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## **Bridging the Gap: A Guided Journey Engaging the Christian Faith Across Generations**

Chad Ibach

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GEORGE FOX UNIVERSITY

PROJECT PORTFOLIO:

BRIDGING THE GAP:

A GUIDED JOURNEY ENGAGING THE CHRISTIAN FAITH ACROSS GENERATIONS



IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT FOR THE DEGREE OF

DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

PORTLAND SEMINARY

BY:

CHAD IBACH

PROJECT FACULTY:

JASON WELLMAN

PORTLAND, OREGON

APRIL 2022





## CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

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This certifies that the doctoral Project Portfolio of

Chad Ibach

has been approved by  
the Evaluation Committee on March 14, 2022  
for the degree of Doctor of Ministry in Leadership & Spiritual Formation.

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I cannot believe this journey is coming to a close. It feels like just yesterday that I was beginning this three-year journey. Never in my wildest dreams did I think that I would complete a doctorate. Never. When I think back on my time over the last three years, the change that has happened in life and the growth I see in myself begins to become overwhelming. God has been faithful to me every step of the way and I cannot say enough how thankful I am.

First, I cannot thank you enough, *Hailey*. You truly are my best friend and have been with me through every step of the way. I still have a vivid picture in my mind of you taking a picture of me on my very first day of school before we were even engaged. You truly have been there every step of this journey. The ways in which you have supported me over the last three years and encouraged me to keep going even when I did not think I could make it, I will forever be grateful for. You helped me to get to the finish line more than anyone else so thank you for that. I love you always.

*Dad & Mom, Drew & Rach* – Thank you for supporting me as I stepped yet again into another crazy idea of going back to school. I would not be where I am today without each of you in my life. Your kindness towards my journey spurs me on and I am forever grateful for that. You care so deeply for who I am and the journey I am on and it is so evident. Thank you for your love and care for me. I cannot thank you enough.

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*Extended Family* – Thank you for your love for me even from afar. It has often been felt over the last three years and I am thankful for each one of you.

*Tuesday Night Group* – I will always and forever be grateful for more than words could say. You each have been so willing to enter into the wrestle that I have experienced throughout the last three years – not trying to fix me; rather, sitting with me in the wrestle. We have worked through a lot of stuff together and you each have left a deep imprint on my soul.

*Jason* – Thank you for your kindness towards me and my journey the last three years. You have done an amazing job encouraging me to pursue where the Lord is leading and challenging me in my thinking in so many different ways. Thank you for being a constant help every step of the way. Your guidance has not gone unnoticed.

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*MaryKate, Ken, & the Doctoral Team* – You each have brought a special piece to this journey. As I think specifically about our times out at Cannon Beach, you created space for us to journey within our own souls to find God. This journey you each have brought us through has deeply changed who I am today. Thank you.

Lastly, *My Lord and Savior* – You are my rock and my salvation. You have sustained me through this journey. Your grace is sufficient for me even when I cannot see it. You truly have helped me to become more rooted and established in love through this program. For that, I am forever grateful.

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## RESEARCH METHOD

This Project utilized a blended methodology that draws upon bibliographic resources, data derived from stakeholder collaboration, and human-centered design and iteration processes to create a heuristic-based, application-oriented Project.

## ABSTRACT

The need that is addressed through this project portfolio is the recognition that there is a lack of space for intergenerational relationships and conversations around spirituality and the Christian faith to occur between older generations and Generation Z specifically. As we look at the church today, we are seeing many different gaps occurring between generations, these two in particular. The focus of this project portfolio is to address this problem of the generational gaps within the church in hopes of creating long-lasting intergenerational relationships. The problem is addressed by gathering individuals from different generations and taking them through a six-month program in which they will study about different aspects of the Christian faith and where we see these generational gaps occurring. The goal is to gather these individuals together to have conversations with one another so they might have a deeper understanding and appreciation for one another. The program will include online, in-person, and retreat aspects. The purpose of each of these aspects is for the individuals from Generation Z as well as older generations to feel comfortable within different platforms. With each of the portions, the individuals will have the chance to interact with one another on a weekly basis to help foster deeper connections with one another. The program will culminate in a final, day-long retreat. This program will be run through a coffee shop ministry as well as a church setting. Individuals need to have a desire to develop relationships with Generation Z/older generations and have a relationship with Christ.

## INTRODUCTION

### ***JOURNEY OF DISCOVERY***

The process of creating this project began as I was working at my parent's coffee shop ministry. I was working with a lot of people from Generation Z but could not seem to connect with them. In the past, it has always felt very easy and natural to connect with those who are younger than me, but for some reason this group of individuals has felt more difficult. As I observed at the coffee shop, I noticed that there did not seem to be many spaces for them to dialogue about their emotional or spiritual health. I began my research solely thinking about the emotional and spiritual health of Generation Z. I gathered individuals from all different generations for my Discovery Workshop to dialogue about what they were seeing in their specific contexts and whether Generation Z individuals were talking about these issues. These individuals included people from Generation Z and older. As we discussed, we realized that there were a lot of different issues that Generation Z is facing today. For my one-on-one interviews, I reached out to individuals who were working directly with Generation Z to gain insight into their generation. From the Discovery Workshop, one-on-one interviews, and research about Generation Z, I began to think about how older generations could equip Generation Z with the tools to better engage with their spiritual and emotional health.

As I continued forward with the Design Workshop, I gathered similar individuals to help think through where I had come from since the first year of research. These individuals again included a wide range of generations, including Generation Z. The reason I included Generation Z in each step was to make sure to include their voice in the entire process. I did not want to create a project without having heard from Generation Z themselves. For this second workshop, I began to focus more about how to create safe spaces for Generation Z and how older generations



could help equip them to talk about their emotional and spiritual health. At the end of the workshop, we came up with the ideas to create a Bible study, create a club for Generation Z, and a space to train and educate leaders in how to help Generation Z. The one-on-one interviews included both people who were working with Generation Z as well as another individual writing about the importance of creating spaces for others.

From these conversations, I realized that what we were seeing was more of a gap that was occurring between the generations. Generation Z is a generation that desires to walk alongside other generations rather than being taught at like older generations might often do towards them. This thought sparked the idea of creating more of a walk-alongside rather than a top-down teaching type of model for my future project. For my prototypes, I created two different approaches. The first was a Bible study that took place solely online where individuals from Generation Z and older generations would engage with weekly material and interact with one another through an online forum. The purpose of this prototype was to use an online platform for the generations to connect. The second prototype was an in-person retreat/conference. The individuals from both Generation Z and older generations would gather to hear from speakers talking about the Christian faith. The purpose for this was to bring Generation Z into a space that may feel more comfortable for older generations. My MVP from this experience was a combination of the two. The reason that I chose a combination was because through all my research I believe it is important to have a technological touch point for Generation Z as well as an in-person touch point for older generations if we are going to bridge the gap. The project would focus on bridging the gap between Generation Z and older generations by using these touch points as well as focusing on key gaps and different spiritual practices to combat these gaps.

As I began to design my project, there were two main areas that I realized that I was going to have to put effort towards. The first was creating the website. This was one of the biggest tasks in creating the project. Creating the website included creating all the different pages, formatting those pages, finding photos and font, and much more. The second area of focus was creating content for the website as well as the program. To create content, I spent many hours researching, reading, listening to podcasts and talks, and watching TedTalks and online videos to find the material that would fit into the focus for each of the portions of the program. I had to find material for the online portion of the program as well as create material for the in-person gathering we will have every other week. The final piece of the content was finalizing the retreat portion of the program. This is the ending to the six-month journey and I wanted the participants to have the space away together to finalize their experience.

My benchmarks for my project seemed to come naturally as I thought about my project. I want intergenerational relationships to happen, I want mutual understanding across generations to develop, and I wanted these relationships to last. These three benchmarks were first on my list to include. To help make them happen, throughout the program, I included different questions and surveys throughout the program to help foster further relationships. The whole program is based upon open dialogue with one another; my hope is that through open dialogue, individuals across generations will develop deep relationships with one another and come to a greater understanding of one another. The final benchmark was about the program format and if it was user friendly. To measure this benchmark, I included surveys after each section of the program specifically asking for feedback about the format. My hope is that this program could be used in multiple arenas to help foster relationships between younger and older generations.

## ***EXPERIENCE EVALUATION***

There has obviously been a lot of time and effort that I have put into this project and as I look back, there were many obstacles and challenges that came along the way. I think the most difficult challenge personally was sustaining the motivation throughout the three years. There were always ups and downs, but the downs were particularly hard to maintain an effort to move forward. Another challenge was my context. I was in a unique context during the entire program, which presented many challenges. Being in a coffee shop ministry, my ministry looked a lot different than many others who are in traditional vocational ministry settings. I had to think outside the box and challenge myself to create a project that could reach further than just the coffee shop. A final challenge was just the lack of resources available doing a virtual program. It felt hard at times to find all the material I was hoping for using the George Fox library and being someone who enjoys hardcopies. This did not strongly hinder me along the way, but I feel is something worth mentioning.

As I look at my project, there were areas of shortcoming that I hope to address in the future. One area of continued growth would be creating a database where I could log what I am observing about the individuals on a weekly basis. I believe this will help me to further understand and help foster better community among the individuals in the program. Another area that I realized would help me further develop the program would be to include one-on-one interviews with the individuals as they are going through the program. These interviews can be used to help improve the program format as well as to understand where each individual is at in relation to creating lasting relationships with others in the group. Something I learned from these defects is that there is always room for improvement. There will always be space to make my

program better. One thing that will be helpful will be to run the first six-month program to see what areas of improvement I will actually be able to make in the future that I may not have already thought about.

A few alternative approaches to my NPO could be to do something only using technology. Technology is such a big part of our world today that to address the NPO only using technology could potentially draw a lot of individuals in. The opposite approach could be to use no technology. There are many individuals who may be drawn to the fact that there is no technology involved when getting to know other individuals. These are two approaches that I thought about as I was beginning to create my project.

One of my key learnings from this project is the importance of intergenerational relationships. This learning may seem obvious but over the last three years I have truly learned the importance of all people in the Christian community. We can learn from those both younger and older than us because we each bring something different to the table. Often, the church does not feel like a space in which we can learn from one another and my hope with this project is that I have provided a space for people from all generations to gather and have conversations that are spiritually forming. Another key learning is the deeper understanding of the weight of technology in our culture today. We are never going to be able to get rid of technology and everyone is going to have to learn how to embrace it in their everyday lives. This does not mean that each person is going to engage it the same; rather, we all need to learn how to engage with it in a healthy manor that allows us to bridge gaps and not create gaps. A final learning from my research journey is the importance of gathering together. I do not believe we were ever made to live alone. We were created to be together to build relationships, learn from one another, and grow as individuals. This growth and change cannot happen if we are not gathering with one

another. For these two reasons previously mentioned is why I have chosen to include both an in person and online portion of the project.

### ***NEXT STEPS***

Looking forward to after graduation is a crazy concept as we have been working on this project portfolio for three years. There is still quite a bit of work to do as I move forward with my program. One area of development is creating the one-on-one interviews that I described earlier. These one-on-one interviews will be spread out periodically throughout the six-month program, but a schedule needs to be created. I also want to further develop my survey questions to better help the format of the program. Many of my survey questions focused on other aspects of the program rather than on the format. A final task of development for the program is to gather all the digital copies of the material in order for the individuals to have easy access of the material. This will include scanning the chapters of the books and including them on the website links.

My plan for the project is to finish all the above as well as gather at least twelve individuals by September 1, 2022. There still is a lot of back-end work that needs to be done before I can start the actual program itself. In my launch plan, I have included the dates of when I will finish each of these steps. My goal is to run the first program October 2022 – March 2023. This would then give me the time and space to process and further develop the program before running it twice a year (Jan – June and July – December).

### ***CONCLUSION***

In reflecting on this doctoral process, I experienced many ups, downs, and surprises along the way. One difficult aspect of the process was not always getting people to participate in either my one-on-one interviews or workshops in the ways that I desired. There were a few individuals

that I anticipated would bring a lot of thought and ideas to the table, but who were not able to participate and/or did not offer as much in the workshops as I hoped. This resulted in having to find alternative individuals to participate. A joy throughout the process was getting to read, listen to, and watch so many different pieces about topics in which I am highly interested. Specifically learning more about the spiritual disciplines was such a joy during the last three years.

I have a lot to process still as I think about this project and the impact it is having and will have on my personal vocation, community, and development. As I have delved into spiritual practices and creating the content around them for this project, I know I have been shaped by what I have been observing. I am continually thinking about how I can relate to Generation Z and older generations differently now that I have studied about bridging the gap for the last few years. I have a deeper desire to see this gap narrow as our culture rapidly changes. As I think about my personal development, I am proud of myself for completing such a big task. I know that sounds so simple yet there were many times that I did not know if I could finish. Well, here I am now about to turn in my final project. It truly is an amazing thing.

Finally, as I think about my project itself, I am hopeful that it can make a deep impact on the souls of others. I desire to see generational gaps in the church diminish and I pray that this project can be a small piece that will help accomplish that. I hope others will use it to help bridge the gaps in their churches and in their communities. I am not exactly sure what that all could look like but I am praying that God will use this project in whatever ways He sees fit.

## PROJECT

### ***NPO STATEMENT***

Creating spaces for intergenerational relationships and conversations around spirituality and the Christian faith to occur between older generations and Generation Z to create lasting relationships.

### ***PROJECT DESCRIPTION***

The context of my vocation is working with people across generations. I have found myself in spaces where I am working with both older and younger generations. As I have observed, there seems to be a disconnect that is happening between older generations and Generation Z. The purpose of my project is to help bridge this gap. The project itself is a website that a group of individuals from different generations will walk through during a six month program which includes an online, in-person, and retreat component. The website is created in order for the cohort to go through their online and in-person material every other week. The online material consists of readings, videos, and podcasts followed by a series of reflective questions. The in-person gatherings are created in order for the group to dive deeper into the material in which they are engaging with online. The retreat will be an additional space in which further dialogue could occur. The project was created as a hybrid program with in-person sessions, online sessions, and a final day-long retreat in order to provide space for all generations to feel comfortable. The six month length was chosen in order to create a long enough time period for individuals to get to know one another and create lasting relationships. Below is the project scope and benchmarks followed by the project documentation. The project documentation is snapshots of each of the website pages as well as leader guides for the online, in-person, and retreat portion of the program.

## ***PROJECT SCOPE***

- Creating a website –
  - Website Domain – Squarespace - \$16/Month
  - Pages –
    - Home Page: about the program, personal introduction, what am I trying to accomplish
    - Program Page: Detailed outline of the program
    - Other pages: online material; in-person gathering material; retreat material
    - Resource Page: a continual resource page that is available to past participants – this will include links to books, podcasts, blogs, etc. and also a connection page to foster continued connection between program participants
- Creating content –
  - Pre-survey of what knowledge participants are bringing into the study, specifically their knowledge of other generations
  - In – Person Gatherings –
    - “Get to know you” and overview material
    - Discussion based material – these discussions will be based on the online material
    - Leader guide to follow each week
  - Online Material –
    - Readings about generations in the church and the Christian faith
    - Readings about spirituality and the Christian faith



- Podcasts to listen to about spirituality and the Christian faith
  - Guidance for practice of spiritual disciplines both individually and collectively
  - Discussion forum to dialogue through the different topic areas that have been chosen for the group
  - Leader guide to follow and descriptions of the materials
- Retreat –
- Research retreat spaces
  - Develop retreat schedule
  - Develop retreat content
  - Develop end of retreat surveys

## ***BENCHMARKS***

1. Mutual understanding across generations – A pre-survey is developed to understand the background of knowledge each of the individuals bring as they enter the program. This survey will include questions about each individual's involvement with people from other generations, how often these individuals are having spiritual conversations, if they feel understood by other generations, and what they hope to gain from joining the program with respect to understanding other generations. A post-survey is developed in order to see where the growth in knowledge has occurred. This benchmark will be indicated if the participants in the post-survey have phrases describing their deeper understanding of other generations (i.e. "I understand that younger/older generations act this certain way because...), how they feel about having spiritual conversations with other generations (i.e. "I am much more confident

- to talk about my spiritual journey with other generations because of this program”), and what they learned from other generations (i.e. “I learned this from other generations”).
2. Lasting intergenerational relationships – 3 pairs of intergenerational relationships are established and continue after the program. A survey will be given to the participants asking about their interactions with other participants and if they plan to continue fostering any relationships that were built. This benchmark will be indicated if I see intention from 3 pairs of individuals desiring to continue their relationship after the program. This may look like the pair meeting once a month or gathering for prayer, etc.
  3. Format of the program – An assessment will be given after each of the topical sessions of the program (4 assessments). These assessments will include questions that ask about what material has stuck out to the participants, what are areas that they would change or want to spend more time on, and something they have learned about themselves or someone else over the course of the topical session. This benchmark will be indicated by the responses from the surveys after each topical session. The responses may include but are not limited to “I am understanding the material really well”, “These are the areas that stick out and I am remembering”, and “Here is what I have learned about myself from the program.”
  4. Dialogue happens between generations – Observations are done to assess whether dialogue is happening between generations. A document will be created to take note of what I notice about the interactions between generations at the in-person gatherings. This benchmark will be indicated by the fact that conversations occur

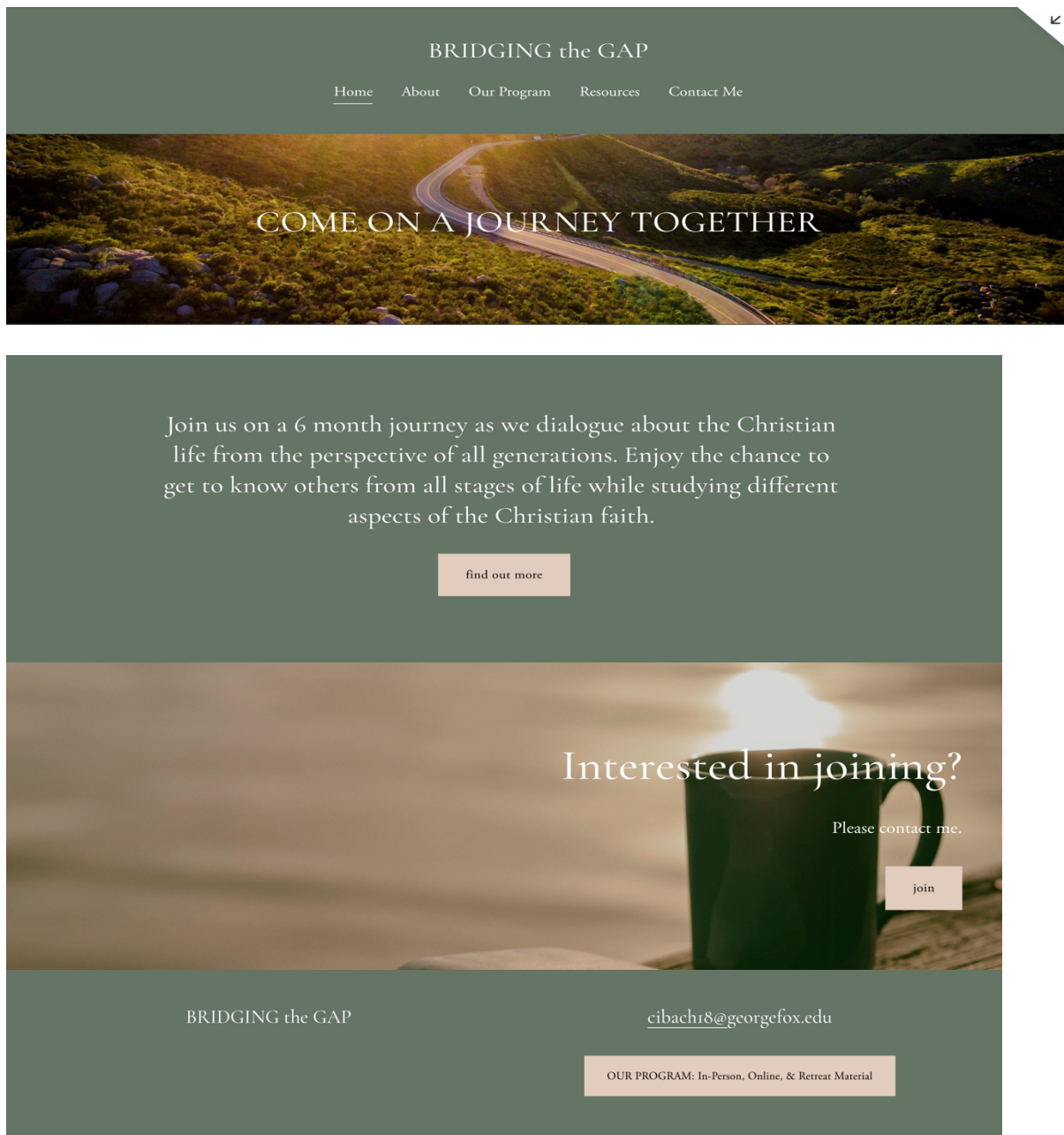
between older and younger generations. The generations do not just stick with one another; rather, they have conversations across generations. These conversations also hopefully will revolve around spiritual topics. This will be indicated by listening and noting on the document in order to keep track of the changes that may occur over the weeks. From Week 1 to Week 24, I should notice a significant difference in interaction between generations as well as if the conversations revolve around spirituality.

