

Six things you can do now that are intergenerational

The Church is multi-generational. It becomes intergenerational when the generations participate together, learn from each other, talk and listen, and co-create. The purpose of this is that every person grows deeper in their faith, spirituality and lived life as followers of Jesus. We all need each other in the cultivating, nurturing and growing process. Here are six intergenerational activities for your church.

Story sharing

We are not always good at listening to one another, but it is the key to good relationships. We give you ideas for sharing stories.

Games evening

Good fun, shared challenge and laughter sustain the relationships from which worship, mission and community flow.

A bonfire gathering

There is something special about gathering outside and around fire. We explain how you could make this a rich experience for the whole community.

Participating in worship together

Worship becomes richer when we are engaged and involved. This is true of all ages, and arguably more so when different ages worship together interactively.

Making a difference

We are called to love our neighbour. Finding ways to do this in intergenerational groupings is transformative as we share activities and conversations.

Mossy Church

Experiencing God's creation is a wonderful way to worship and to explore. A walk with questions and stations along the way works well for intergenerational groups.

See next page for more detail on each idea.

For further ideas or help please contact:

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Story sharing

Create spaces for conversations in small groups of different generations.

The key is setting question(s) that can be answered by anyone, for example:

- Tell a story about your favourite teacher at school and what made them special.
- Talk about a day when you smiled a lot!
- The thing I am afraid of is ...

Give each person the experience of really being listened to. It is helpful if someone hosts each group to help the process work for each person.

Games evening

The Revd Simon Chan observed that churches that don't play together well don't worship together well. There is a close link between play and creativity and spirituality. Fun matters! What about holding a games evening with an intergenerational twist?

Have tables that mix the generations. For the games (and this will need to be prepared in advance) have four different generations bring and explain a game that everyone then learns and plays together. This allows different generations to share something of their experience, and facilitates a new shared experience/conversation.

A bonfire gathering

There is something about dark and firelight that opens up connection and conversation – as well as being a lot of fun.

A bonfire party is a great way to bring the generations together around a shared experience.

Have a plan for food, for fun, and for stories (maybe taking cues from the story sharing above).

Paying attention to the hospitality and the hosting is key. Are there rituals you can build in that form the framework, not only for the first evening but for subsequent ones?

Participating in worship together

What are the small changes that can be made to enable intergenerational connections and conversations as part of the worship service? Try these ideas:

- Have a craft activity as a response to the reading or what has been shared. Talk to people around you about what they have made and why.
- Set up some prayer stations with different ways of enabling prayer. Those who go to a particular station then talk about why they chose that one and what they experienced.
- Encourage different generations in groups to share where they have seen God at work in the last week, or what they will be doing this time tomorrow.

Making a difference

Christ calls us to love our neighbours and hence our neighbourhood. Participating in doing something practical is a great way of learning and experiencing together. Here are ideas from two different churches:

1. A church on an estate regularly does a litter pick, heading out in small groups of different ages.
2. Another church does the 'Send a cow' charity challenge, working together to fundraise and to connect with the communities that the work blesses.

Mossy Church

Organise a walk with small groups of different generations walking together, sharing the experience of being out in the 'bio cathedral'.

Nature does a lot of the work and conversation flows from the experience of being outside. But you can build in pauses to explore what we hear, see, smell, feel – and to listen to each other.

Collect items along the way and explore how they connect to faith.