intentional – calls into question a cultural tendency to isolate groups and generations from each other
  - strategic – interact for a specific purpose of Christian faith formation

- intertwined – age specific programming complements a church or ministry's commitment to intergen.
- Not an end in itself, it's a means that God uses to form Christian community. Intergenerational Ministry is a tool for forming disciples that are learning together to love the things that God loves, in the way that God loves.

## Chapter Four: Generational Theory and Faith Communities

- There has been a shift over time in how we view, form and value community :
  - Door-to-door: community was formed daily, through the relationships with people in geographical proximity (Silent and Greatest generations)
  - Place-to-place: Transport of 1970s meant that you could be a part of the community you wanted to be in – you were part of a church community if you 'showed up'. Impacted on how churches were staffed (Baby Boomers and Gen X)
  - Person-to-person: Direct person-to-person contact, over a wider social network. Church attendance does not always equal belonging (Millennials and Gen Z)
- Know that each generation is coming with different expectations for community – having all three expectations of community is one of the reasons we find forming community in the church so difficult.

## Chapter Five: From *Multigenerational* to *Intergenerational*

- Homogeneity (e.g. families with children) has made it difficult for the different generations to build community together. A move from multi- to intergenerational requires a process of adaptive change.
  - *Stage 1 Awareness*: people must be convinced that there is a problem before they are interested in a solution (Alan Hirsch & Michael Frost). Form an intergen team carefully
  - *Stage 2 Understanding*: Allow time to cultivate understanding, have discussions, communicate well.
  - *Stage 3 Evaluation*: Evaluate current actions, attitudes and values in light of new understanding. Time for discernment and decision making. Crucial for making lasting change.
  - *Stage 4 Experimentation*: Experiment with ministries around the edge, which can engage the system without overwhelming it. Begin where you are, with some cross-gen ministries already happening. Share stories of success, and extend invitation to join the journey. Collaborative style of leadership required.
  - *Stage 5 Commitment*: Planned intergen interactions become the spontaneous and natural ways of church members treating each other – unavoidably impact the previously existing structures of the church. Structural changes can now be accomplished because the people themselves have taken on a new way of being church together.