## ***PRESENTATION/DOCUMENTATION OF PROJECT***

*Below, I have cut and pasted all of the pages of my website together and added the Leader Guide Outlines for the Online & In-Person sections.*

*Here is the link to the website: <https://reindeer-ray-26p6.squarespace.com/home>*

**HOME PAGE:** Below are pictures of the front page of the website. Included is a menu of all of the pages of the program, a description of the program, and a “Interested in Joining” section.



**ABOUT PAGE:** Below are pictures of the history of the program as well as more about myself for the viewer. This page includes a detailed description of the program, including how I created the program as well as the program outline. The About Page also includes a portion about myself and my spiritual journey.

## history of the program

As a result of months of reflection and research, I have observed a gap between generations specifically around the ability to have conversations about our Christian faith. My hope for this program is to provide a space to begin the process of bridging that gap, creating long-lasting, faith-oriented relationships between today's generations.

This 6 month journey will begin by dialoguing about the Christian community

As we discuss these topics, we will incorporate spiritual disciplines that help us to engage our faith regarding these topics.



### PROGRAM OUTLINE:

- WEEKS 1 - 4: Christian Community
- WEEK 5: Breakdown of the Generational Gaps
- WEEKS 6 - 9: Technology & Silence and Solitude
- WEEKS 10 - 13: Vocation & Simplicity
- WEEKS 14 - 17: Pace of Life & Slowness and Sabbath
- WEEKS 18 - 21: Culture & Engagement
- WEEKS 22 & 23: Wrap up
- WEEK 24: Retreat

My hope is that through this program we each can learn more about ourselves, others and God.

## about me

My name is Chad Ibach and I am from Plymouth, Michigan. I am currently finishing my Doctorate of Ministry in Leadership and Spiritual Formation through George Fox University. My focus in this degree has developed over time, but I continue to find myself engaged with and passionate about spiritual disciplines. My hope for this program is to provide a space that fosters community across generations as well as to guide others in how to incorporate spiritual disciplines into their daily lives.

The practice of spiritual disciplines has been important in my own personal journey. I feel excited to see what this program could offer others as they engage in their own spiritual formation.

Some of my favorite things to do are running, sitting and drinking a good cup of coffee at local spots, and going for long walks with our puppy, Neville.



My wife, Hailey, and I got married in May of 2020. We have loved establishing our home and family over the last year and a half. We share a deep love for the water and often find ourselves in Holland, MI along Lake Michigan. We enjoy working out together, spending time with family, travelling, and reading (we initially bonded over the Harry Potter books).

We love hearing the stories of others and hope that through this program we get the privilege of hearing yours!

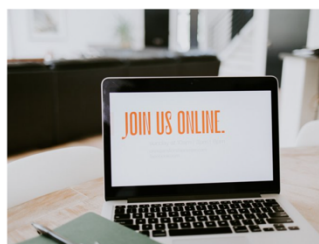
**PROGRAM:** Below are pictures of the Program Page – On the Program Page is where each week for both the online and in-person material is located. There are buttons on each page which are linked to each week. This is where the user will navigate the website in order to have access to the material.

#### Our PROGRAM.



##### IN-PERSON

We will gather every other week over the next six months for 1.5 hours each week. During this time we will participate in group activities, engage in small and large group discussions, and more.



##### ONLINE

On the off weeks from in person gatherings, we will engage in the online portion of the program. We will read sections from various books, listen to podcasts, and watch videos online. These aspects will be followed up by online discussion questions, with the opportunity to engage with one another's answers.



##### RETREAT

Our program will culminate with a one day, group retreat. This retreat will be geared towards everything we have learned over the past six months and symbolize an end to a journey well spent together.

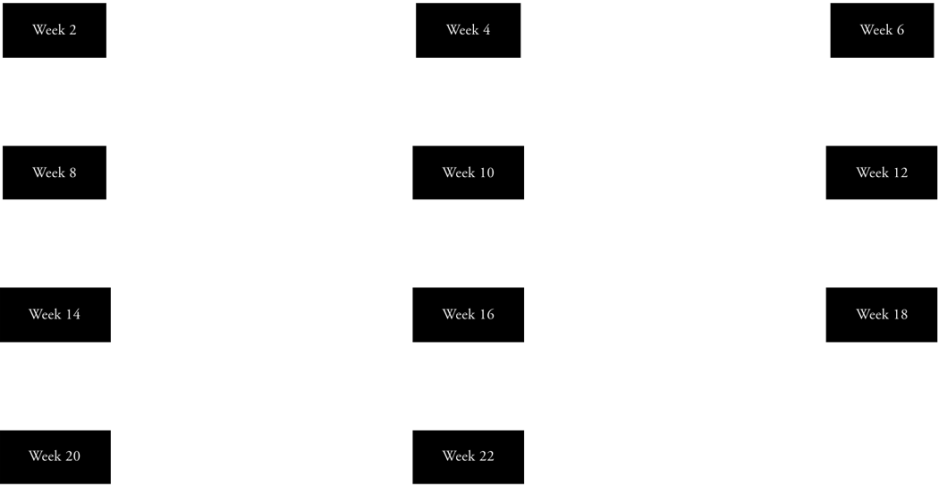
#### MATERIAL

##### IN-PERSON MATERIAL

Week 1	Week 3	Week 5
Week 7	Week 9	Week 11
Week 13	Week 15	Week 17



ONLINE MATERIAL





**WEEK 1:** Below are pictures of Week 1 of the program including an overview and questions/activities. Week 1 will be focusing on getting to know one another and asking questions like “Why are we here?”

## WEEK I (In-Person)

What are we doing here? What does Christian Community look like?



### WEEK I - Overview

During this first week, our focus will be on getting to know one another and dialoguing about the purpose of this program.

Below is a list of the questions and activities we will engage with during our in-person gathering.



## QUESTIONS

Why are we here?

What is this going to look like?

What can I expect each week?

What can Christian Community look like across generations?

Why are we gathering in-person, online, and retreat?

## ACTIVITIES

Large get to know you ice-breakers.

Leader talk - share parts about the program.

Break up - small groups (2-3) to get to know one another.

in-person MATERIAL

### WEEK 1 - In-Person (1.5 Hours):

- What is WEEK 1 In-Person Gathering?
  - Schedule of WEEK 1 (6pm – 7:30pm):
    - Welcome (6 – 6:10)
    - Large Ice Breakers (6:10 – 6:30)
    - Leader Talk (6:30 – 6:40)
    - Small Groups (6:40 – 7:15)
    - Closing (7:15 – 7:30)
  - Schedule Breakdown:
    - Welcome –
      - Do a brief welcome and tell a little bit about myself and how I got to the place I am at today.
    - Large Ice Breakers –
      - Two Truths & a Lie
        - Everyone will tell 2 truths and a lie about themselves. The others have to guess what the lie is.
    - Leader Talk –
      - I will share about the program:
        - This is a 6 month journey with people from all different generations (small group of individuals – 6 Generation Z and 6 older generations). The purpose of the program is to talk about the different gaps/misunderstandings that we may experience between one another and also focusing on our spiritual lives/spiritual disciplines. The first few weeks of the program we will go over the question: What does Christian Community look like? Following the first weeks, we will engage with different gaps that we are seeing and then practice a spiritual discipline together while thinking about this gap.
    - Small groups:
      - Tell a brief overview of yourself.
      - Why are you here?
      - What are you looking forward to?
      - What is important to you in this journey?
      - What questions do you still have?
    - Closing
      - Any comments from small groups
      - What questions do you still have?
      - Assessment Handout of where each member is regards to understanding their generation and other generations

**WEEK 2:** Below are pictures of Week 2 including an overview, the material for the online week, and sources for the material. During Week 2, we will talk about Christian Community and learning what it means to engage. Some of the material includes readings from James Bryan Smith and Dietrich Bonhoeffer.



## WEEK 2 (Online)

What are people saying about Christian community? Where in Scripture do we find Christian community?

### WEEK 2 - Overview

This week's focus is Christian Community. The reading and listening material below all engage this idea of Christian Community and offer insight into how this might look.

Before you start, take a look at the questions listed below. It may be helpful to keep these in mind as you engage this week's material. Then, once you've finished your reading and listening, come back and answer the questions in the message box. Your answers will be compiled into a document with answers from the rest of the group. This document will be emailed to you prior to our next in-person gathering so we can all read and hear one another's thoughts before meeting.

## MATERIAL



## "Life Together"

Enjoy a few sections from Dietrich Bonhoeffer's "Life Together."

Reading

## Scripture Reading

Romans 12

Scripture

## "The Good and Beautiful Community"

Read "The Christ Centered Community" Chapter of James Bryan Smith's book about community.

Reading

## "Practice Friendship"

Listen to Emily P. Freeman's podcast talking about friendship.

Podcast

online MATERIAL

## After.

Answer the following questions to help all of us engage the material in a deeper way.

1. What stuck out to you from the readings and listening?
2. In regards to the readings and podcast, why do you think Christian Community is important?
3. What areas do you see in your context where Christian Community is hindered? How would you hope to help this hindrance be resolved?
4. What questions do still you have?

Name \*

First Name

Last Name

Email \*

Message \*

Send

## SOURCES:

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BRIDGING the GAP

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OUR PROGRAM: In-Person, Online, & Retreat Material

## WEEK 2 – Online: Christian Community

- What is WEEK 2 Online?
  - Breakdown of WEEK 2 -
    - Purpose/Overview: Christian Community
      - This week we will be engaging with a few different readings and podcasts revolving around the topic of Christian Community. The purpose of the week is for individuals to gain a deeper understanding of what Christian Community is as well as the purpose of it.
    - Readings:
      - *Life Together* by Dietrich Bonhoeffer – Chapter 1
      - *The Good and Beautiful Community* by James Bryan Smith – Chapter 4
      - Romans 12
    - Listening
      - “Practice Friendship” by Emily P. Freeman
    - Discussion Questions
  - Breakdown of Readings and Recordings –
    - *Life Together*
      - The individuals will be given a section from the “Community” chapter in Bonhoeffer’s book. The reason this section was chosen was because I believe Bonhoeffer gives a beautiful picture of what Christian Community can look like.
    - *The Good and Beautiful Community*
      - This chapter of Smith’s book was chosen because in the chapter it talks a lot about understanding one another’s differences while still choosing to live in community with one another. In today’s world, I believe it to be important to challenge each other to still engage in community despite our differences.
    - Romans 12
      - This chapter really dives into the purpose of living together as one body. There is so much division happening in our world that I wanted to remind the readers why Christian Community is necessary.
    - “Practice Friendship”
      - This podcast was chosen because it gives some practical and purposeful resources and questions for us to think about as a group talking about Christian Community.
  - Questions
    - What stuck out to you from the readings and listening?
    - In regards to the readings and podcast, why do you think Christian Community is important?
    - What areas do you see in your context where Christian Community is hindered? How would you hope to help this hindrance be resolved?
    - What questions do you still have?

**WEEK 3:** Below are pictures of Week 3 including an overview and questions we will go over in-person. In Week 3, we will talk about what the different generations are saying about the Christian faith. We will have a panel of people from different generations discussing this important topic.

## WEEK 3 (In-Person)

What are different generations saying about the Christian faith?



## WEEK 3 - Overview

During this week's in-person gathering, we will have the chance to hear from different generations and how they view aspects of the Christian life. Below are some of the questions the panel will be asked. You will also have the chance to ask questions that may not be answered at the end of our time together.



## QUESTIONS -

- Tell us a brief description about yourself and your journey in the Christian faith (elevator speech length)
- What aspects of the Christian faith are important to you (church, prayer, spiritual disciplines, evangelism)? Any why?
- Can you offer some perspective about important aspects of the Christian faith are for your generation? Help us to understand a bird's eye view of how they engage the Christian faith.
- What is a positive and negative perspective from your generation of the Christian faith?

in-person MATERIAL

### WEEK 3 - In-Person (1.5 Hours): Christian Community

- What is WEEK 3 In-Person Gathering?
  - Schedule of WEEK 3 (6pm – 7:30pm):
    - Welcome (6 – 6:10)
    - Small Group Discussion from Online WEEK 2 (6:10 – 6:30)
    - Panel Discussion (6:30 – 7:15)
    - Closing (7:15 – 7:30)
  - Schedule Breakdown:
    - Welcome –
      - Do a brief welcome and describe what will take place over the gathering – talk about the panel and how it will work. Answer any questions that individuals may have.
        - Describe how the panel is not supposed to be an all-encompassing view rather it is supposed to be an overview/insight into parts of how each generation engages the Christian faith. Remind the group there may be varying answers from individuals in the same generation
    - Small Group Discussion –
      - What is still lingering for you from this past week’s readings and listening?
      - Share one thing you learned about yourself from this past week’s material.
    - Panel Discussion (1 Generation Z, 1 Millennial, 1 Gen X, 1 Boomer):
      - Introductions from each member of the panel – what generation they are technically a part of and a brief description of their Christian journey
      - Questions for the panel:
        - What aspects of the Christian faith are important to you and why?
        - Can you offer some perspective of how your generation engages the Christian faith? What do you see/think is different about your generation than others as it relates to engagement with faith?
        - What are some positive and negative perspectives you believe you see your generation engaging the Christian faith?
      - Questions from the audience
    - Closing
      - Any closing comments or questions from small groups or the panel discussion
      - What questions do you still have?
      - Wrap up the panel and thank the guests

**WEEK 4:** Below are pictures of Week 4 including an overview, online material, reflection questions, feedback section, and sources. During Week 4 we will be reading and pondering the importance of intergenerational relationships. We will be reading and listening to different excerpts from *Christianity Today*, scripture, and more. This week also includes our first feedback from the participants in order to help improve the program.

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## WEEK 4 (Online)

Why are intergenerational relationships in the Christian faith important? How do we engage the differences between us?

### WEEK 4 - Overview

This week's focus is on the importance of intergenerational relationships within the Christian faith.

Below is the material for this week to help develop a larger perspective. Remember to take a look at the questions for this week to help guide your thoughts through this material.

## MATERIAL

## "Christ, Culture, and the Generation Gap"

An important article from Christianity Today.

Reading

## Scripture

1 Corinthians 12:12-27

Titus 2

Scripture

"Intergenerational Christian Formation: Bringing the Whole Church Together in Ministry, Community and Worship"

Read this section from Holly Allen and Christine Lawton's book about Intergenerational community.

Reading

## Generations: Intergenerational

Watch to this video from a church talking about the importance of intergenerational relationships.

Video

## After.

Answer the following questions to help us engage the material in a deeper way:

1. What stuck out to you from the readings and video?
2. From your perspective, why do you think there is a gap among generations?
3. From you and your generation, what would you hope other generations would understand about you?
4. What do you think or feel is important about intergenerational relationships among generations?

Name \*

First Name

Last Name

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## FEEDBACK.

I hope that you have enjoyed the first 4 weeks of the program thus far. In order to better help further develop my program, please answer the following questions for both the in-person gatherings and online portion of the program:

1. How are the flow and content of the in-person gatherings and the online platform?
2. Of the content in both platforms, what has been most meaningful to you and why?
3. Has the content helped you gain a better understanding of other people's perspectives? If so, how?



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### SOURCES:

Allen, Holly Catterton., and Ross, Christine Lawton. *Intergenerational Christian Formation: Bringing the Whole Church Together in Ministry, Community and Worship*. Downers Grove, Illinois:

IVP Academic, 2012.

O'Brien, Brandon J. "Christ, Culture, and the Generation Gap." *Christianity Today*, October 23, 2012, [https://www.christianitytoday.com/biblestudies/articles/evangelism/generation-gap.html?](https://www.christianitytoday.com/biblestudies/articles/evangelism/generation-gap.html?start=1)

[start=1.](https://www.christianitytoday.com/biblestudies/articles/evangelism/generation-gap.html?start=1)

Swanson, Miriam Swaffield. "Generations: Intergenerational." Produced by Harvest Live at The Woodlands UMC. November 3, 2020. Video, 33:37.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DM3GznI6po&t=254s.](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DM3GznI6po&t=254s)

## WEEK 4 – Online: Intergenerational Community

- What is WEEK 4 Online?
  - Breakdown of WEEK 4 -
    - Purpose/Overview: Intergenerational Community
      - During this week’s online section, the participants will be reading and listening to different voices talking about the importance of intergenerational community. We will take a look at some of the key voices as well as diving into Scripture in order to help us understand at a deeper level the importance of all parts of the Christian community.
    - Readings:
      - “Christ, Culture, and the Generation Gap” by Brandon J. O’Brien
      - *Intergenerational Christian Formation: Bringing the Whole Church Together in Ministry, Community and Worship* by Holly Catterton Allen and Christine Lawton Ross – Chapter 2
      - 1 Corinthians 12:12 – 27
      - Titus 2
    - Video
      - “Generations: Intergenerational” by Harvest Live at The Woodlands UMC
    - Discussion Questions
    - Section 1 Feedback
  - Breakdown of Readings and Recordings –
    - “Christ, Culture, and the Generation Gap”
      - This *Christianity Today* article discusses some of the different perspectives we are seeing today with the generational gaps. There is not necessarily a right or wrong answer, rather the author challenges the reader to understand others from different generations
    - *Intergenerational Christian Formation: Bringing the Whole Church Together in Ministry, Community and Worship*
      - We will be reading chapter two from this book which describes the importance of intergenerational relationships in the Christian community. Allen and Ross talk about the effects of intergenerational relationships for different age groups in this chapter. We are obviously talking about Generation Z and older but this will help round out our perspectives as we think about the effect of intergenerational relationships on all age groups.
    - 1 Corinthians 12:12- 27 & Titus 2
      - Both of these chapters describe the importance of intergenerational community in Scripture. The Christian Community cannot function fully if we are divided among the generations.
    - “Generations: Intergenerational”
      - This video takes a deep dive into the importance of intergenerational community from the perspective of a Christian

leader. The speaker is urging the audience to understand the need and depth of importance of the generations.

- Discussion Questions
  - What stuck out to you from the readings and listening?
  - From your perspective, why do you think there is a gap among generations?
  - From you and your generation, what would you hope other generations would understand about you?
  - What questions do you still have?
- Section 1 Feedback Questions:
  - How are the flow and content of the in-person gatherings and the online platform?
  - Of the content on both platforms, what has been most meaningful to you and why?
  - Has the content helped you gain a better understanding of other people's perspectives? If so, how?

**WEEK 5:** Below are pictures of Week 5 including an overview and discussion questions for each of the gaps that we will engage. For Week 5's in-person gathering, we will be talking about the different gaps that we are seeing among generations. There will be four topics of focus: technology, vocation, pace of life, and cultural engagement. There will be different questions we will discuss for each topic.

## WEEK 5 (In-Person)

What gaps are we seeing among generations? What areas of life are important? How do we engage these gaps?



### WEEK 5 - Overview

We will spend our time this week talking about the gaps we see between generations in the Christian community. We will focus on four specific areas over the next several weeks: Technology, Vocation, Pace of Life, and Cultural Engagement.

Tonight will be a breakdown of these four areas during both our large and small group discussion times. Below is a breakdown of the four areas as well as some questions to prompt our discussions.



## TOPICS &amp; DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

## Technology

"Alone Together: Why We Expect More from Technology and Less from Each other" by Sherry Turkle

How do you see technology playing into your life?

What is something you like about technology and what is something you dislike?

## Vocation

"Your Vocational Credo: Practical Steps to Discover Your Unique Purpose" by Deborah Koehn Loyd

What has been your experience with the word vocation?

What areas of vocation have been easy or difficult for you?

## Pace of Life

"The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry" by John Mark Comer

What do you think about when I ask about your pace of life?

Where do you think the trajectory of our lives are going in relation to pace of life?

## Cultural Engagement

How do we currently try to understand and engage culture in your context?

What is something about culture that you are wrestling with?

### WEEK 5 - In-Person (1.5 Hours): Intergenerational Community

- What is WEEK 5 In-Person Gathering?
  - Schedule of WEEK 5 (6pm – 7:30pm):
    - Welcome & Overview (6 – 6:10)
    - Leader Talk & Large Discussion (6:10 – 7:00)
      - Technology
      - Pace of Life
      - Vocation
      - Cultural Engagement
    - Small Group Discussion (7:00 – 7:20)
    - Closing (7:20 – 7:30)
  - Schedule Breakdown:
    - Welcome & Overview –
      - Do a brief welcome and describe what will take place during the gathering – intro the 4 different areas we will take a look at over the next several weeks as well as describe the format of the following weeks. Answer any questions that individuals may have.
        - Format for the upcoming weeks:
          - Each topic will be a 4 week block
          - Online 1: First online week will be the readings/reflection questions for that specific topic
          - In-Person 1: We will dive deeper into the topic and also have time to dialogue in person
          - Online 2: We will introduce a spiritual discipline through readings and practices
          - In-Person 2: We will talk about and practice the discipline together
    - Leader Talk & Large Discussion –
      - This is meant to be an overview of each of these areas as well as a discussion about each from the generations. The discussion from the participants will be a large part of this portion.
        - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PAJytr0OZQU>
      - Technology
        - For this section, I want to be careful in how I approach technology because it seems to be one of the largest gaps between generations, not just in Christianity but all of life.
          - “Alone Together” by Turkle: pg. 23-25
        - Questions to think about:
          - How do you see technology playing into your life?
          - What is something you like about technology and what is something you dislike?
      - Pace of Life
        - There is no doubt that the pace of life is faster than ever. I want to dialogue with the generations about what this pace

of life does to each of us. We each are unique individuals so our paces of life will likely look different

- “The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry” by Comer: pg. 1-4
- Questions:
  - What do you think about when I ask about your pace of life?
  - Where do you think the trajectory of our lives are going in relation to pace of life?
- Vocation
  - We each have struggled at some point or another with what we are called to or our vocation. Again, each of us are uniquely gifted and it is an important part of our spiritual formation to understand our vocation. The church has not always done a good job at this but recently there seems to be a shift back to a deep dive into understanding each of our unique vocations.
    - “Your Vocational Credo” by Loyd pg. 18-20
  - Questions:
    - What has been your experience with the word vocation?
    - What areas of vocation have been easy or difficult for you?
- Cultural Engagement
  - Our culture is ever changing it seems but as believers it is important that we learn to live in the world. We cannot always go into our own little worlds and hide away. We are called out to the world at times but oftentimes we do not know what this looks like. Understanding culture is an important part of our spiritual formation.
  - Questions:
    - How do you currently try to understand and engage culture in your context?
    - What is something about culture that you are wrestling with?
- Small Group Discussion
  - Of the 4 topics, which one are you most looking forward to talking about?
  - What topic do you think will be the most difficult to engage with and why?
  - Where do you hope we head with some of these topics?
- Closing
  - Any closing comments or questions from small groups or the large group time
  - What questions do you still have?
  - Describe next week’s online portion

**WEEK 6:** Below are pictures of Week 6 including an overview as well as the online material, reflection questions, and sources. This week we will focus on the topic of technology. We will be reading from Sherry Turkle and Jay Kim as well as listening to a TedTalk to help engage with this topic of technology.

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## WEEK 6 (Online)

What do we each think about and gain from technology? How do we and/or how should we engage with technology?

### WEEK 6 - Overview

Our first focus is technology. This week for our online section, we will be reading from a few different books and articles as well as watching a TedTalk from some key voices in this field.

The goal of this week is to learn about technology and the importance of engaging with one another in a positive way in this space.

Below are the links to the material for this week as well as the questions we will be answering.

## MATERIAL

## "Reclaiming Conversation: The Power of Talk in a Digital Age"

Ch. 1 of Sherry Turkle's book calls us to reclaim the importance of having in-person conversations despite the deep technological world in which we live.

Read

## "Analog Church"

Engage with Jay Kim in thinking about how technology is having an impact on the church and community. This is a longer chapter (Chapter 4).

Read

## "Why our screens make us less happy"

Adam Alter shares some good insight during his TedTalk about our screen time.

Watch

online MATERIAL

## After.

Answer the following questions about the above readings and video in order to help us engage the topic of technology:

1. What are some personal concerns that you may have about yourself or your family or your friends in regards to technology?
2. Where do you see the good in technology?
3. What are some specific insights that stick out from the readings and video?
4. How do you hope to engage with technology in the future?

Name \*

First Name

Last Name

Email \*

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## SOURCES:

Alter, Adam. "Why Our Screens Make Us Less Happy." Filmed in July 2017 in New York, NY. TED Video, 9:29.

[https://www.ted.com/talks/adam\\_alter\\_why\\_our\\_screens\\_make\\_us\\_less\\_happy](https://www.ted.com/talks/adam_alter_why_our_screens_make_us_less_happy).

Kim, Jay Y., and McKnight, Scot. *Analog Church: Why We Need Real People, Places, and Things in the Digital Age*. Downers Grove, Illinois: IVP, 2020. Ebook

Central Perpetual.

Turkle, Sherry. *Reclaiming Conversation: The Power of Talk in a Digital Age*. New York, NY: Penguin Press, 2015.

## WEEK 6 – Online: Technology

- What is WEEK 6 Online?
  - Breakdown of WEEK 6 -
    - Purpose/Overview: Technology
      - The purpose of this week is to engage with the topic of technology and how it is affecting each one of us. This is definitely a touchy subject as we each are engaging with technology in a different way. But as the world continues to move forward, technology is not going to go away so we all need to learn how to engage in a positive way.
    - Readings:
      - *Reclaiming Conversation: The Power of talk in a Digital Age* by Sherry Turkle – Chapter 1
      - *Analog Church: Why We Need Real People, Places, and the Things in the Digital Age* by Jay Kim – Chapter 4
    - Video
      - “Why our screens make us less happy” by Adam Alter
    - Discussion Questions
  - Breakdown of Readings and Video –
    - *Reclaiming Conversation: The Power of Talk in a Digital Age*
      - Read Ch. 1 of Sherry Turkle’s book talking about the importance of conversation in our digital world. We seem to have lost the ability to converse well with one another and she challenges the reader with this.
    - *Analog Church: Why We Need Real People, Places, and the Things in the Digital Age*
      - Read the chapter “Rebuilding Babel.” This chapter describes the story of Babel in Scripture and Kim relates this to what we are seeing in our culture in regards to technology. Kim challenges the reader to think deeply about the effect technology is having on the church’s view of community.
    - “Why our screens make us less happy”
      - This video is a good short video talking about what happens to us as we are on our screens so often throughout our day. I was encouraged by this video because Alter was not so negative about technology; rather, he encouraged the audience to think deeply with how often they are on their phones. He recognizes that we are not going to ever get rid of technology.
  - Discussion Questions
    - What are some personal concerns that you may have about yourself or your family or your friends in regards to technology?
    - Where do you see the good in technology?
    - What are some specific insights that stick out from the readings and video?
    - How do you hope to engage with technology in the future?

**WEEK 7:** Below are pictures of Week 7 including an overview as well as questions and activities we will do in person. During this week, we will discuss together how technology effects each of us and how we handle it. We will each participate in a few large and small group activities during the week.

## Week 7 (In-Person)

How does technology affect us? What do we do about it?



### Week 7 - Overview

Tonight we will be focusing on what we have learned/what we are still pondering from last week's readings and video. We also will dialogue about the role each of us are to play when it comes to technology in our world today.

Below are some of the questions and activities we will go through together.



## Questions & Activities

- Large Group Activity
  - Break up into 2 groups and await further instructions
- Small Groups
  - What are some thoughts you have about your own technology use?
  - What is something you have learned about another generation from the material?
  - What is still lingering for you from this past weeks readings?
- Next Week
  - Overview of what is to come!

in-person MATERIAL

## WEEK 7 - In-Person (1.5 Hours): Technology

- What is WEEK 7 In-Person Gathering?
  - Schedule of WEEK 7 (6pm – 7:30pm):
    - Welcome (6 – 6:10)
    - Large Group Activity (6:10 – 6:45)
    - Small Group Discussion from Large Group & Online WEEK 6 (6:45 – 7:15)
    - Closing (7:15 – 7:30)
  - Schedule Breakdown:
    - Welcome –
      - Do a brief welcome and describe what we will be doing over the next hour and a half.
    - Large Group Activity –
      - Break up into 2 groups – each group will be given a prompt in regards to technology and the group has to create a video (via. Phone) to represent their prompt. At the end of the time, we will show both videos to the groups.
        - GROUP 1 – Think of a space or time in your life where technology was used for a purpose that was helpful or useful – a positive space or time for technology. Also think about how in that space the effects of technology were used poorly. Act this scenario out as a group.
        - GROUP 2 – Think of a space or time in your life where technology was used poorly – technology had a negative effect on the group. Also think about how technology could have been used positively in this space or time. Act this scenario out as a group.
    - Small Group Discussion –
      - What sticks out to you from the large group activity?
      - What is still lingering for you from this past week’s readings and video?
      - What are some thoughts you have regarding your own technology use?
      - How would you hope to bridge gaps between people and generations that may be caused by technology?
      - Talk about something you learned about another generation from the material.
    - Closing
      - Any closing comments or questions from small groups or the video activity.
      - Intro next week’s topic
        - We will be diving into the spiritual disciplines of silence and solitude. These are two practices that can be helpful with technology engagement. Over the next two weeks, we

will be engaging these 2 disciplines both individually and collectively.

- What questions do you still have?

**WEEK 8:** Below are pictures of Week 8 including an overview as well as the online material, spiritual practices, reflection questions, and sources. During our online portion, we will be focusing on the spiritual disciplines of silence and solitude. We will be reading from different authors including John Mark Comer, Ruth Haley Barton, and more. We will also engage the spiritual disciplines on our own.



## Week 8 (Online)

What is silence and solitude? What is the purpose of practicing them in our world today?

### Week 8 - Overview

Our focus this week will be on the spiritual disciplines of silence and solitude. These practices are ancient practices in the Christian tradition, and yet they have become the most forgotten in our world today.

Our work this week will be twofold: We will listen to and read from a few current, key voices in regards to these practices and then we will take the time to actually engage them on our own.

Below you'll find the list of materials, practices, and questions for the week.



## MATERIAL

### "What is Silence and Solitude?"

John Mark Comer describes to his church the definition of silence and solitude as well as where we see this happening in scripture.

Watch

### "Invitation to Silence and Solitude: Exploring God's Transforming Presence"

Ch. 1 of Barton's book beautifully describes the importance of the journey into silence and solitude

Read

### "Solitude: A Hike"

Listen as Nathan and Richard Foster talk about solitude. This is wonderful listen of a father and son talking about the importance of solitude.

Listen

### Scripture

Mark 6:30 - 32

Read

## PRACTICES

1. Find a space in your home, outside, or wherever you feel you can have time to be alone. Take 10 minutes to be away from all people and technology and be in complete silence.
2. At the dinner table, try having one meal with family or friends in complete silence.

online MATERIAL

## After.

Answer the following questions and complete the activities to help us engage the spiritual disciplines on a deeper level:

1. What stuck out to you from the readings and listening?
2. What was your experience like with the two different activities?
3. Why do you think we connected technology with the disciplines of silence and solitude?
4. How or why would you hope to incorporate silence and/or solitude in your life?

Name \*

First Name

Last Name

Email \*

Message \*

Send

## SOURCES:

Barton, R. Ruth. *Invitation to Solitude and Silence: Experiencing God's Transforming Presence*. Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2004.

Comer, John Mark. "What is Silence and Solitude?" Produced by Bridgetown Church. February 6, 2017. Video, 7:22.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wrHnDw2xaAY>.

Foster, Richard. "Solitude: A Hike," September 30, 2018 in *Renovare Podcast*, Podcast, 27:14, <https://renovare.org/podcast/episode-141-richard-foster-nathanfoster-solitude-hike>.

## WEEK 8 – Online: Practices - Silence and Solitude

- What is WEEK 8 Online?
  - Breakdown of WEEK 8 -
    - Purpose/Overview: Silence & Solitude
      - The purpose of this week is to learn about the Christian practices of silence and solitude.
    - Readings:
      - *Invitation to Silence and Solitude* by Ruth Haley Barton – Chapter 1
      - Mark 6:30 – 32
    - Video
      - “What is Silence & Solitude?” by Bridgetown Church/John Mark Comer
      - “Solitude: A Hike” by Renovaré (Nathan & Richard Foster)
    - Practices
    - Discussion Questions
  - Breakdown of Readings and Video –
    - “Invitation to Silence and Solitude”
      - Read Ch. 1 “Beyond Words.” This chapter describes Barton’s journey into silence and solitude while also encouraging the reader to enter into this sacred space. Barton helps the reader to think deeply about the importance of silence and solitude in our spiritual journeys.
    - Mark 6:30 – 32
      - This passage describes Jesus asking his disciples to go away and practice silence and solitude. The disciples had just come back from being out teaching and were telling Jesus all they had done. Jesus then proceeded to tell them each to get away and spend time alone. This speaks to the importance of silence and solitude.
    - “What is Silence & Solitude?”
      - John Mark Comer does a wonderful job explaining the difference between silence and solitude yet highlights the importance of each of the disciplines. He also describes their correlation.
    - “Solitude: A Hike”
      - This podcast is a beautiful piece between a father and a son. This episode is a dialogue between Nathan and Richard Foster while they are on a hike. They talk about the importance of solitude and how it affects many different areas of our lives, including our spiritual journey.
  - Practices
    - Find a space in your home, outside, or wherever you find you can have time to be alone. Take 10 minutes to be away from all people and technology and be in complete silence.
    - At the dinner table, try having one meal with family or friends in complete silence.

- Discussion Questions
  - What stuck out to you from the readings and listening?
  - What was your experience like with the two different activities?
  - Why do you think we connected technology with the disciplines of silence and solitude?
  - How or why would you hope to incorporate silence and/or solitude in your life?



**WEEK 9:** Below are pictures of Week 9 including an overview as well as large group and small group discussion questions and activities for the in-person gathering. During this in-person gathering, we will be practicing silence and solitude as a group. We will also be dialoguing about our experiences with the practices from the online week. This week also includes feedback.

## Week 9 (In-person)

What are our experiences with silence and solitude? Can we practice silence and solitude in a group setting?



### Week 9 - Overview

Our purpose tonight will be to dialogue about each of our experiences practicing silence and solitude. We will then practice these disciplines as a large group and discuss what it is like practicing them in a large group setting compared to individually.

Below are the activities and questions we will think through during this week.

## Large Group Activity

Each person will have 30 minutes to spend on their own in silence and solitude. You will be given questions to think and reflect upon during this time. After, we will come together as a group and discuss what practicing these was like as a group. We will also discuss what the practices of silence and solitude may look like for each of the different generations.

## Large and Small Group Questions & Discussion

1. What felt different about practicing silence/solitude as a group rather than on your own?
2. Have each generation share their own practicing of silence and solitude. Take some time to share how it might be different for each of the generations.
3. Dialogue with one another about where you felt close to God, far from God, and where God might be calling you in these practices.
4. How would you hope to incorporate these practices into your everyday lives?
5. What is something you would say to someone not in our program about what you experienced this week?

in-person MATERIAL

# FEEDBACK.

I hope that you have enjoyed these past weeks of the program talking about technology and silence/solitude. In order to better help further develop my program, please answer the following questions for both the in-person gatherings and online portion of the program:

1. What parts of the online and in-person portions have gone well?
2. What is something that you would want to change or spend more time on?
3. What is something you have learned about yourself and someone else in these past weeks?



Email \*

Message \*

Submit

## WEEK 9 - In-Person (1.5 Hours): Silence and Solitude

- What is WEEK 9 In-Person Gathering?
  - Schedule of WEEK 9 (6pm – 7:30pm):
    - Welcome (6 – 6:15)
    - Large Group Activity (6:15 – 6:45)
    - Large Group Discussion from Large Group Activity (6:45 – 7)
    - Small Groups (7– 7:20)
    - Closing (7:20 – 7:30)
    - Section 2 Feedback
  - Schedule Breakdown:
    - Welcome:
      - Do a brief welcome. But also take a 3 – 5 minute pause at the beginning of the welcome in order to get the group ready to talk about the spiritual disciplines of silence and solitude.
    - Large Group Activity:
      - Give the group time to take in silence (and solitude) for about 30 minutes. Prompt them with a few different questions for them to think about while spending time in silence:
        - Where in the last week did you feel close to God?
        - Where in the last week did you feel far from God?
        - Where do you feel/think the Lord is calling you into as you reflect on feeling close and far?
    - Large Group Discussion:
      - What felt different about practicing silence/solitude as a group rather than on your own?
      - Have each generation share their own practices of silence and solitude. Give the people a chance to share how it might be different for each of the generations.
    - Small Groups:
      - Dialogue with one another about where you felt close, far, and where God is calling you.
      - How would you hope to incorporate these practices into your everyday lives?
      - What is something you would say to someone about this week that is not in our program?
    - Closing:
      - Wrap up the week.
      - Any final thoughts or questions?
      - Introduce the week.

**WEEK 10:** Below are pictures of Week 10 including an overview, the online material, reflection questions, and sources. During this online section, we will reflect upon our vocation. We will be reading from Deborah Loyd and Parker Palmer on this subject.



## Week 10 (Online)

What is our purpose? How do we each see our purpose differently? What do we do?

### Week 10 - Overview

Our focus this week will be on vocation. This topic is difficult as we all struggle to understand our purpose. The goal for this week is to think a layer deeper about our vocation as believers.

This material is not all encompassing, however it will be helpful for us as we begin to think about vocation.

Below are the readings, video, and questions for this week.

## MATERIAL

### "Your Vocational Credo: Practical Steps to Discover Your Unique Purpose"

Read Ch. 2 of Loyd's book talking about vocation. This chapter helps us to think more deeply about the definition of vocation. Loyd's book is a good resource to think about steps to understanding our purpose.

Read

### "Let Your Life Speak: Listening for the Voice of Vocation"

Parker Palmer challenges us to think deeply about ourselves in order to better understand our vocation. We will read the first chapter of his book.

Make It

### "A Holistic View of Christian Vocation"

This video is a great conversation about trying to help others decipher their vocation as well as the importance of our callings as Christians.

Watch

online MATERIAL

## After.

We are all in different places in our journey but hopefully this week helped us to think more deeply about vocation. Answer the following questions to help us engage more deeply:

1. How have you wrestled with your own sense of vocation?
2. What challenged you from this week?
3. What encouraged you from this week?
4. What are you going to take with you moving forward?

Name \*

First Name

Last Name

Email \*

Message \*

Send

## SOURCES:

"A Holistic View of Christian Vocation." Produced by Initiative on Faith & Public Life. September 6, 2017. Video, 9:59.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3nrM-MwmwPo>.

Loyd, Deborah Koehn. *Your Vocational Credo: Practical Steps to Discover Your Unique Purpose*. Downers Grove, Illinois: IVP Books, 2015.

Palmer, Parker J. *Let Your Life Speak: Listening for the Voice of Vocation*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2000.

## WEEK 10 – Online: Vocation

- What is WEEK 10 Online?
  - Breakdown of WEEK 10 -
    - Purpose/Overview: Vocation
      - The purpose of Week 10 is to reflect upon the topic of vocation. Many times we wrestle to understand our unique purpose in life and I believe that this is an area where we can all think deeply about our unique purposes. Hopefully this week will help to create some dialogue between the generations and how they each understand vocation.
    - Readings:
      - *Your Vocational Credo: Practical Steps to Discover Your Unique Purpose* by Deborah Lloyd – Chapter 2
      - *Let Your Life Speak: Listening for the Voice of Vocation* by Parker Palmer – Chapter 1
      - *The Call: Finding and Fulfilling the Central Purpose of Your Life* by Os Guinness – Chapter 1
    - Video
      - “A Holistic View of Vocation”
    - Discussion Questions
  - Breakdown of Readings and Video –
    - *Your Vocational Credo: Practical Steps to Discover Your Unique Purpose* – Ch. 2
      - In her book, Lloyd describes a journey of discovering one’s vocation. She describes how this process can be long but worth the journey if one desires clarity in their vocation. We will read the second chapter of her book where she talks about the definition of vocation as well as the different perceptions people have made about vocation.
    - *Let your Life Speak* Ch. 1
      - In his book, Palmer beautifully talks about the importance of finding and listening to ourselves about vocation. In chapter 1, which we will read, Palmer encourages the reader to understand ourselves on a deeper level in order that we may understand our vocation in life. He talks about how this is not an easy journey but vitally important.
    - *The Call: Finding and Fulfilling the Central Purpose of Your Life*
      - We will be reading the first chapter from Guinness’ book, which is an overview of his journey in finding his calling in life. From the overview, the reader is challenged to contemplate where they are at in their own journey and where they may struggle to understand their own sense of vocation. Guinness says that this chapter/book is not a step-by-step process to find one’s vocation; rather, it is a space for deep reflection on a hard topic in life that many struggle to understand.



- “A Holistic View of Vocation” by Initiative on Faith & Public Life
  - Watching this video helped to understand and show the importance of dialogue when it comes to vocation. We all wrestle with our purpose and these four individuals encourage the deep dive into understanding our vocation.
- Discussion Questions
  - How have you wrestled with your own sense of vocation?
  - What challenged you from this week?
  - What encouraged you from this week?
  - What are you going to take with you moving forward?

**WEEK 11:** Below are pictures of Week 11 including an overview as well as large group and small group reflection questions. For Week 11, we will be discussing in-person the importance of understanding our vocation. We will have both a large activity and small group questions that the participants will go through during the gathering.

## WEEK II (In-Person)

What do we do about our vocation? How do we each view this differently?



### WEEK II - Overview

Tonight we will be talking about the importance of understanding vocation. We each have a different understanding of this topic and there is a wealth of knowledge to be gained from other's perspectives.

Below are this week's activities and questions.

## LARGE GROUP ACTIVITY

Each of us will share what we wanted to be when we grow up:

1. Why do you think we wanted to be those things?
2. What changed, if anything?
3. How do you think those desires speak to who we are as individuals?

## SMALL GROUPS

1. What felt important or resonated with you from the online portion?
2. What is something that stuck out to you from the large group activity?
3. How do you hope to engage with the idea of vocation moving forward?
4. How do you hope to help others engage with this topic?

in-person MATERIAL

### WEEK 11 - In-Person (1.5 Hours): Vocation

- What is WEEK 11 In-Person Gathering?
  - Schedule of WEEK 11 (6pm – 7:30pm):
    - Welcome (6 – 6:10)
    - Large Group Activity (6:10 – 6:30)
    - Small Group Discussion from Large Group & Online WEEK 10 (6:30 – 7:15)
    - Closing (7:15 – 7:30)
  - Schedule Breakdown:
    - Welcome –
      - Do a brief welcome and describe what we will be doing over the next hour and a half.
      - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RUUp841pZrs>
    - Large Group Activity –
      - Each talk about what we wanted to be when we grew up when we were kids.
        - Why do you think we wanted to be those things?
        - What changed?
        - How do you think those desires speak to who we are as individuals? If anything at all?
    - Small Group Discussion –
      - What felt important or resonated with you from the online portion?
      - What is something that stuck out to you from the large group activity?
      - How do you hope to engage with the idea of vocation moving forward?
      - How do you hope to help others engage with this topic?
    - Closing –
      - Any comments or questions from large group or small group?
      - Intro next week's topic: We will be talking about the spiritual discipline of simplicity. There are many reasons for thinking about this topic but I believe this spiritual discipline helps us to not put so much pressure on our vocation.

**WEEK 12:** Below are pictures of Week 12 including an overview as well as the online material, spiritual practice, reflection questions, and sources. Week 12 focuses on the importance of simplicity in our lives. We will read from Richard Foster and John Mark Comer as well as try to implement simplicity into our own lives.



## WEEK 12 (Online)

How does the spiritual discipline of simplicity affect our lives? What does this look like?

### WEEK 12 - Overview

This week we will be focusing on the spiritual discipline of simplicity. It may not be obvious, but the practice of simplicity directly impacts how we engage our vocations.

Simplicity is an important piece of our Christian faith and will look different for each of us.

Below you'll find the list of readings and a podcast to listen to regarding the discipline of simplicity.

**MATERIAL****"Celebration of Discipline: The Path to Spiritual Growth"**

Read the chapter about simplicity from Richard Foster's book. This entire book is foundational to understanding spiritual disciplines and their purposes.

[Read](#)**"Freedom of Simplicity: Finding Harmony in a Complex World"**

*Freedom of Simplicity* is an entire book by Richard Foster dedicated to the discipline of simplicity. This chapter takes this discipline a step deeper.

[Read](#)**"Simplicity"**

Jeff Bethke and John Mark Comer discuss the practice of simplicity in their podcast.

[Listen](#)**Scripture**

1 Timothy 6:6-21

[Click Here](#)**PRACTICE**

Choose two places to take a slow walk. One must be inside and one outside. Ask yourself these questions during each one: What do I feel? Am I at rest here? What do I notice about this space? What can I name about how this place makes me feel?

[online MATERIAL](#)

## After.

Answer the following questions to help us engage together the spiritual discipline of simplicity:

1. What do you think and/or feel the purpose of simplicity is in relation to vocation?
2. After this week, are there any things in your life or journey that you would like to make more simple?
3. What pieces from the material felt most helpful to your journey this week?
4. What pieces felt most challenging?

Name \*

First Name

Last Name

Email \*

Message \*

Send

## SOURCES:

Comer, John Mark., and Bethke, Jefferson. "Simplicity," December 5, 2019 in *Fight Hustle, End Hurry*, Podcast, 26:17,

<https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/7-simplicity/id1480300467?i=1000458737647>.

Foster, Richard J. *Celebration of Discipline: The Path to Spiritual Growth*. 25th Anniversary ed. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 2003.

Foster, Richard J. *Freedom of Simplicity: Finding Harmony in a Complex World*. 1st ed. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 2005.

## WEEK 12 – Online: Practice – Simplicity

- What is WEEK 12 Online?
  - Breakdown of WEEK 12 -
    - Purpose/Overview: Practice Simplicity
      - The purpose of this week is to engage with the spiritual discipline of simplicity. Today, we are surrounded by so much materialism and our busyness seems to be continually increasing. Hopefully after thinking about our vocation last week, this week's topic will help guide us. Simplicity is something that is difficult to practice in our world but something I believe each of us are asked to do.
    - Readings:
      - *Celebration of Discipline* by Richard Foster – Chapter 6
      - 1 Timothy 6:2-21 (Message Version)
      - *Freedom of Simplicity* by Richard Foster – Chapter 1
    - Podcast
      - “Simplicity” on Fight Hustle, End Hurry
    - Practices
    - Discussion Questions
  - Breakdown of Readings and Podcast –
    - *Celebration of Discipline*
      - We will be reading Foster's chapter on the spiritual discipline of simplicity. Foster's chapter is an incredible resource for understanding the purpose behind practicing the spiritual discipline of simplicity. In this chapter, Foster provides many examples and tools to help incorporate this discipline into our daily lives. However, he never wants it to become legalistic; rather, he wants it to flow from our deep desire to become more like Christ.
    - 1 Timothy 6:6-21 (Message Version)
      - This chapter of Scripture describes many different aspects of simplicity and is a great one to contemplate. Paul is writing to Timothy and urging him to think deeply about different aspects of his life. As believers, we can really gain from reading this piece and reflecting on our own lives.
    - *Freedom of Simplicity*
      - Foster's books on simplicity provide such depth into the importance of this topic. We will be reading another one of his chapters from a different book on simplicity in order to gain a deeper understanding of the spiritual discipline of simplicity.
    - “Simplicity”
      - This podcast is a discussion between John Mark Comer and Jefferson Bethke. Both Comer and Bethke have written books involving the discipline of simplicity. This podcast is a great overview from their books and their thoughts on the importance of practicing simplicity in a world that is no longer simple.



- Practices
  - Choose two places to take a slow walk. one must be inside and one outside. Ask yourself these questions during each one: What do I feel? Am I at rest here? What do I notice about this space? What can I name about how this place makes me feel?
- Discussion Questions –
  - What do you think/feel the purpose of simplicity is in relation to vocation?
  - After this week, are there any things in your life/journey that you would like to make more simple?
  - What pieces from the material felt most helpful to your journey this week?
  - What pieces felt most challenging?

**WEEK 13:** Below are pictures of Week 13 including an overview, large and small group reflection questions and activities, and feedback for this section. For our gathering, we will be doing a large group activity focusing on simplicity as well as break up into small groups to discuss this topic. There is a feedback section for this week.

## WEEK 13 (In-Person)

What does simplicity look like in our everyday lives? How can we put it into practice?



### Week 13 - Overview

We will be diving into three different areas of our life tonight and thinking about how we might bring the discipline of simplicity into them.

We will then have the chance to dialogue about these spaces within our small groups.

Below are the activities and some of the small group questions we will reflect on.

### Large Group Activity

#### Simplify Activity -

We will be thinking about 3 different areas (Mind, Schedule, and Material) to simplify. You will be given prompts and questions to reflect upon for each of these areas. We will also discuss as a large group.

### Small Group Questions

1. How has reflecting on simplicity helped you think about the topic of vocation?
2. Where do you find practicing simplicity in your life the most difficult and why?
3. What changes, if any, do you hope to make when you think about vocation and simplicity?
4. What thoughts or feelings do you have from the large group activity?

in-person MATERIAL

## FEEDBACK.

I hope that you have enjoyed these past weeks of the program talking about vocation and simplicity. In order to better help further develop my program, please answer the following questions for both the in-person gatherings and online portion of the program:

1. What is going well with the online and in-person portions of the program?
2. What is an area that could improve with either the online or in-person portions of the program?
3. What is one idea or concept that will stick with you after this program?
4. What is something new you have learned about someone?



Email \*

Email \*

Message \*

Submit

### WEEK 13 - In-Person (1.5 Hours): Practice - Simplicity

- What is WEEK 13 In-Person Gathering?
  - Schedule of WEEK 13 (6pm – 7:30pm):
    - Welcome (6 – 6:10)
    - Large Group Activity (6:10 – 6:50)
    - Small Group Discussion from Large Group & Online WEEK 12 (6:50 – 7:20)
    - Closing (7:20 – 7:30)
    - Section 3 Feedback
  - Schedule Breakdown:
    - Welcome –
      - Do a brief welcome and describe what we will be doing over the next hour and a half.
      - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xrusZ-MkTn4>
    - Large Group Activity –
      - Simplify Activity
        - We will be thinking about 3 different areas and how we can simplify them. We will be asking questions, participating in activities, and reflecting on areas we may be able to make change. This is not a place for condemnation; rather, a space to enter into where God may be speaking to our busy hearts. Three Areas: Mind, Schedule, and Material
        - Mind –
          - Take the next 5 minutes and write down anything and everything that comes to your mind. Try to continuously write for the whole 5 minutes. I will time us.
          - Thoughts and Questions:
            - We will take a few minutes to talk about what this experience was like
            - How would you like to simplify your brain space?
            - What do you notice about how your mind is running?
        - Schedule –
          - Look at your calendar from the last week – either on your phone or try to write out the best you can what you did throughout the last week or even the last month if you don't have the details of a particular week.
          - Thoughts and Questions:
            - What are your initial thoughts as you reflect upon it?
            - What would it look like for you to simplify your calendar?

- What would you hope your calendar would look like?
- Material –
  - Think of a space in your home that bothers you or feels cluttered or has too much stuff
  - Thoughts and Questions:
    - Why does it bother you?
    - Where would you start in simplifying that space?
    - What would you hope that space would look like?
- Small Group Discussion –
  - How has reflecting on simplicity helped you think about the topic of vocation?
  - Where do you find practicing simplicity in your life the most difficult and why?
  - What changes, if any, do you hope to make when you think about vocation and simplicity?
  - What thoughts or feelings do you have from the large group activity?
- Closing –
  - Any comments or questions from large group or small group?
  - Introduction to next week's topic: We will talk about the pace of life that we are seeing in our culture today. We are often having to continuously move quickly and it only seems to be getting faster and faster.

**WEEK 14:** Below are pictures of Week 14 including an overview, the online material, reflection questions, and sources. For Week 14, we will be reflecting upon how fast our world is today. We will be reading a few different authors talking about this topic as well as listening to another TedTalk.



## WEEK 14 (Online)

What does our pace of life look like today? Where do we think we are going?

### WEEK 14 - Overview

The focus of our material this week will be on our pace of life. We live in a fast paced world and that makes it hard to slow down and live at a more natural speed.

Below are the readings and a video about the struggles of this fast paced world we live in. Remember to take a look at the questions to help guide your thoughts through this week's material

## MATERIAL

### "An Unhurried Life: Following Jesus' Rhythms of Work and Rest"

We will be reading Falding's first chapter describing his own wrestle with a fast paced life. Hopefully this chapter is encouragement to you of the importance of engaging this topic.

Make It

### "In Praise of Slowness: Challenging the Cult of Speed"

Honoré gives a beautiful description of the history of speed in our world today. We have not always lived so fast and Honoré describes how we have gotten to where we are at today.

Make It

### "The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry"

Comer's book is a great read about this topic. We will be reading his first chapter talking about the hurry that we often feel in our lives today.

Make It

### "The Unforeseen Consequences of a Fast Paced World"

In her TedTalk, Bouskills talks about both the positive and negatives of our fast paced environments. Not all things are bad about it but she does a great job describing the consequences.

Click Here

## After.

Answer the following questions to help us better engage the topic of our pace of life:

1. After engaging this week's material, what are some initial thoughts and feelings about your own pace of life?
2. How do you hope you or people in your context respond to the increase of speed in our world?
3. What are areas that felt challenging and helpful from this week?

Name \*

First Name

Last Name

Email \*

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Send



## SOURCES:

Bouskill, Kathryn. "The Unforeseen Consequences of a Fast-Paced World." Filmed in November 2018 in Manhattan Beach, NY. TED Video, 9:18.

[https://www.ted.com/talks/kathryn\\_bouskill\\_the\\_unforeseen\\_consequences\\_of\\_a\\_fast\\_paced\\_world?language=en](https://www.ted.com/talks/kathryn_bouskill_the_unforeseen_consequences_of_a_fast_paced_world?language=en).

Comer, John Mark. *The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry*. First ed. Colorado Springs: WaterBrook, 2019.

Fadling, Alan. *An Unhurried Life: Following Jesus' Rhythms of Work and Rest*. Revised and Expanded ed. Downers Grove, Illinois: IVP, 2020. Ebook Central Perpetual.

Honoré, Carl. *In Praise of Slowness: Challenging the Cult of Speed*. First Harper Collins Paperback ed. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 2005.

## WEEK 14 – Online: Pace of Life

- What is WEEK 14 Online?
  - Breakdown of WEEK 14 -
    - Purpose/Overview: Pace of Life
      - The purpose of this week is to see and understand our fast pace of life. In our culture, it seems to all be about speed. We seemingly always answer the question, “How are you?” with a description of how busy we are. We rarely have enough time to get everything done we want to or we are too distracted to actually get it done. The books and video challenge us to think deeply about our pace of life.
    - Readings:
      - *An Unhurried Life: Following Jesus’ Rhythms of Work and Rest* by Alan Fadling – Chapter 1
      - *In Praise of Slowness: Challenging the Cult of Speed* by Carl Honoré – Chapter 1
      - *The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry* by John Mark Comer – Chapter 1
    - Video
      - “The Unforeseen Consequences of a Fast Paced World” by Kathryn Bouskill
    - Discussion Questions
  - Breakdown of Readings and Podcast –
    - *An Unhurried Life: Following Jesus’ Rhythms of Work and Rest*
      - In chapter 1, Fadling describes his own wrestle with hurry. There was a realization that he could no longer live the way in which he was living and still follow Jesus the ways in which he desired. Fadling’s pace of life was encroaching on his ability to truly follow Jesus.
    - *In Praise of Slowness: Challenging the Cult of Speed*
      - Honoré gives a great overview of what has happened throughout history in regards to how the view of time has changed. We now live in an even faster paced world and it does not seem like it is going to slow down anytime soon. These facts are a fascinating read to understand what has happened throughout history.
    - *The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry*
      - In his book, Comer shares the important idea that has been passed down from mentors that we must “ruthlessly eliminate hurry” from our lives. He says how our lives are constantly getting busy and that it will be important to pay attention to this continuous change.
    - “The Unforeseen Consequences of a Fast Paced World”
      - This TedTalk is a great depiction of what is happening in our world today in regards to speed. There are many areas in life that are constantly getting faster and faster. Bouskills makes some good points that some of these areas are good things and others not so

good. She really makes the listener think about their lives and where speed deeply affects who they are as individuals.

- Discussion Questions –
  - After reading and watching this week, what are some initial thoughts and feelings about your own pace of life?
  - How do you hope you or people in your context respond to the increase of speed in our world?
  - What are some areas that felt really challenging and really helpful about this week?

**WEEK 15:** Below are pictures of Week 15 including an overview, a large group activity, and small group questions. Week 15's gathering is focused on discussing our fast pace world and how to engage in it well. We will be doing a large group activity that involves entering a busy space as well as a small group discussion.

## WEEK 15 (In-Person)

Where do you recognize a fast pace in our world today? What is a fast-paced part of your own life?



## WEEK 15 - Overview

This week we will be looking at different fast-paced parts of our lives and the lives of those around us. We will reflect upon what we think about the increasing speed of our culture.

Below is a summary of our activity for this week as well as the questions we will be discussing in our small groups.

### Large Group Activity

We will be driving to a “busy” place in the area. When we arrive, the prompt is to just walk around, watch, and notice. We will come back together to discuss.

### Small Group Questions

1. Where do you see the fast paced mentality most in your life?
2. Where do you see this mentality in others?
3. How do you think we are shaped by the pace of our world?

in-person MATERIAL

### WEEK 15 - In-Person (1.5 Hours): Pace of Life

- What is WEEK 15 In-Person Gathering?
  - Schedule of WEEK 15 (6pm – 7:30pm):
    - Welcome (6 – 6:05)
    - Large Group Activity (6:05 – 7)
    - Small Group Discussion from Large Group & Online WEEK 14 (7 – 7:20)
    - Closing (7:20 – 7:30)
  - Schedule Breakdown:
    - Welcome –
      - Do a brief welcome and describe what we will be doing over the next hour and a half.
    - Large Group Activity –
      - Busyness Activity
        - We will drive over to some sort of “busy” area (a mall, downtown, etc.) near our normal meeting space. The prompt will be to just watch and notice the different paces that you may see.
        - Some questions to think about:
          - What do you see? Hear?
          - What thoughts or emotions do you have as you watch?
          - How do you engage with the thoughts or emotions that come with your own pace in your own life?
    - Small Group Discussion –
      - What was it like for you participating in the large group activity?
      - Where do you see the fast pace most in your own life?
      - Where do you see fast pace in others’ lives around you?
      - How do you think we are shaped by the pace of our world?
    - Closing –
      - Any comments or questions from large group or small group?
      - Intro next week’s topic: Next week we will look at two different disciplines: slowness and Sabbath. Slowness is an act that we can do in all areas of our lives that I believe will truly help our spiritual formation. Practicing the Sabbath has often been lost in our Christian worlds but is definitely worth looking at and putting the practice back into our lives.

**WEEK 16:** Below are pictures of Week 16 including an overview, the online material, spiritual practices, reflection questions, and sources. Week 16's spiritual discipline is slowing down and practicing Sabbath. Participants will read from John Ortberg, John Mark Comer, and Wayne Muller as well as listen to a podcast from Pete Scazzero and Rich Villodas.



## WEEK 16 (Online)

What does it mean to slow down? What is the Sabbath all about?

### WEEK 16 - Overview

Most of us are familiar with the discipline of Sabbath. Have you ever thought of moving slowly as a spiritual discipline though?

This week we will be reading and reflecting on these two disciplines: Slowness and Sabbath.

These disciplines are completely counter-cultural and often very hard to practice. The goal this week is to think about our lives and how we might be able to implement these practices into them so that we may see Christ in our everyday life.

Below are the readings, podcast, and practices for this week.

**MATERIAL****"The Life You've Always Wanted: Spiritual Disciplines for Ordinary People"**

John Ortberg does a great job describing the importance of living an unhurried life. In his first chapter, he talks about slowing down and also practicing the Sabbath.

[Read](#)**"The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry"**

In Comer's final chapter, he reflects upon the discipline of slowing. He gives some great practical examples of how to implement this discipline into our lives.

[Read](#)**"Sabbath: Finding Rest, Renewal, and Delight in Our Busy Lives"**

Wayne Muller beautifully describes how rest has been stripped away from many of our lives. Many of us choose the speed of our culture. He challenges the reader to think deeply about practicing the Sabbath.

[Read](#)**"Practice Sabbath Delight"**

Listen in as Pete Scazzero and Rich Villodas discuss the importance and beauty of practicing Sabbath

[Listen](#)**PRACTICES**

This week try to do one activity slower than you normally would do.

Pick one day this week to practice Sabbath - it does not have to be Sunday but try to practice one 24 hour period of Sabbath.

[online MATERIAL](#)



## After.

Reflect and answer these questions about slowing down and practicing Sabbath in our fast paced environments:

1. What resonated with you from the material this week?
2. What are a few areas you think or feel like you can slow down? How would you go about doing that?
3. What do you think or feel about the practice of Sabbath?
4. What is one thing you learned from someone else in our group this past week?

Name \*

First Name

Last Name

Email \*

Message \*

Send

## SOURCES:

Comer, John Mark. *The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry*. First ed. Colorado Springs: WaterBrook, 2019.

Muller, Wayne. *Sabbath: Finding Rest, Renewal, and Delight in Our Busy Lives*. Bantam Trade Pbk. ed. New York: Bantam Books, 2000.

Ortberg, John. *The Life You've Always Wanted: Spiritual Disciplines for Ordinary People*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1997.

Scazzero, Pete., and Villodas, Rich. "Practicing Sabbath Delight" September 3, 2015 in *EH Leader Podcast*, Podcast, 15:45,

<https://www.emotionallyhealthy.org/eh-leader-podcastpracticing-sabbath-delight/>.

## WEEK 16 – Online: Slowing and Sabbath

- What is WEEK 16 Online?
  - Breakdown of WEEK 16 -
    - Purpose/Overview: Slowing & Sabbath
      - The purpose of this week is to think about ways to combat the fast pace lives we all live in. We will reflect on two different disciplines this week: slowness and Sabbath. Each of these disciplines help us to engage life at a slower pace. It is important to reflect on each of these disciplines because they are an intricate part of the Christian faith.
    - Readings:
      - *The Life You've Always Wanted* by John Ortberg – Chapter 5
      - *The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry* by John Mark Comer – Chapter 11
      - *Sabbath: Finding Rest, Renewal, and Delight in Our Busy Lives* by Wayne Muller - Introduction
    - Podcast
      - “Practice Sabbath Delight” by The Emotionally Healthy Leader
    - Discussion Questions
  - Breakdown of Readings–
    - *The Life You've Always Wanted*
      - We will be reading from Ortberg about what it looks like to live an unhurried life. He gives many examples of different areas the reader can practice slowing down in life. In this chapter, he also talks about the importance of practicing Sabbath.
    - *The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry*
      - In Comer's last chapter of his book, he talks about this important discipline of slowing. Slowing is a huge piece of our spiritual formation that is not often talked about in the church. Comer does a great job giving examples of areas in his own life where he decided to practice slowing down. He in turn challenges the reader to pick some areas of our own.
    - *Sabbath: Finding Rest, Renewal, and Delight in Our Busy Lives*
      - Muller does a great job talking about how we do not have many rhythms of rest in our lives in his introduction chapter. Practicing Sabbath is one of those ways in which we can implement a rhythm of rest into our lives. Throughout the rest of Muller's book, he gives practical ways and reasons why Sabbath should be a part of our lives as believers.
    - “Practice Sabbath Delight”
      - This is a conversation between Rich Villodas and Pete Scazzero about the importance of practicing sabbath
  - Practices
    - Try doing something you normally do on a daily basis slower than you typically do it (ex: driving, walking, line at grocery store, etc.)

- Try practicing a day of Sabbath (it can be on Sunday or a different day) – pick a day to do nothing but rest and delight in the Lord and his creation – spend it with friends and/or family if you wish but try to not do any work on this day.
- Discussion Questions –
  - What resonated with you from the readings this week?
  - What are a few areas in your life that you feel or think you can slow down? How would you go about doing that?
  - What do you think about the practice of Sabbath?
  - What is one thing you learned about someone else this week?

**WEEK 17:** Below are pictures of Week 17 including an overview, a large group activity, small group questions, and the section feedback. For this in-person gathering, we will discuss how and the importance of slowing down and practicing Sabbath. We will do a large group activity together in order to help slow down as well as have a small group discussion together. This week includes a feedback section.

## WEEK 17 (In-Person)

How do we practice slowing down? What do we notice about slowing down and Sabbath?



### WEEK 17 - Overview

It is vital for our spiritual formation that we learn how to slow down. Practicing slowness and practicing Sabbath rest are two ways we can work against the pace of our culture.

The purpose of this week is to spend time reflecting on these practices together. There is a lot we can learn from one another's experiences with these practices.

Below are our activities and small group questions for the week.

### Large Group Activity

#### "Walk & Notice" -

We will be given 10 minutes each to take a walk and notice anything and everything we can. We will come back together and discuss our experiences.

### Small Group Questions

1. What are some new practices from this past week that you may try to implement into your daily lives?
2. How do you think the idea of slowness can affect how you interact with others?
3. Why do you think as a church we have not done very well at practicing the Sabbath?
4. Do you think you can incorporate practicing Sabbath into your life? Why or why not? And if so, how?

in-person MATERIAL

## FEEDBACK.

I hope that you have enjoyed these past weeks of the program talking about pace of life, slowing down, and the Sabbath. In order to better help further develop my program, please answer the following questions for both the in-person gatherings and online portion of the program:

1. What is going well with the online and in-person portions of the program?
2. What is an area that could improve with either the online or in-person portions of the program?
3. What is one idea or concept that will stick with you after this program?
4. What is something new you have learned about someone?



Email \*

Message \*

Submit

### WEEK 17 - In-Person (1.5 Hours): Practice – Slowing and Sabbath

- What is WEEK 17 In-Person Gathering?
  - Schedule of WEEK 17 (6pm – 7:30pm):
    - Welcome (6 – 6:10)
    - Large Group Activity (6:10 – 6:50)
    - Small Group Discussion from Large Group & Online WEEK 12 (6:50 – 7:20)
    - Closing (7:20 – 7:30)
    - Section 4 Feedback
  - Schedule Breakdown:
    - Welcome –
      - Do a brief welcome and describe what we will be doing over the next hour and a half.
      - <https://practicingtheway.org/practices/unhurry>
    - Large Group Activity –
      - Walk & Notice Activity
        - Everyone will be given 10 minutes to walk wherever they want, inside or outside the building. The prompt is: notice everything you can about what you are seeing, hearing, smelling, touching, and tasting (if you find a drinking fountain, piece of candy, etc.).
        - When we come back together, we will talk about the following questions:
          - What are some initial thoughts or feelings about what you noticed?
          - Compared to last week, what do you think or feel was different?
          - How do you think this practice relates to slowness and Sabbath?
          - Do you think you can incorporate this activity into your daily life? Why or why not? And/or if so, how?
    - Small Group Discussion –
      - What are some new practices from this week that you may try to implement in your daily lives?
      - How do you think the idea of slowness can affect how you interact with others?
      - Why do you think as a church we have not done very well with practicing Sabbath?
      - Do you think practicing the Sabbath is important? Why or why not?
    - Closing –
      - Any comments or questions from large group or small group?
      - Intro next week's topic: Next week we will begin to dive into our views and thoughts on culture. This topic is a difficult one to

wrestle with but so important. Over the next 4 weeks we will look at culture and ways we can engage in it as believers.



**WEEK 18:** Below are pictures of Week 18 including an overview, the online material, reflection questions, and sources. During this online week, we will be thinking about how culture is influencing the Christian faith and how we can engage. We will be reading from Gabe Lyons, Phyllis Tickle, and more.



## WEEK 18 (Online)

Where do we see culture influencing the Christian faith? What should we do or how should we think about it?

### WEEK 18 - Overview

This week we will be engaging with the topic of Church and Culture. This topic is difficult and equally as important as we learn to be in the world, but not of it. As believers, it is important to learn how to engage with culture if we are going to make a difference.

Below are readings and a video about culture in general as well as questions to think about.

## MATERIAL

### "The Next Christians: Seven Ways You can Live the Gospel and Restore the World"

Gabe Lyons does a great job engaging in the culture of today. He wants Christians to be able to engage deeply and make a difference. We will be reading the second chapter from his book.

[Read](#)

### "Christianity and the World of Cultures"

In This article, Lloyd talks about how culture from all around the world has influenced Christianity. This is not all a bad thing, but something to be aware of.

[Read](#)

### "The Great Emergence: How Christianity is Changing and Why"

Christianity has changed a lot over the years and Tickle describes some of these changes and why we have seen them happening. She encourages readers about all of the changes we may be seeing today and that the truth of Christianity has withstood the test of time.

[Read](#)

### "Trending Faith: Is Christianity Influenced by American Culture?"

This video shows how Christianity is not only influenced by American culture but by culture worldwide. This should not necessarily be a surprise to us.

[Watch](#)

## After.

Culture can be a hard topic to talk about, but nonetheless is an important one. Engage in the topic by answering the following questions from the material above:

1. What parts of the reading stuck out to you most?
2. What areas of culture do you wrestle with the most?
3. How do you hope we engage culture?

Name \*

First Name

Last Name

Email \*

Message \*

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## SOURCES:

Lloyd, Stephen. "Christianity and the World of Cultures," *Boston University*. <https://www.bu.edu/cgcm/annual-theme/christianity-and-the-world-of-cultures/>.

Lyons, Gabe. *The Next Christians: Seven Ways You Can Live the Gospel and Restore the World*. Trade Paperback ed. Colorado Springs: Multnomah Pub., 2012.

Tickle, Phyllis. *The Great Emergence: How Christianity Is Changing and Why*. Emergent Village Resources for Communities of Faith. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Books, 2008.

"Trending Faith: Is Christianity Influenced by American Culture?" Produced by Grand Canyon University. December 30, 2021. Video, 4:58.

<https://www.gcu.edu/blog/theology-ministry/trending-faith-christianity-influenced-culture>.

## WEEK 18 – Online: Church and Culture

- What is WEEK 18 Online?
  - Breakdown of WEEK 18 -
    - Purpose/Overview: Church & Culture
      - This week in our online portion, we will be thinking about the church and culture. There is lot changing within our culture today and it is important to pay attention to the changes that are happening. The church can be a place for encouragement to learn how to engage in a more Christ-like way in our world.
    - Readings:
      - *The Next Christians: Seven Ways You can Live the Gospel and Restore the World* by Gabe Lyons – Chapter 2
      - “Christianity and the World of Cultures” by Stephen Lloyd – Online Article
      - *The Great Emergence: How Christianity is Changing and Why* by Phyllis Tickle – Chapter 1
    - Video
      - “Trending Faith: Is Christianity Influenced by American Culture?” by Grand Canyon University
    - Discussion Questions
  - Breakdown of Material–
    - *The Next Christians: Seven Ways You can Live the Gospel and Restore the World*
      - In Chapter 2 of Lyons’ book, he describes the changes that he is seeing in our culture today. This is an important topic that we need to be thinking about as believers.
    - “Christianity and the World of Cultures”
      - This is a beautiful article talking about how diverse and widespread Christianity is with different cultures. We can see how Christianity has spread all throughout the world and changed because of the different cultures. Like the article says, this does not mean there are no core beliefs but rather that culture does affect how some of Christianity looks in each context.
    - *The Great Emergence: How Christianity is Changing and Why*
      - Tickle does an amazing job sharing an overview of how culture has changed and shaped Christianity. She points out that often there are major shifts within Christianity and this is not something to necessarily be afraid of.
    - “Trending Faith: Is Christianity Influenced by American Culture?”
      - This video is a discussion about how Christianity is influenced by American culture. This is a very broad topic but an important one to realize that Christianity is always influenced by the people who are practicing it.
  - Discussion Questions –
    - What parts of the reading stuck out to you most?

- What areas of culture do you wrestle with the most?
- How do you hope we engage culture?



## Large Group Activity

### Jeopardy-

We will be playing culture jeopardy thinking about different aspects of culture & the church.

We will then discuss together about some of the topics mentioned in the game.

## Small Group Questions

1. What are some of your thoughts or feelings from last weeks readings & video?
2. What was it like participating in the pop culture Jeopardy?
3. How do you think culture influences your faith and your context?

in-person MATERIAL

### WEEK 19 - In-Person (1.5 Hours): Church and Culture

- What is WEEK 19 In-Person Gathering?
  - Schedule of WEEK 19 (6pm – 7:30pm):
    - Welcome (6 – 6:10)
    - Large Group Activity (6:10 – 6:50)
    - Small Group Discussion from Large Group & Online WEEK 18 (6:50 – 7:20)
    - Closing (7:20 – 7:30)
  - Schedule Breakdown:
    - Welcome –
      - Do a brief welcome and describe what we will be doing over the next hour and a half.
    - Large Group Activity –
      - Jeopardy
        - This week for our group activity, we are going to play a sort of pop culture jeopardy. We will think about different eras of history and the pop culture of that day – similar to a “this day in history” game.
        - The purpose of this activity is to see the different changes throughout history and see what different generations know or do not know about other generations.
    - Small Group Discussion –
      - What are some thoughts or feelings you have about the readings and videos from last week’s online portion?
      - What was it like participating in the pop culture Jeopardy?
      - How do you think culture influences your faith and in your context?
    - Closing –
      - Any comments or questions from large group or small group?
      - Intro next week’s topic: Next week we will think about the importance of how we should engage culture as believers. This is definitely a debated and difficult topic; however, it is a really important one to think about. We end with thinking about culture as a group.



**WEEK 20:** Below are pictures of Week 20 including an overview, the online material, reflection questions, and sources. In Week 20's online section, we will be asking ourselves how we can engage in culture and what it can look like. We will be reading a couple different chapters as well as watching a video about what this topic.



## WEEK 20 (Online)

How can we engage culture? What would it look like?

### WEEK 20 - Overview

This week we are going to be focusing on what it looks like for us as believers to engage in culture. Again, there are no right or wrong answers here. Rather, the point is that we need to look at how we are going to engage the culture around us.

Below are this week's readings and a video to get us thinking about this topic. The questions that follow will help guide our thoughts on this topic.

**MATERIAL****"Every Square Inch: An Introduction to Cultural Engagement for Christians"**

Read the first chapter from Ashford's book and gain great perspective on competing views of how to engage culture and what it can look like as believers.

[Read](#)**"UnChristian: What a New Generation Really Thinks about Christianity... And Why it Matters"**

Kinnaman and Lyons provide good examples in how to engage in a culture that is very "unChristian." We will be reading chapter 9 from their book, which offers some good perspective.

[Read](#)**"How Should Christianity Engage in Culture?"**

This short video compares ancient Babylon to what we are currently seeing in our world today. It challenges the viewer to engage.

[Watch](#)[online MATERIAL](#)

## After.

Engaging culture can be hard but is definitely important.

Reflect upon these questions:

1. After reading and watching, how do you hope to engage culture differently?
2. What are some ways you could engage culture in a different way?
3. How would you hope to help other believers engage culture?

Name \*

First Name

Last Name

Email \*

Message \*

Send

## SOURCES:

Ashford, Bruce Riley. *Every Square Inch: An Introduction to Cultural Engagement for Christians*. Bellingham, Washington: Lexham Press, 2015.

Kinnaman, David, and Lyons, Gabe. *Unchristian: What a New Generation Really Thinks about Christianity-- and Why It Matters*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Books, 2007.

Metzger, Mike. "How Should Christianity Engage in Culture?" Produced by Explore God. September 6, 2013. Video, 2:22.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uIeVp20GWj0>.

## WEEK 20 – Online: Engaging Culture

- What is WEEK 20 Online?
  - Breakdown of WEEK 20 -
    - Purpose/Overview: Culture & Engagement
      - The purpose of this week is to engage and dialogue about how we should engage with culture. There truly is no right answer to this question but it definitely is an important one that we must think about as believers.
    - Readings:
      - *Every Square Inch: An Introduction to Cultural Engagement for Christians* by Bruce Riley Ashford – Chapter 1
      - *UnChristian: What a New Generation Really Thinks about Christianity... And Why it Matters* David Kinnaman and Gabe Lyons – Chapter 9
      - “Christ, Culture, and the Generation Gap” by Brandon J. O’Brien – Online Article
    - Video:
      - “How Should Christianity Engage in Culture?” by Explore God
    - Discussion Questions
  - Breakdown of Material–
    - *Every Square Inch: An Introduction to Cultural Engagement for Christians*
      - Ashford provides examples of the competing views of culture and how we should engage in a view that is helpful to the Christian faith.
    - *UnChristian: What a New Generations Really Thinks about Christianity...And Why it Matters*
      - Kinnaman and Lyons talk about how to engage a culture that seems at times to be very “unChristian.” They give some practical examples of how to engage well.
    - “Christ, Culture, and the Generation Gap”
      - O’Brien describes how each generation is engaging with culture in different ways. However, it is important to learn how to engage with one another and with culture even if we may have differing views.
    - “How Should Christianity Engage in Culture?”
      - This is a short video comparing Babylon to what we are seeing in culture today. The video challenges us to learn how to engage the culture in order to spread the Gospel of Truth.
  - Discussion Questions –
    - After reading and watching, how do you hope to engage culture differently?
    - What are some ways you could engage culture in a different way?
    - How would you hope to help other believers engage culture?

**WEEK 21:** Below are pictures of Week 21 including an overview, a panel discussion questions, and feedback for this section. For Week 21, we will have another panel about how individuals from different generations engage with culture. The purpose of this is to understand one another. This week also has feedback from the participants.

## WEEK 21<sub>(In-Person)</sub>

How do we engage culture? What do we each have to say about this?



### WEEK 21 - Overview

Tonight we will have another panel - hearing from individuals across generations about what it looks like to engage in culture.

Below are the questions we will be discussing.

### Panel Discussion Questions

1. How have you seen culture change over the years?
2. How have you experienced church and culture engaging with one another (both good and bad examples)?
3. How do you hope to engage culture moving forward from your perspective?
4. From your perspective and a voice from your generation, what is something about culture that you would want other generations to know?

in-person MATERIAL

## FEEDBACK.

I hope that you have enjoyed these past weeks of the program talking about culture and the church. In order to better help further develop my program, please answer the following questions for both the in-person gatherings and online portion of the program:

1. What is going well with the online and in-person portions of the program?
2. What is an area that could improve with either the online or in-person portions of the program?
3. What is one idea or concept that will stick with you after this program?
4. What is something new you have learned about someone?



Email \*

Message \*

Submit

### WEEK 21 - In-Person (1.5 Hours): Panel Discussion

- What is WEEK 21 In-Person Gathering?
  - Schedule of WEEK 21 (6pm – 7:30pm):
    - Welcome (6 – 6:10)
    - Small Group Discussion from Online WEEK 20 (6:10 – 6:30)
    - Panel Discussion (6:30 – 7:20)
    - Closing (7:20 – 7:30)
  - Schedule Breakdown:
    - Welcome –
      - Do a brief welcome and describe what we will be doing over the next hour and a half.
    - Small Group Discussion –
      - How have you tried to engage with the culture in your own context?
      - What are areas that have been easy to engage and what are areas that have been difficult?
    - Panel Discussion (1 Generation Z, 1 Millennial, 1 Generation X, 1 Boomer)
      - How have you seen culture change over the years?
      - How have you experienced church and culture engaging with one another (both good and bad examples)?
      - How do you hope to engage culture moving forward from your perspective?
      - From your perspective and a voice from your generation, what is something about culture that you would want other generations to know?
    - Closing –
      - Any comments or questions from large group or small group?
      - Intro next week's topic: Next week is our wrap up week for the online portion of the program. We will be reflecting upon what we have learned and gained from the last couple months of gathering together and learning online.

**WEEK 22:** Below are pictures of week 22 including an overview, a reflecting practice, and reflection questions. For Week 22, we will be reflecting on our experience as a whole.

Participants are asked to read a couple different sections from past weeks as well as listen/watch from past weeks.



## WEEK 22 (Online)

What made me pause? What do I think about differently now? What am I going to take with me?

### WEEK 22 - Overview

This week for our online portion, you will have the opportunity to go back through some of the material we have learned over the past couple months. This exercise is supposed to be one that is reflective and helpful.

Below is a list of what guidelines to follow as well as reflective questions to guide you through this process.



## LOOKING BACK

### Readings

Go back and pick two readings to re-read from the 4 different topic areas we have reflected upon over the last several months.

### Podcasts/Videos

Go back and pick two podcasts or videos to re-listen or re-watch from the 4 different topic areas we have reflected upon over the last several months.

online MATERIAL

## After.

Reflect upon what you have re-read, re-listened to, or re-watched and answer the following prompts:

1. Write about which pieces you chose to go back and read, listen, or watch.
2. Why did you choose to go back to those ones?
3. What stuck out to you about them?
4. What would you hope someone else would gain from if they read, listened, or watched what you chose to go back to?

Name \*

First Name

Last Name

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WEEK 22 – Online: Reflection

- What is WEEK 22 Online?
  - Breakdown of WEEK 22 -
    - Purpose/Overview: Reflection
      - This week will be an overview or a reflection piece from the past couple months of the program. I want each individual to have the chance to reflect upon what they have been learning and share it with one another.
    - Readings:
      - Pick two pieces to go back and re-read from one of the 4 topics that we have covered. It can either be from the overview week or the spiritual discipline week.
      - Pick two podcasts or videos to re-listen/re-watch from the 4 topics. Again, it can be either from the overview or spiritual discipline week.
    - Discussion Questions
      - Write about which pieces you chose to go back and read, listen, or watch.
      - Why did you choose to go back to those ones?
      - What stuck out to you about them?
      - What would you hope someone else would gain from if they read, listened, or watched what you chose to go back to?

**WEEK 23:** Below are pictures of Week 23 including an overview, a large group activity, and small group questions. Week 23 is a wrap up week before the retreat. We will be doing a large group activity reflecting on our experience with one another. We also will have small groups in order to discuss how to finish well.

## WEEK 23 (In-Person)

How do we wrap this all up? What do we do next?



### WEEK 23 - Overview

Tonight is our final in-person gathering before our retreat. For this in-person gathering, we will be reflecting upon our experiences and doing some activities together.

### Large Group Activity

#### Deck of Cards Game -

Each suit (hearts, diamonds, clubs, spades) represent a different topic we've covered over the course of this program. We'll pass the deck of cards around the room and whoever is holding the deck will flip the top card and ask a question within that topic to the person on their right.

### Small Group Questions

1. What are some practices that you have engaged with that you are hopeful to carry with you after the program?
2. What is something that unexpectedly came from this program?
3. What is one thing you appreciate about other generations?

in-person MATERIAL

### WEEK 23 - In-Person (1.5 Hours): Final Reflection

- What is WEEK 23 In-Person Gathering?
  - Schedule of WEEK 23 (6pm – 7:30pm):
    - Welcome (6 – 6:10)
    - Large Group Activity (6:10 – 6:40)
    - Small Group Discussion (6:40 – 7:15)
    - Closing (7:15 – 7:30)
  - Schedule Breakdown:
    - Welcome –
      - Do a brief welcome and describe what we will be doing over the next hour and a half.
    - Large Group Activity –
      - Deck of Cards Challenge
        - Each suite of the deck (Hearts, Diamonds, Spades, Clubs) will represent a different topic/question – each member of the group will answer the topic/question as they flip over the deck of cards
    - Small Group Discussion –
      - What are some different practices that you have engaged with over the last months that you hope to carry after we are done with the program?
      - What is something that unexpectedly came about because of the program?
      - What is one thing you appreciate about other generations?
    - Closing –
      - Share about my experience leading the group and how valuable the time and space was for myself.
      - Talk about the retreat that will happen the following week. Give a detailed schedule and what to expect.

**RETREAT:** Below are pictures of the Retreat schedule, content, and details. We have a detailed schedule that we will follow for the day from 9am-7pm. We will have two different sessions, two different times for group activities, and one final time for small groups.



## SCHEDULE:

- o Introduction & Expectations (9am – 9:30am)
- o Session 1 (9:30am – 10:30am)
- o Activity 1: Silence & Solitude (10:30am – 12pm)
- o Lunch (12pm – 1pm)
- o Session 2 (1pm – 2pm)
- o Activity 2: Journey through Time (2pm – 3:30pm)
- o Small Groups (3:30pm – 4:30pm)
- o Final Session & Assessments (4pm – 5pm)
- o Closing Dinner (5pm – 7pm)

## CONTENT

Session 1 - Reflect again on the importance of silence and solitude. How am I going to practice this in my life?

Activity 1 - Silence and Solitude

Session 2 - A few questions we will ponder during this session: What's Next? What do we do after this 6 month journey?

Activity 2 - Journey through Time

Small groups - Spend 1 last time together reflecting and sharing about our experience together.

## DETAILS

Location- 9074 Joy Road, Plymouth, MI 48170

Expectations - NO technology. SLOW our thoughts. BE with one another.

ALL MEALS PROVIDED.

MATERIAL

## RETREAT OVERVIEW:

- Purpose:
  - A reflective time together to look back at all the thing we have done together as a group
  - Realize how much we have gained from one another
  - Focus on what we have seen in one another – specifically focus on the intergenerational aspect of the program
  - Enjoy one last time as a group together
  - There will be a no technology use policy for participants
- Retreat Space:
  - My Parent's Home
    - This is a perfect space because they have a ton of room where we can gather as a large group as well as lots of spaces for people to go off on their own.
    - They have lots of space to sit on their property as well as take long walks.
    - They have hosted retreats in the past and it has worked out perfectly.
- Activities:
  - Silence & Solitude
    - We will spend a significant amount of time in silence and solitude reflecting on what we have done.
  - Journey through time
    - We will go back through the last few months and reflect together about the different topics we have engaged with – I will have them either write a story, draw a picture, write a poem, write a song, paint a picture, etc. to answer the questions below.
    - How have these topics shaped our view of ourselves and others?
    - What are some areas that stuck out to each of us as we think about the last few months?
    - We will talk about them as a large group
  - Small groups
    - We will have one final time to spend together in our small groups discussing what we are hopeful for after the program.
  - Dinner Activities
    - TableTopics – we will have these set up at our tables that we can enjoy some conversations with one another about different topics
    - Favorite Memory – think of a favorite memory over the last 6 months
- Brief Schedule:
  - Introduction & Expectations (9am – 9:30am)
  - Session 1(9:30am – 10:30am)
  - Activity 1: Silence & Solitude (10:30am – 12pm)
  - Lunch (12pm – 1pm)
  - Session 2 (1pm – 2pm)
  - Activity 2: Journey through Time (2pm – 3:30pm)
  - Small Groups (3:30pm – 4:30pm)
  - Final Session & Assessments (4pm – 5pm)



- Closing Dinner (5pm – 7pm)

## RETREAT SCHEDULE & CONTENT:

- Introduction & Expectations (9am – 9:30am)
  - During this time, we will go over what the retreat will look like as well as some of the expectations for the day. Below is a list of what will be covered.
    - No Technology – We will have a basket for all of our phones, tablets, etc. to be placed. A number can be given to family members in case of an emergency!
    - Slow paced – We will be taking our time going through the different sessions and activities together, while trying to practice some of the areas we have focused on throughout the semester
    - Respect One Another – Each of our journeys are different so be gentle with yourselves and one another as we end this journey we have been on over the last 6 months
  - Breakfast will be provided during our introduction and expectations.
- Session 1 (9:30am – 10:30am)
  - Read a section from Abba's Child (Ch. 2)
  - Show a video - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5lOcIr9QGks> ; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hII9sVU13SQ>
  - Discuss the purpose of reflection & talk about the importance of silence and solitude again
  - Dialogue as a group
- Activity 1: Silence & Solitude (10:30am – 12pm)
  - We will be spending an hour & a half in silence and solitude – there is plenty of space to find on your own both inside and outside. Please do and be whatever you need in order to ponder the last 6 months. Below are questions to reflect upon during the time:
    - What areas have stayed with you the most since the beginning of our journey?
    - How have you seen yourself change over the last 6 months?
    - How have you seen others change in this group over the last 6 months?
    - What do you hope to continue after this journey is over?
- Lunch (12pm – 1pm)
- Session 2 (1pm – 2pm)
  - Questions we will answer during this session:
    - What's next?
      - This will be time and space to reflect upon what is next after the program and what we are hopeful for moving forward.
      - I will give resources and tools to help to carry over some of the practices into everyday life.
    - How do we carry this into our everyday lives?
    - How do invite others into this journey?
- Activity 2: Journey through Time (2pm – 3:30pm)

- We will reflect about our journey over the last 6 months – I will ask each individual to create a story or poem or song or draw a picture of what the last 6 months have been like. We will share these and more in our small groups.
- Here are some questions to help get you thinking:
  - What have you learned about yourself during this journey?
  - What have you learned about others during this journey?
  - How am I different than before this journey?
  - What sticks out?
- Small Groups (3:30pm – 4:30pm)
  - During this small group session, we will share what we created during our “Journey through Time” activity.
  - We will also share some of our experiences and reflections from our silence and solitude session.
- Final Session & Assessments (4pm – 5pm)
  - Closing thoughts
  - Give Retreat Survey
- Closing Dinner (5pm – 7pm)
  - Have a final closing dinner together

**RESOURCE PAGE:** Below are pictures of the resource page including all of the resources used and a connection card. The resources page will be an ever growing page for participants to be able to go and retrieve information about each of the topics we discussed. It will also be a place where they can connect with others after their program is finished.



#### TECHNOLOGY

*Reclaiming Conversation: The Power of Talk in a Digital Age* by Sherry Turkle

*Analog Church: Why We Need Real People, Places, and the Things in the Digital Age* by Jay Kim

"Why Our Screens Make Us Less Happy" by Adam Alter

#### SILENCE & SOLITUDE

*Invitation to Silence and Solitude* by Ruth Haley Barton

*The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry* by John Mark Comer

*Celebration of Discipline* by Richard Foster

"What is Silence and Solitude?" video by John Mark Comer

"Solitude: A Hike" podcast by Nathan and Richard Foster

#### VOCATION

*Your Vocational Credo: Practical Steps to Discover Your Unique Purpose* by Deborah Loyd

*Let Your Life Speak: Listening for the Voice of Vocation* by Parker Palmer

"A Holistic View of Christian Vocation" Video by Initiative on Faith & Public Life

#### SIMPLICITY

*Celebration of Discipline* by Richard Foster

*Freedom of Simplicity* by Richard Foster

*The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry* by John Mark Comer

"Simplicity" Podcast by Jeff Bethke and John Mark Comer

## PACE OF LIFE

*An Unhurried Life: Following Jesus' Rhythms of Work and Rest* by Alan Falding

*In Praise of Slowness: Challenging the Cult of Speed* by Carl Honoré

*The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry* by John Mark Comer

"The Unforeseen Consequences of a Fast Paced World" Video by Kathryn Bouskill

## SLOWNESS & SABBATH

*The Life You've Always Wanted* by John Ortberg

*The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry* by John Mark Comer

*Sabbath: Finding Rest, Renewal, and Delight in Our Busy Lives* by Wayne Muller

*God in my Everything: How an Ancient Rhythm Helps Busy People Enjoy God* by Ken Shigematsu

"Practice Sabbath Delight" Podcast by Pete Scazzero and Rich Villodas

## CULTURE

*The Next Christians: Seven Ways You can Live the Gospel and Restore the World* by Gabe Lyons

*The Great Emergence: How Christianity is Changing and Why* by Phyllis Tickle

*Every Square Inch: An Introduction to Cultural Engagement for Christians* by Bruce Ashford

*UnChristian: What a New Generation Really Thinks about Christianity... And Why it Matters* by David Kinnaman and Gabe Lyons

"Christianity and the World of Cultures" Article by Stephen Lloyd

"Christ, Culture, and the Generation Gap" Article by Brandon J. O'Brien

"Trending Fatih: Is Christianity Influenced by American Culture?" Video by Grand Canyon University

"How should Christianity Engage in Culture?" Video by Explore God

## COMMUNITY

*Becoming a True Spiritual Community* by Larry Crabb

*Life Together* by Dietrich Bonhoeffer

*The Good and Beautiful Community* by James Bryan Smith

"Christ, Culture, and the Generation Gap" by Christianity Today

*Intergenerational Christian Formation: Bringing the Whole Church Together in Ministry, Community and Worship* by Holly Allen and Christine Lawton

"Practice Friendship" Podcast by Emily P. Freeman

"Generations: Intergenerational" Video by The Woodlands UMC

## CONNECT.

Connect with other current and past participants from other cohorts by filling out the form.

Often, after completing a program like this, we do not stay very connected with one another. If interested, this connection piece provides opportunity to stay connected with one another even after the 6 month program is complete. This connection can look like many different options but the option is out there. As the program continues to develop, there will be more opportunities to connect. Enjoy staying in the loop with one another! :)

Name \*



First Name

Last Name

Email \*

Message \*

Send

**CONTACT ME:** Below is a picture of the Contact Me page. This page currently only includes my email.



Contact me:  
[cibach18@georgefox.edu](mailto:cibach18@georgefox.edu)



## ASSESSMENT TOOLS FOR PROJECT:

- Building Phase Assessment
  - Questions asked of Stakeholders
    - What are your initial thoughts about the overview of the program? And do you think the 4 areas of study are ones that would be valuable for both older generations and Generation Z?
    - What are your initial thoughts of the website/layout of the website?
    - What do you think of the online portion (readings, reflection questions, etc.)? And the in-person portion (the activities, small group discussion, etc.)
    - If you were to go through a program like this, what is something that would matter to you and you would want me to make sure was included in the program?
- Pre-Program Assessment
  - Survey of Intergenerational Relationships
    - How many friendships/relationships do you have with people from other generations (does not include family members)?
    - How often are you dialoguing with someone from a different generation about the Christian life (prayer, spiritual disciplines, daily struggles, church, etc.)?
    - Do you feel like you are understood by generations older or younger than you? Why or why not?
    - Name 1 or 2 areas you hope to gain from joining a program focused on bridging the gap between older generations and Gen Z, specifically thinking about the Christian journey of faith.
- Online & In-Person Platform Assessment:
  - 3 Question Survey about the online & in-person portion (This survey is given every 4 weeks of the program – after each section):
    - What parts of the online and in-person portions have gone well?
    - What is something that you would want to change or spend more time on?
    - What is something you have learned about yourself and someone else in these past weeks?
- Retreat Assessment
  - Survey of Retreat
    - On a scale of 1 to 10, how beneficial was the retreat to your experience of the program (1 being not beneficial; 10 most beneficial).
    - Describe what you thought or felt about the format of the retreat.
    - What is an something you would keep and what is something you would change about the retreat?
- Post-Program & Intention Assessment
  - Survey of Intergenerational Relationships
    - Name 1 or 2 insights you gained from the program, specifically about others from different generations.
    - Do feel more or less understood by different generations after this program? Why or Why not?



- What insights about the Christian faith did you gain from others about the Christian life?
- What did you enjoy most about interacting with others from different generations?
- How likely are you to stay in relationship with someone from a different generation because of this program?
- How do you hope to interact with other generations differently because of this program?

## ASSESSMENT

1. Mutual understanding across generations – For this benchmark, I created a pre-survey in order to understand the background of knowledge that each of the participants bring as they enter the program. This survey asks specific questions about the individuals understanding of other generations and how often they dialogue with older/younger generations about the Christian faith. It also asks what they are hopeful to learn from others during this experience. A post-survey is developed in order to see where the growth in knowledge has occurred in each participant. This survey asks about different insights they have gained and what they enjoyed most about having other generations in the program. Throughout the program, there is both online material and thought provoking questions that directs the individuals to reflect upon different generations and what they are learning from other generations. The goal with the material as well as the interactions with one another is that there will be a mutual understanding across generations. A growth point for this benchmark will be to develop one-on-one interviews with each participant to gain a more thorough picture of how a mutual understanding is developing between generations. This one-on-one interview would provide more space for the participants to dialogue about this mutual understanding or lack of understanding. Questions would revolve around similar topics but it would provide another opportunity for growth within the program. In my launch plan, I will include this growth area of one-on-one interviews periodically throughout the program.
2. Lasting intergenerational relationships – The measure of this benchmark will be the development of three pairs of intergenerational, long-term relationships. These

relationships do not necessarily have to look a certain way. My desire is that after the program there would be consistent relationships that happens because of the friendships that were built over the six months of journeying together. My hope is that this will happen organically. This feels difficult to measure, but if I can see that 3 lasting relationships occur I will be happy with what the program has accomplished. At the final retreat gathering, there will be a survey that is given to each of the participants asking their thoughts about their interactions with individuals from Gen Z/older generations and if they plan to continue to foster any relationships with Gen Z/older generations. The survey also asks the participants how they hope to engage with others from different generations moving forward in hopes of fostering other relationships outside of the program itself. The purpose of the program is for there to be lasting intergenerational relationships; so, with the help of the material, reflection questions, in-person gatherings, and retreat my hope is that these relationships will happen. This benchmark feels like a hard one to improve upon because, as stated previously, the hope is that these relationships would come about organically through the program. After running the first trial program, I could add additional questions and readings focused on the importance of lasting intergenerational relationships. I believe this benchmark could vary between cohorts as it is dependent on the group itself. Further development may need to occur after the initial trial program run.

3. Format of the program – In order to assess the format of the program, the individuals are given a 3 question survey at the end of each 4 week section. The responses to these questions will be used to further develop the program itself. The questions that are asked include, “What areas are going well?” and, “What areas could be improved

upon?” The surveys also ask which areas participants would want to change or spend more time on in hopes of gaining a better understanding of where to focus on program development. The feedback given on these questions will be able to be utilized after the first cohort has completed the program. I am sure there will be more space and questions for improvement that I will be able to implement after the first cohort is finished. An area of improvement would be to ask more questions pertaining to the usability of the website. This will be an important piece that I did not focus much on besides during the building phase as I asked some of my stakeholders their initial thoughts of the website. But, moving forward, it will be important to gather information about the usability of the website from those who are actually using it on a weekly basis. Another area for growth is similar in asking questions that help further develop the in-person and retreat gatherings. In my surveys, I focused much more on the content of the program and not on the usability or it’s actual format. In my launch plan, I will include a space to improve upon the surveys that have already been created in order to further develop this benchmark.

4. Dialogue happens between generations – This benchmark relies heavily on the observations I will gain as the program leader, particularly during the in-person gathering weeks. One of the purposes of the program is to create dialogue between generations, which I know will happen because much of the material requires discussion. However, in order to assess if dialogue is occurring, I need to create some sort of document or database for the observations. For the project/program growth, it will be important to have this documentation to see what is happening on a week to week basis. In the launch plan, I will dedicate time to creating a database for

observations gathered during each in-person gathering. This database will help me understand and develop the program as I will be able to see what is happening within the program.

## PROJECT LAUNCH PLAN

### ***PROJECT DESCRIPTION***

The project is a website that a group of different generations will walk through during a six month program which includes an online, in-person, and retreat component. The website is created in order for the cohort to go through their online and in-person material every other week. The online material consists of readings, videos, and podcasts followed by a series of reflective questions. The in-person gatherings are created in order for the group to dive deeper together into the material in which they are engaging with online. The retreat will be an additional space away in which further dialogue could occur. The project was created as a hybrid program with in-person sessions, online sessions, and a final day-long retreat in order to provide space for all generations to feel comfortable. The six month length was chosen in order to create a long enough time period for individuals to get to know one another and create lasting relationships. Below is the project scope and benchmarks followed by the project documentation. The project documentation is snapshots of each of the website pages as well as leader guides for both the online, in-person, and retreat portion of the program.

### **AUDIENCE**

The primary audience of my project will be Generation Z and any generation older. The audience must have a level of desire to develop intergenerational relationships. A primary focus will be on spirituality and the Christian faith so the material will be focused on individuals who have a relationship with Christ. Each of these generations will have an opportunity to engage with in-person and online material. The hybrid of in-person and online material caters to all generations as many younger generations enjoy the online material and many older generations would prefer in-person material. The website that has been created is user friendly, so all

generations should find it easy to navigate. The purpose of the website is to engage people from all generations in dialogue with one another.

### ***DEVELOPMENT TIMELINE***

- **LAUNCH PLAN MILESTONES:**
  - Create 1-on-1 interviews and schedule them throughout the 6 months (This milestone is linked to the improvement upon the mutual understanding across generations benchmark).
  - Add survey questions regarding the actual format of the website and in-person gathering discussions (This milestone is linked to the improvement of the format of the program benchmark).
  - Create a database in order to document the dialogue that is happening between generations (This is linked to the dialogue between generations benchmark of the program).
  - Gather all of the material in PDF format in order for the participants to have access to all of the online material that is needed. Include links on the resource page to the different books, podcasts, etc. that are used throughout the program.
  - Finalize and book a retreat space – This will be important in order to let participants know when and where we will be meeting for the retreat.
  - Gather 12 participants – these participants may come from the coffee shop ministry or the church I am currently attending. There will be 6 participants from older generations (Millennials, Gen X, Baby Boomers) and 6 participants from Generation Z.

- Begin 1<sup>st</sup> Program Fall of 2022 – the goal is to begin the program Fall of 2022 and to finish in the first part of 2023. The goal will eventually to be on a 6 month rotation in order to have 2 programs per year (January – June & July – December). This can occur after the first initial program and gather of data
- Gather data and feedback from participants in Spring 2023 in order to start the program again in July of 2023 to start the twice a year process.
- ASSESSMENTS AND TIMELINE FOR EACH MILESTONE:
  - 1-on-1 Interviews – The template for this will be completed by July 1, 2022. The purpose of these interviews is to provide a better understanding of where the individuals are at in their understanding of one another. The interviews will be strategically placed after each section of the program to see the development of the individual's understanding of one another over the course of the program.
  - Survey Questions about Format – These survey questions will be added to the website by July 1, 2022. The purpose of these questions is to better understand the usability of the website and format of the in-person gatherings rather than solely the content of the program. These questions will help to solve any issues that individuals may be having with the usability and format of the program.
  - Database for Dialogue – The database will be created by August 1, 2022. The database will be a Google Document that will be kept as a running document of the observations that I have after each in-person gathering. There will be different questions to think through for each week and these could pertain to the discussion topic for the week. The purpose of this database is to have documented what was



happening each week between all of the participants and how to help foster further relationships.

- Material & Resource Page – Gathering all of the material into PDF format and links to all of the resources used throughout the program will be completed by September 1, 2022. The purpose of this is so that the individuals will have easy access to the material as well as the resources listed on the resource page.
- Gather 12 participants – This will be done by September 1, 2022. I will reach out to the coffee shop ministry and church by August 1 in order to give time to find 12 individuals who are interested in participating in this program over six months. The success of gathering these individuals will determine if I will be able to start the program in the fall.
- Retreat – Book a retreat center by October 1, 2022 and be able to let all participants know the date of the retreat. The retreat space most likely will be at my parents' home because they have enough space to host a retreat of 13 individuals (including myself) for a day retreat. The reason this space has been chosen is because of the location as well as the opportunities that are available at their retreat home. The location is near to us creating convenience for participants. Their home also provides unique opportunities to be outside in nature and also different secluded spaces inside their home. This space will be a good space to test for a small group of individuals to use in both summer and winter seasons.
- Begin 1<sup>st</sup> Six-Month Program – I will begin the first program by October 1, 2022 and it will run through March 2023. This is a trial run because obviously there will need to be changes that need to be made moving forward from the feedback

gathered. The goal would then be to start the next program in July of 2023 and the next one in January 2024.

- Gathering Data – After the first program is completed, I will go through all of the data collected from each of the surveys and databases in order to see where improvement can be made. This process will take place from March – June 2023 in order to start the process over again to find more participants and start in July 2023.

### ***ITERATION PROCESS***

In order to continually evaluate my project, I have created multiple internal surveys in order to help draw continual feedback each time the program is run. In my launch plan, I have included even more ways to provide feedback in order to make sure that each of my benchmarks are being met. These additional ways of feedback include 1-on-1 interviews and a database for in-person observations of the individuals. After running the first program, I have created enough space in my launch plan in order to make improvements on the website, in-person gatherings, and the retreat. There is a continual learning process as I run the program and I know there will need to be many changes after the first trial run.

## APPENDIX A—MILESTONE 1 THE NPO CHARTER

### ***PERSONAL RESEARCH MANIFESTO***

My approach to researching the NPO is to have an open mind, listen well, and recognize I will not solve all of the world's problems through this research.

### ***NPO STATEMENT***

Generation Z Christians do not feel they have safe spaces in church, home, friends, or communities to engage with and understand their emotional and spiritual health.

### ***NPO SCOPE***

I have noticed that many young adults do not have safe spaces where they are talking about the deeper issues of life. As a coffee shop, we are slowly becoming a space for some of Generation Z to talk about their emotional and spiritual health. I am hoping to understand why they seem to feel more comfortable coming into our space and I want to continue to foster deeper connections with others. With this desire come some risks because we are hoping to dialogue about people's souls. Some may not want to enter into the space for discussion and others may feel it is too hard.

### ***NPO CONTEXT***

The context for my NPO is a coffee shop ministry in Northville, Michigan. The coffee shop has been opened as a business with the dual purpose of ministry. The purpose of the ministry is to create a safe space for people to come in and have conversations with others. We have recognized many people do not have a safe space to have conversations about their emotional and spiritual health. As a coffee shop ministry, we have slowly begun to realize that our primary ministry has been with our employees, who are mainly in Generation Z. However, we have also seen many Generation Z customers come into our space and enjoy what we have to

offer. Generation Z is a generation we hope to be able to reach in this day and age. Our hope is to create a space for them to come wherever they are at in their story.

### ***ROOT CAUSES***

There are many possible root causes but here are some of the ones discussed in my Discovery Session and 1on1 interviews:

1. Fear
2. Lack of skills to have deeper, more meaningful conversations
3. Lack of trust
4. Physical Safety
5. Stress/Busyness
6. Sin/Brokenness

One of the main root causes mentioned was different types of fear. Many people are fearful of discussing their emotional and spiritual health with family, friends, pastors, etc. Because of this fear, many choose not to engage with their internal worlds; rather, they choose to remain on the surface. Another root cause is the idea that there is a lack of skill developed by Generation Z Christians to discuss their health. I believe this to be true: many from Generation Z seem to not really know or understand how to dialogue or think about their internal world. This type of reflection on our emotional and spiritual health is a lost art.

### ***DISCOVERY SESSION STAKEHOLDERS***

1. Young Life Staff
2. Individual Employed by School System
3. Reaching Higher Representative
4. Coffee Shop Employee

5. High School Student
6. High School Student
7. High School Student

### ***ONE-ON-ONE INTERVIEWS***

1. Young Life Regional Director
2. Director of Discipleship
3. Coffee Shop Owner

### ***ACADEMIC RESOURCES***

There is currently a lot of research coming out about Generation Z but I want to go even deeper and understand where Generation Z Christians feel most safe to process their emotional and spiritual health. Some key fields I want to research are the church and Generation Z; the secular world and where Generation Z says it feels most connected and known; social media and Generation Z; mental health; defining a safe space; and defining emotional and spiritual health. A few key scholars and academic resources I will look at are the Fuller Youth Institute, Ray Oldenburg, Pew Research Center, scripture, and many others.

### ***DISCOVERY SESSION AND ONE-ON-ONE REPORT***

#### **Discovery Session Description**

For my Discovery Session, I reached out to a group of people who I believed would have valuable knowledge on the topic of my research. My participants were: three high school students, an employee at the coffee shop, a Young Life Staff members, and two others who work for the school system/programs in the high school. Each were asked if they would be interested in an initial session that would help me clarify and think through different angles of the topic itself. Once I confirmed a date and time, each arrived at the space we were going to hold the

discovery session. I introduced myself, thanked them for coming, and laid some ground rules for the session. I then gave a brief overview of my topic, keeping it very vague in order to make sure there was not a lot of bias coming from myself. We then slowly went through the prompts provided by the Discovery Session guide. I had them place sticky notes on the walls, group things together, and talk as a group about different ideas they were coming up with. The group had many questions but I tried to just continue the process along, knowing we would eventually answer the final question. I was able to be the facilitator of the group and not participate or offer many of my own thoughts. The process went very smoothly and I believe each of my participants had a lot to offer.

#### Discovery Session Statement

Considering school teacher's/administrations relationship with high schoolers,  
we've discovered there is a lack of healthy/authentic relationships,  
which is caused by different types of fear.  
If solved, it would mean transformative community.

#### Critical Insights from Discovery Session

Overall I felt there was good information gathered from my discovery session. The session really helped me to think from different angles more than anything. One of the biggest surprises was the fact that as an audience the group did not think very much about high schoolers themselves. The conversation revolved much more around those creating the safe spaces rather than the high school students themselves. I was not thinking the conversation would go this direction but was thankful to have new insights about those creating spaces. One other finding that I would like to dive deeper in was the types of fear that they were talking about in the discovery session. It would be interesting to think more deeply about this aspect in order to know

different directions I am able to go for research and the project. Now, I have also decided to think more broadly at Generation Z rather than just high school students because my context of ministry is changing not because of the discovery session.

#### One-on-One Interview Discoveries

One of the themes that came about from the one-on-one interviews was the idea that maybe high school students have never been taught to think and reflect. They are not taking care of their emotional and spiritual health because they have never been given the tools to do so. If they were given the tools or were taught to be more reflective of their own lives, maybe they would be in a better place. One interviewee looked at my discovery session overview and also wanted to think more deeply about the different types of fear as the root causes. They thought I could go even deeper and explain more of what this actually meant. All of the interviewees also asked me to continue to think about the audiences as well as the different people and spaces needed to create safe spaces. Each brought new light to the discovery session and what was said.

#### Synthesis

The synthesis from both the one-on-one interviews and the discovery session is that this problem of not having safe spaces to dialogue about our emotional and spiritual health is prevalent in our time, particularly with high school students. Because my ministry context is changing, I will be able to think more broadly about Generation Z Christians which will help me to be able to gather more research. When the interviewees looked at the discovery session notes that I had gathered, many were not shocked by what came about from the session. They understand the directions the group had gone and were able to add even more perspective on what was already said. As a whole, the one-on-ones focused more on the high school students themselves while the discovery session focused more on those involved with high school

students. Both were very helpful for me because I was able to see from multiple different perspectives. Each person believes in the importance of having safe space but many said that these places are not happening often. Each was curious the direction in which my research is heading and hopeful that more spaces will be created to process emotional and spiritual health.

#### Next Steps

I must begin to look at all of the different research coming out about Generation Z, both secular and Christian. I will begin looking at their interaction with the church, their families, friends, and other spaces. From all the interviews and the discovery session, I have also realized that I need to make sure to define what I mean by a “safe space.” There were many questions about this term and how often the term is used in our culture today. I am sure this will create some challenges so I must begin to engage in those areas. I also want to look also at how social media is playing a role in the lives of Generation Z. I know there is a lot of researching come out about social media as a whole but it will be interesting to see if I can find anything about how it is specifically affecting Generation Z. These are just a few of my next steps.



## APPENDICES

Below is an overview of my discovery session that I sent to my 1on1 interview participants as well as pictures from my discovery session.

### ***DISCOVERY SESSION OVERVIEW FOR 1on1s:***

My Need, Problem, or Opportunity I am planning to research revolves around the topic that high school students do not feel safe in their different spheres (home, school, church, etc.) specifically when it comes to processing their internal world.

When I gathered my stakeholders for our discovery session, I posed this general prompt: there is a lack of safe spaces for high school students. I asked the stakeholders to think about what it may look like to create safe spaces for high school students, but I did not give any of my own thoughts as a way to avoid swaying what direction the discovery session went.

The end goal of the night was to answer and fill in this statement: “Considering \_\_\_\_\_ (audience), we’ve discovered \_\_\_\_\_ (NPO), which is caused by \_\_\_\_\_ (root cause). If solved, it would mean \_\_\_\_\_ (outcome).

### **PART 1:**

The stakeholders were asked to think about the audience of the prompt of lack of safe spaces for high school students (anyone involved with this theme). We all put ideas up on the wall and then grouped them into categories. I then asked them to vote on which one they thought was the most compelling audience. As seen below, they picked teachers/school administration.

- |                     |                                      |
|---------------------|--------------------------------------|
| - Parents (1)       | - Family (siblings, extended family) |
| - Summer Camp       | - High school students               |
| - Coaches (3)       | - Trusted adults (1)                 |
| - Leaders           | - Youth pastors/church leaders (2)   |
| - Friends/teammates | - Teachers/school administration (5) |
| - Employers         |                                      |

## PART 2:

The stakeholders were then asked to answer the question “What is the need / problem / opportunity around this topic?” followed by, “What are the symptoms/pain points and root causes for each of the answers to the first question?” The theme that gained the most traction of the four listed below was relationships/acceptance.

The themes were:

- Busyness/problems of stress
- Bigger Purpose
- Maintaining Spaces
- Relationships/Acceptance

## PART 3:

The stakeholders were then asked to answer the question “If solved, what would it mean for the audience?” The responses are below.

- Students have better sense of their “calling”
- Vision of what marriage could be
- A sense of what community is
- Better grasp on responsibility and disappointing people
- Being the church
- Seeing religious relationships and wanting one
- Exposure to healthy relationships
- More head space, clear thinking to focus on what matters because they have health relationships
- Less entitled spirit

## PART 4:

The final task of the discover session was to answer the initial phrase listed above in the overview. From all of the information gathered throughout the evening the group landed on the following statement:

Considering school teacher's/administrations relationship with high schoolers, we've discovered there is a lack of healthy/authentic relationships, which is caused by different types of fear. If solved, it would mean transformative community.

## ***1-ON-1 INTERVIEWS***

### *Director of Discipleship*

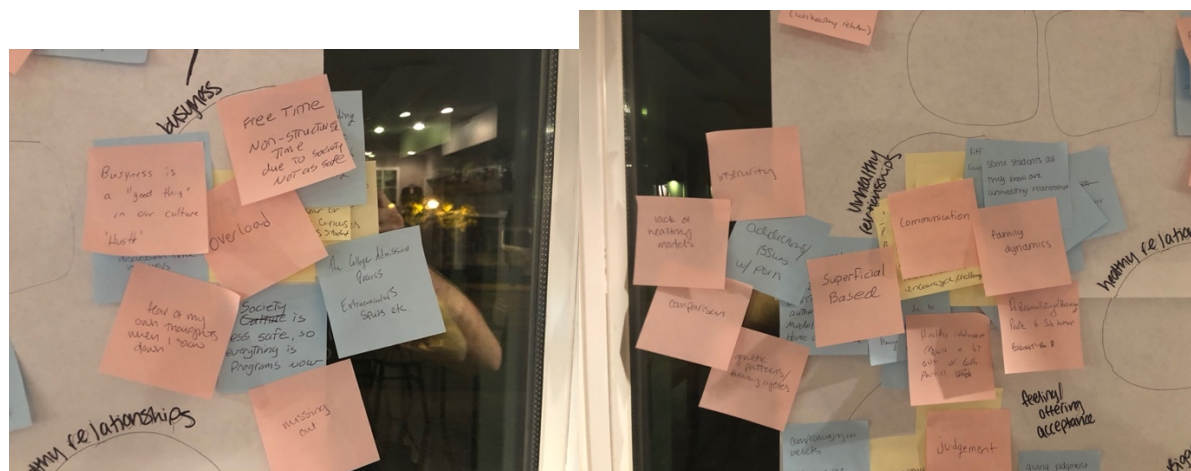
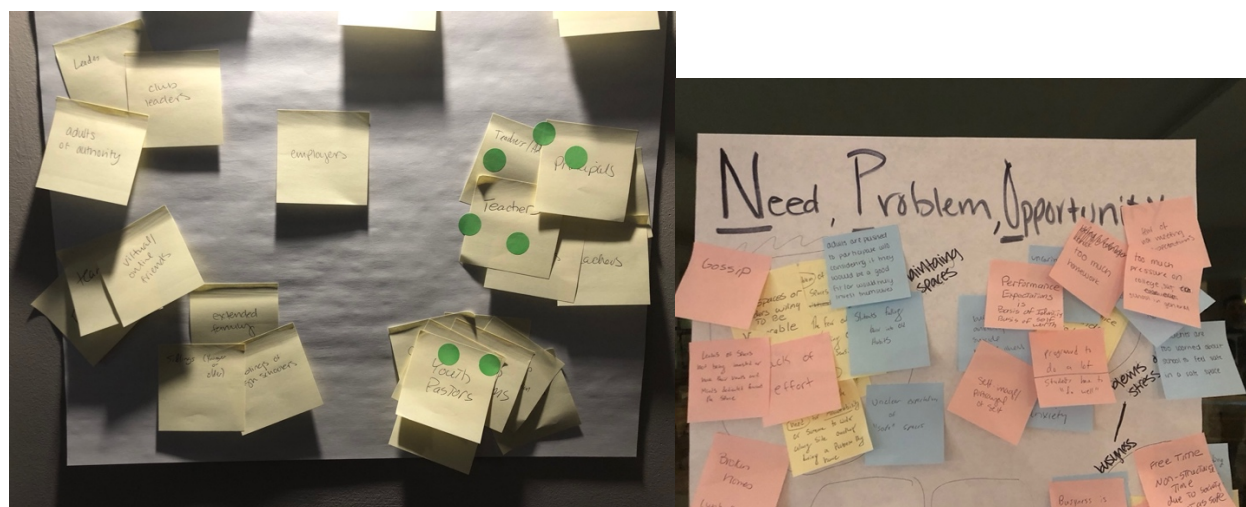
- Initial Thoughts
  - Thinking about physical space or relational space
    - Two different legs – space for physical and relational
  - Third Place –
    - What is the third place they went to?
    - The church has lost its spot to
    - How do you create space to be a part of their routine?
  - Purposeful routine
    - How can important people be a part of the routine.
  - Themes:
    - All of them feel deeply connected with their rhythms of life
    - Giving perspective when with other people
    - Trauma informed
    - How much of it loss skills?
  - Embodiment work the students need
    - Idea of what it means to be embodied
    - Life skills.
    - if they are not even safe to themselves
  - High schoolers
    - Why do they not feel safe?
      - You don't know how?
      - Don't trust them?
      - You aren't having face to face conversations?
      - Do they need to do reflective work?
    - What are the necessary components that high schoolers need to feel safe to process their internal world?
    - What are the components were developed in the high space because they have a safe space?
  - Who am I doing this for? And who am I doing this because?

*Young Life Regional Director*

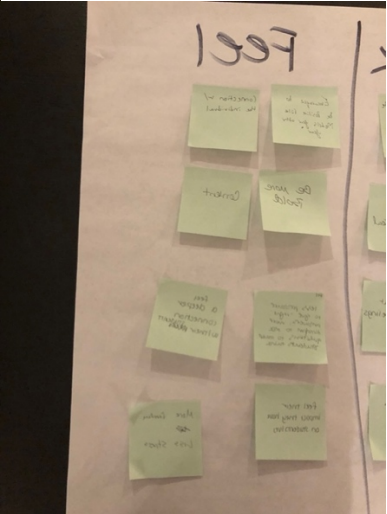
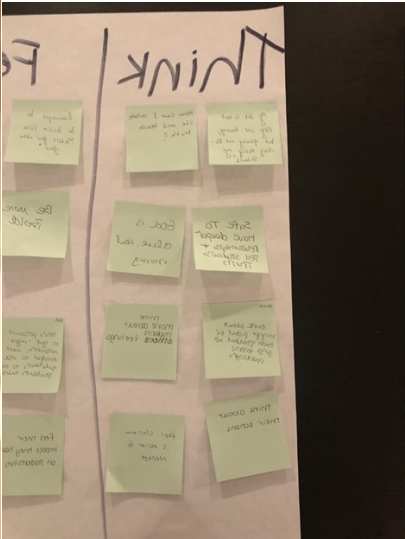
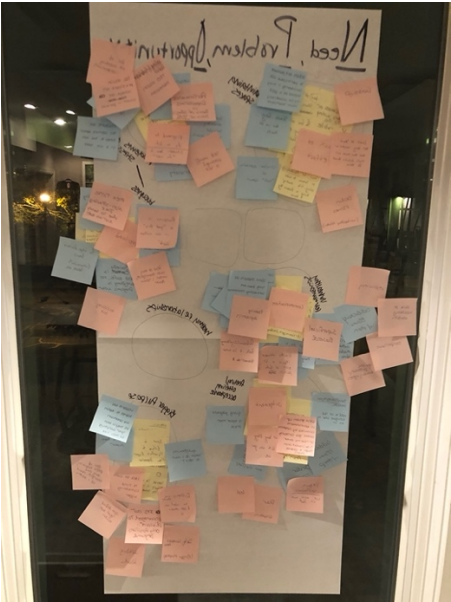
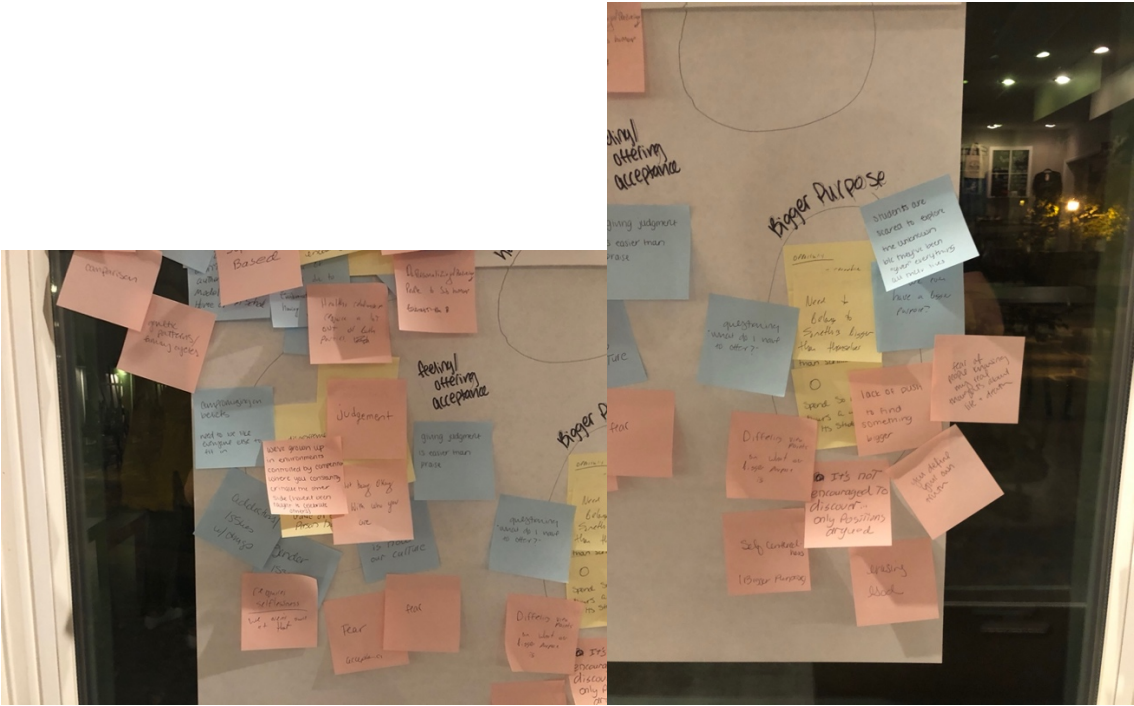
- Initial thoughts about the topic
  - Invested in this for a long time.
  - Not connected to any high school kids anymore.
  - Don't feel like an expert
  - If high schoolers aren't a key audience, why not? Are they not able to be self-reflective?
    - Any conclusions drawn for safe space will have to have some quantitative sense of their own experience
    - Developmental experts need to speak into... what are they able to process?
    - Pick some questions that high school students are able to answer!
  - This is what people now think or
  - Not sure what the questions to ask students
    - How often do you think about your own feelings?
  - Thinking about input data that comes from kids
    - We found this... what we think that means is this.
  - What are some of the causes?
    - Accept the prevailing wisdom
    - Root issue... timeless... we are sinners! And insecure... true 50 years ago... add to it the pressures (social media, technology).
  - At various junctures
    - Would be worthwhile to survey other young life staff
  - How much of some of the findings is tied to type of community of socioeconomic status, different environments, etc.
    - I bet it is different
- What is missing?
  - Audience
    - Therapists/mental health professionals
      - Interesting to hear from them
      - We build the relationship
      - Have we been able to create a safe space here?
      - More and more kids are in this space
      - Think it is wise.

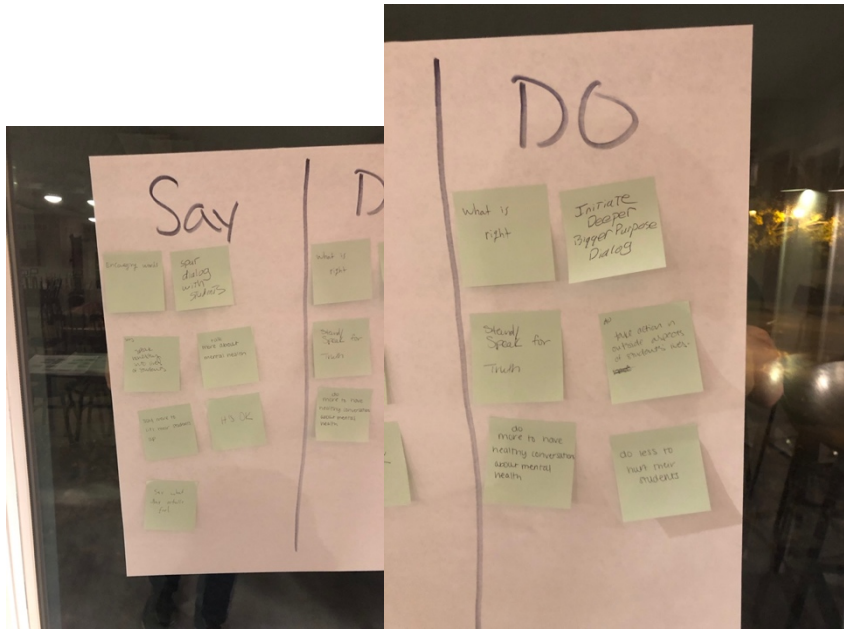
### *Coffee Shop Owner*

- Initial thoughts about the topic
  - Fascinated that the administration/teachers were the highest audience
  - Surprised that coaches had that high of a number
  - You can go so many different directions
    - Friends stab each other in the back... friends were not even marked high on there
  - If solved, transformative community
    - Are we trying to create transformative communities?
    - Or are we trying to create safe spaces to process their internal world?
  - Transformative community is super broad
  - In order to create safe spaces is it to process the internal world or transformative community.
  - Not sure about the Root Cause we came up with in the Discovery Session?
    - Not in touch with their internal world – which is because they don't have a space to get in touch with it.
    - Fear of authenticity
      - Not necessarily the root cause...
    - The lack of healthy authentic relationships is cause by the lack of processing their internal world... why?
      - There is no safe space within the home, church, jobs, authentic relationships... because they haven't found that safe space.
    - The fear of internal processing
      - Going deeper than just the types of fears – this is super broad.
    - They just don't have a safe space to do that
  - Different answers with different audiences.
  - IF SOLVED...
    - Transformative to safe
    - Authentic community
    - Grace filled community
    - Outward focused rather than an inward focus.
- Any others directions I should think about or go through
  - Huge connection between safe spaces and processing our internal world.
    - Is there a connection between the two?
  - We have lack of the space than what is created instead...
    - Is that we are so busy?
    - Is that why we don't have authentic communities?
  - What does a safe space look like?
    - How do I connect all of that – connecting our internal world with spaces.
      - Walking on the beach with someone?
      - Being alone?
      - Other spaces?
  - Space, internal world, and how do you create it?
    - How do you create a space where you are processing your internal world?









## APPENDIX B—MILESTONE 2 NPO TOPIC EXPERTISE ESSAY

### ***INTRODUCTION***

As humans, our emotions are a difficult space for us to understand let alone talk about with others. Robert Harper describes the complexity of emotions when he says, “Human emotion is a complicated subject and can involve numerous aspects that interact and influence human behavior.”<sup>1</sup> While every generation deals with this difficulty of understanding their emotions, Generation Z seems to be facing this difficulty in ways other generations have never experienced.<sup>2</sup> Rozalowsky notes that it is a lie to assume that people understand the complexities of the emotional life, and therefore, it is necessary to examine the inner life more fully.<sup>3</sup> Instead of striving to figure out our emotions on our own, “We need help to navigate our emotions, past hurts and relationships.”<sup>4</sup> Generation Z needs help in order to understand the importance of dialoguing about their emotional health.

### ***SECTION 1: BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS***

Young people in the world today are struggling to find spaces in their everyday lives to dialogue about their emotional health, even though this is an essential human need. One place that should be a safe space for Generation Z is the church; yet, that no longer seems to be the

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<sup>1</sup> Harper, Robert T. *Health and Wellness: Honoring God in Body, Mind, and Spirit*, (Marion, Ind.: Triangle Pub., 2004), 123.

<sup>2</sup> White, James Emery. *Meet Generation Z: Understanding and Reaching the New Post-Christian World*, Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Books, 2017. Generation Z is born from approximately 1995 to 2010.

<sup>3</sup> Rozalowsky, Suzanne. “The Importance of Emotional and Spiritual Health,” *Power to Change - Students* (blog), December 20, 2017, accessed March 17, 2020, <https://p2c.com/students/articles/the-importance-of-emotional-and-spiritual-health/>.

<sup>4</sup> Rozalowsky, 2017.

case. Duncan says, “The sad irony is that our culture has to have so many safe spaces right now because the Church has largely ceased to be one.”<sup>5</sup> Even though the church may not currently be a safe space, the youth of today are desiring for safe spaces to dialogue about their emotional health and the church has an opportunity to capitalize on this desire.

### Textual Discussion

There are a few different passages of scripture that emphasize the importance of emotional health as well as the need and method for creating safe spaces. This section will dialogue about this importance of emotional health through looking at the example of Esther as well as Matthew 11:28-30 (ESV). In the final two passages the importance of having a safe space and creating safe spaces will be discussed.

**Esther 4:9-17.** When thinking about emotional health in scripture, a great example of someone who was emotionally healthy and also had a safe space to process is Esther. She has a series of events happen in her life that eventually culminate in her being asked to go before the king to help save her people. Esther finds a safe place in her Uncle Mordecai to process the situation she is in as the Queen. This decision she must make is difficult because she faces the potential of dying by going before the king. Jobes says, “She would be identifying herself as a target of destruction under Haman's decree and an easy mark in the treacherous Persian court.”<sup>6</sup> Esther knows the potential of her actions which is seen in verse 16 when she says, “If I perish, I perish.” But there is also some sense of hope from her as she is learning to trust in what she believes God

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<sup>5</sup> Duncan, Ryan. “What the Church Gets Wrong About Safe Spaces,” *RELEVANT Magazine*, December 7, 2016, accessed January 24, 2020, <https://relevantmagazine.com/life5/what-church-gets-wrong-about-safe-spaces/>.

<sup>6</sup> Jobes, Karen H. *Esther: From Biblical Text- To Contemporary Life*, NIV Application Commentary, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 1999), 137.

is calling her to do.<sup>7</sup> She recognizes that she must take action and is called upon by her uncle to do so.<sup>8</sup>

According to Levenson, “In Esth. 4:13-14, Mordecai seeks to call his cousin back to her Jewish roots. She must not allow her queenship to go to her head.”<sup>9</sup> Mordecai creates a space for Esther to come back to her true roots and see hope in the right decision. This growth and change in Esther is seen all throughout the book.<sup>10</sup> For Esther to go before the king, reveal who she was, and also plea for her people took considerable emotional strength and stability.

That capacity of emotional strength and stability is seldom found in individuals who do not have a safe space to process their emotional health. She was given the opportunity to trust in God and followed Him in the midst of difficulty. Esther found her true sense of self and maintained her emotional stability by walking through the decision with her uncle and recognizing the weight of doing what was right.<sup>11</sup> From this story, Generation Z can learn what it means to have emotional stability as well as a safe person to help them process difficult situations.

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<sup>7</sup> Fox, Michael V. *Character and Ideology in the Book of Esther*, Studies on Personalities of the Old Testament, Columbia, S.C.: University of South Carolina Press, 1991.

<sup>8</sup> Jobes, 138.

<sup>9</sup> Levenson, Jon Douglas. *Esther: A Commentary*, 1st ed. Old Testament Library, (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 1997), 80.

<sup>10</sup> Levenson says, “Esther has moved from being the adopted daughter of an exile, to the winner of a beauty contest, to the queen of Persia and Media, to the pivotal figure in the crisis hanging over the Jews, able to issue effective commands to her foster father. Levenson, Jon Douglas. *Esther: A Commentary*, 1st ed. Old Testament Library, (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 1997), 82.

<sup>11</sup> Jobes, Karen H. *Esther: From Biblical Text- To Contemporary Life*, NIV Application Commentary, Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 1999. Jobes again says, “The decision she now faces will irrevocably define her future and determine the destiny of her people as well.”

**Matthew 11:28-30.** Another example of the importance of emotional health in scripture is found in Matthew 11:28-30 (ESV). In the time this passage was written, many people were struggling with religion and finding any source of hope in their faith.<sup>12</sup> This same struggle is seen today. People often struggle to find any sort of peace and hope in this world because there is chaos so much of the time. In the book of Matthew, Jesus offers hope for the weary in both the past and present.

He extends to us a new type of hope when he uses the word “come.” Green states, “What grace, that God should come to seek his rebel subjects with no word of condemnation on his lips, but an invitation, ‘Come’! That one word shows us the very heart of God. That is his attitude to sinners.”<sup>13</sup> Jesus reminds Generation Z that he wants to be with them and in relationship with them. This relationship offers something new, which is seen through this passage. Relationship with Jesus “does not bring weariness or heavy burdens but rest. It is service, however, not freedom from any obligations.”<sup>14</sup> Jesus recognizes that this world is going to be difficult and wearisome at times but offers Generation Z the space to come to him to find rest rather than going to the world for all of their troubles.

**John 4:1-28.** In John 4 (ESV), we see Jesus interacting with a Samaritan woman who was an outcast of her community. In this day, Jews and Samaritans did not interact, let alone with a woman. According to Fredrikson and Ogilvie, “[Jesus] could not avoid these people in spite of

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<sup>12</sup> Green, Michael. *The Message of Matthew: The Kingdom of Heaven*, Bible Speaks Today, Downers Grove, Illinois: Inter-Varsity Press, 2000.

<sup>13</sup> Green, 101.

<sup>14</sup> Glasscock, Ed. *Matthew*, Moody Gospel Commentary, (Moody Press, 1997), 256.

the long history of resentment and antagonism between Jews and Samaritans.”<sup>15</sup> Jesus believed differently about the Samaritan people and wanted to not only share truth with them but create a space where they could live freely. Milne says, “Through the entire conversation Jesus deals with her as a person in her own right, with her unique history and special longings.”<sup>16</sup> The woman most likely never felt pressure or any sense of judgment from Jesus. Rather, “at a deeper level, there had been the loving concern of one reaching out to touch that other solitary, needy person.”<sup>17</sup> A space was created where she was able to be honest with herself and the living God.<sup>18</sup> Through this experience, Jesus offered her a new way of living and thinking.<sup>19</sup> This may not have been possible if a safe space had not been created for her.<sup>20</sup>

**1 Peter 4:8-11.** In 1 Peter 4:8-11 (ESV), it talks about the importance of loving one another as well as showing hospitality. In verse 8, Peter talks about loving one another “deeply.” When he uses this word, Clowney states, “The word translated deeply can also mean ‘constant.’”<sup>21</sup> Often,

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<sup>15</sup> Fredrikson, Roger L., and Ogilvie, Lloyd John. *John*, Communicator's Commentary Series, (Waco, Texas: Word Books, 1985), 94.

<sup>16</sup> Milne, Bruce. *The Message of John: Here Is Your King!*, Bible Speaks Today, (Downers Grove, Illinois: IVP Academic, 1993), 35.

<sup>17</sup> Fredrikson and Ogilvie, 96.

<sup>18</sup> The woman at the well was someone who was ostracized in her community and no one would interact with her. She would completely avoid going to the well when others were there for fear of interacting with others. Yet this time she experienced something different.

<sup>19</sup> Milne, 35.

<sup>20</sup> Fredrikson, Roger L., and Ogilvie, Lloyd John. *John*, Communicator's Commentary Series, (Waco, Texas: Word Books, 1985), 102. It is interesting to see how the disciples reacted when they saw Jesus talking with a Samaritan woman. She immediately got up from that place and went into the city. According to Fredrikson and Ogilvie, “The disciples showed unusual reticence by not voicing any of their questions.” In that moment, how was the woman feeling and did she not feel the space was a safe space for her to stay any longer? This is only speculation and extra thoughts.

<sup>21</sup> Clowney, Edmund P., Motyer, J. A., Stott, John, and Tidball, Derek. *The Message of 1 Peter: The Way of the Cross*, Bible Speaks Today, (Downers Grove, Illinois: IVP Academic, 1988), 61.

many people do not love constantly. It seems that times are chosen when to love and when not to love. If people learn to extend this constant love in the church, people may begin to feel safe enough to share their emotions and feelings with one another. Part of this sharing is done through hospitality. Hospitality was a huge part of the early church and often times they met in homes with one another.<sup>22</sup> According to Anders and Walls, “Hospitality among Christians is an important and tangible expression of love.”<sup>23</sup> In spaces where people gather with one another, love and hospitality are ways to show others that the space they are gathering in is a safe space to come. This gift of love and hospitality to others is one that is timeless and can create a place where emotional health can be discussed.<sup>24</sup>

### Synthesis

After looking through scripture to see the importance of emotional health and safe spaces, there are a few themes that arise. The first theme is that emotional health is not an easy topic or easily handled. When looking at both Esther and the verses in Matthew, one can see that life can throw people a lot of difficult situations. However, even with all the difficulty, there is a chance to be emotionally stable like Esther and bring burdens to Jesus like in Matthew.<sup>25</sup> Further research must be done to understand ways in which Generation Z can handle their emotional health even through difficult times.

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<sup>22</sup> Clowney, Motyer, Stott, and Tidball, 62.

<sup>23</sup> Anders, Max., and Walls, David. *Holman New Testament Commentary - 1 & 2 Peter, 1 2 & 3 John and Jude*, (Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 1999), pg. 79.

<sup>24</sup> Waltner, Erland, and Charles, J. Daryl. *1-2 Peter, Jude*, Believers Church Bible Commentary, (Scottsdale, Pennsylvania.: Herald Press, 1999), 136.

<sup>25</sup> The church has an opportunity to help Generation Z see that at times life may be difficult but there are ways in which we can handle our emotional health.



The second theme is that creating space for others is done from a place of love. Jesus loved the woman at the well in a way many probably had never loved her before. And in 1 Peter, love is deep and constant. The church has an opportunity to learn how to help Generation Z dig deep with one another and also to create spaces that allow Generation Z to freely share all they are thinking and feeling.<sup>26</sup> Further research can be done to understand what Generation Z believes to be safe spaces and also how people feel and express their love.

The final theme from the passages is the importance of community. In each of these passages, people are dialoguing with one another. The church can encourage Generation Z to recognize the importance of community in their lives for them to dialogue about their emotional health. Additional research can be done in order to understand what community looks like in Generation Z's culture today.

Generation Z is in a unique time where they often do not feel they have safe spaces in which they can talk about their emotional health. At the same times this dialogue is important and necessary if Generation Z is going to live healthy lives.

## ***SECTION 2: TOPIC HISTORY AND KEY VOICES***

Many experts say that it is getting harder to define generations—the generational gaps are becoming smaller.<sup>27</sup> According to White, “There’s still some debate on exact dates, but essentially it involves those who were born after Generation Y, so approximately 1995 to around

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<sup>26</sup> The church can show hospitality to Generation Z by bringing in the strangers and outcasts in their communities and creating a space for them. Not many are doing this inviting and the church has an opportunity to capitalize for the sake of Generation Z.

<sup>27</sup> Jenkins, Ryan. “This Is Causing Generation Z to Be the Most Distinct Generation Ever,” Inc.com, May 14, 2019, accessed March 30, 2020, <https://www.inc.com/ryan-jenkins/this-is-causing-generation-z-to-be-most-distinct-generation-ever.html>.

2010. It is the generation that is now collectively under the age of twenty-five.”<sup>28</sup> Experts are trying to understand Generation Z—who they are and what they will offer to the world. Williams says, “With the oldest members of this cohort barely out of high school, these tweens and teens of today are primed to become the dominant youth influencers of tomorrow.”<sup>29</sup> The world is now all wondering what this new generation will entail, specifically revolving around emotional health and the different cultural shifts this generation has endured.

### History of Emotional Health

Emotional health is an idea that has obviously been around for a long time but was not truly named until the early 1900s by a man named Clifford Whittingham Beers. Beers describes his struggle with his own mental health as mental hygiene and began to advocate change to happen around the stigma as well as care for those who struggle with mental health.<sup>30</sup> As seen with Beers, terms for our mental state have changed throughout history. Often, mental health and emotional health are viewed interchangeably but rather they should be viewed as a tag team. Herron states, “A good way to think about mental and emotional health is like a tag team. Mental health refers to your ability to process information. Emotional health, on the other hand, refers to your ability to express feelings which are based upon the information you have processed.”<sup>31</sup> For the sake of ease, this section will refer to emotional and mental health interchangeably.

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<sup>28</sup> White, James Emery. *Meet Generation Z: Understanding and Reaching the New Post-Christian World*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Books, 2017), 29.

<sup>29</sup> Williams, Alex. "Move Over, Millennials: Here Comes Generation Z," *New York Times*, 1923-Current File, (New York, N.Y.), 2015.

<sup>30</sup> Tolan, Patrick, and Karen Taylor-Crawford. "Clifford Whittingham Beers | American Author," *Encyclopedia Britannica*, March 26, 2020, accessed April 3, 2020, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Clifford-Whittingham-Beers>.

<sup>31</sup> Herron, Andrea. "The Emotional and Mental Aspects of Well-Being," *WebMD Health Services*, July 12, 2017, accessed April 4, 2020, <https://www.webmdhealthservices.com/2017/07/12/the-emotional-and-mental->

Tolan and Taylor-Crawford say about Beers' autobiography that it "provided a balanced, substantive view into mental illness and drew attention to the often horrific conditions of mental institutions."<sup>32</sup> Beers was truly an advocate for change around the stigma of emotional health. However, the stigma of emotional health has remained and now experts are seeing the rise in emotional health concerns among Generation Z.<sup>33</sup> According to the Pew Research Center, anxiety and depression are on the rise amongst the youth in America.<sup>34</sup> With all of the different stresses and changes in life, Generation Z seems to be swallowed up with the struggle of emotional health. As a church, in order to help Generation Z, it is important to begin to understand some of what may be causing this spike in emotional health concerns as well as what can be done to change the trajectory of the upward trend. There are two areas worth discussing in further detail revolving around the history and impact of emotional health. Those two areas are how the growth in technology throughout their lifetime has affected Generation Z's emotional health as well as how the church has handled emotional health throughout history, specifically with Generation Z.

**Technology and Its Effects on Generation Z's Emotional Health.** One of the biggest factors that has affected Generation Z's emotional health is technology. Generation Z, more than any prior generation, is drastically affected by technology because it is all they have known. Seymore

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aspects-of-well-being/.

<sup>32</sup> Tolan and Taylor-Crawford.

<sup>33</sup> Horowitz, Juliana Menasce, and Nikki Graf. "Most U.S. Teens See Anxiety, Depression as Major Problems." *Pew Research Center's Social & Demographic Trends Project*, February 20, 2019, April 4, 2020, <https://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2019/02/20/most-u-s-teens-see-anxiety-and-depression-as-a-major-problem-among-their-peers/>.

<sup>34</sup> Horowitz, Juliana M., and Nikki Graf.

says, “Unlike older generations, who either grew up without or came into adulthood during the rise of social media, smartphones and unfettered accessibility of information, Gen Z was born into new technology and has been defined by it more than any.”<sup>35</sup> Generation Z cannot live without it; rather, it is part of who they are as a generation.

According to Rapacon, “Clearly, they see technology not just as devices and tools, but as essential to living their lives.”<sup>36</sup> Technology has now become a way of life. They are able to connect across the world to someone in a matter of seconds. If something happens on the other side of the world, Generation Z is able to know within minutes.<sup>37</sup> Their way of communication has also changed because of technology. Generation Z is almost always able to be connected to those with whom they are not with and also can connect to those around the world. Jenkins says about this connectedness, “Connectivity has reframed for Generation Z how effortless it is to communicate and collaborate across the globe. Generation Z will be a boundary-less generation.”<sup>38</sup> Generation Z seems to have a whole new way of navigating life compared to other generations.

This new way of life for Generation Z is causing effects in their emotional health. According to Low, “Technology and social media provides a feeling of connectedness, even when you’re not really connected. This generation sees issues where parents don’t feel like they

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<sup>35</sup> Seymour, Emily. “Gen Z About to Change the Face of the US,” August 25, 2019, accessed March 30, 2020, <https://www.voanews.com/student-union/gen-z-about-change-face-us>.

<sup>36</sup> Rapacon, Stacy. “Gen Z’s Tech-Driven Take on Adulting,” July 11, 2019, accessed March 30, 2020, <https://garage.ext.hp.com/us/en/modern-life/generation-z-redefining-the-world.html>.

<sup>37</sup> Jenkins, “This Is Causing Generation Z to Be the Most Distinct Generation Ever,” 2019.

<sup>38</sup> Jenkins, Ryan. “4 Reasons Generation Z Will Be the Most Different Generation,” Inc.com, January 11, 2017, accessed March 30, 2020, <https://www.inc.com/ryan-jenkins/who-is-generation-z-4-big-ways-they-will-be-different.html>.

spend time with their kids because they are glued to their phones, and groups of friends don't actually do anything together but look at social media."<sup>39</sup> Generation Z feels they are connected with one another and those around them yet inside they feel deeply alone. Jayson states, "But now experts are finding that the always connected social media mavens in the country's younger generations report being lonely."<sup>40</sup> Technology is always at the fingertips of Generation Z, yet they are among the loneliest in the world. This reality is striking as one thinks about technology and emotional health. With dramatic changes in technology continuing, Generation Z is going to continue to be challenged with the emotional health unless they begin to dialogue about what they are thinking and feeling with those in which they feel safe to do so. One space where Generation Z will hopefully begin to feel safe in talking about their emotional health is the church.

**Church, Generation Z, and Emotional Health.** Throughout history, the church has not been a place where emotional health has been discussed often. The church has seemed to be a place where the stigma of emotional health problems has been high. According to Stetzer, "In many ways, the church, the supposed haven for sufferers, is not a safe place for those who struggle with mental illness."<sup>41</sup> Christians seem to believe the opposite of what Stetzer is saying. Many believe that emotional health should not be a problem in the church but when one thinks about

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<sup>39</sup> Low, Maddy. "Stress, Mental Health, and Generation Z." Western Governors University, June 6, 2019, accessed March 30, 2020, <https://www.wgu.edu/blog/stress-mental-health-generation-z1906.html>.

<sup>40</sup> Jayson, Sharon. "Social Media Doesn't Stop Generation Z, Millennials from Feeling Lonely, Survey Finds," NBC News, March 8, 2019, accessed April 4, 2020, <https://www.nbcnews.com/health/health-news/despite-social-media-generation-z-millennials-report-feeling-lonely-n980926>.

<sup>41</sup> Stetzer, Ed. "The Christian Struggle with Mental Illness," The Exchange | A Blog by Ed Stetzer, May 23, 2016, accessed March 31, 2020, <https://www.christianitytoday.com/edstetzer/2016/may/christian-struggle-with-mental-illness.html>.

life more deeply, “just as we are not immune to physical health problems, people of faith are not immune to mental and emotional suffering.”<sup>42</sup> Everyone is going to struggle or deal with some sort of emotional unhealthiness throughout their lifetime. Humanity is broken, so the church is a place where this brokenness should be accepted, not rejected.

### Cultural Shifts for Generation Z

Although there are many significant cultural shifts throughout Generation Z’s lifetime, there are two specific shifts worth mentioning. One was early on in Generation Z’s lifetime but still has had significant impact on the ways in which Generation Z lives and views the world. The second is a little later on but also has substantial influence on Generation Z’s view of life.

**September 11, 2001.** September 11, 2001 was a massive event worldwide. The implications of this event are still felt today, whether or not people know or realize it. The oldest of Generation Z would have been about 5 or 6 years old at the time of this event. When talking about 9/11, Steed says, “Most members of Gen Z either don’t remember the event or hadn’t been born yet.”<sup>43</sup> This, however, does not mean that the event itself did not have an impact on this generation. More than many other generations before them, they grew up with the impact of 9/11 on their society.<sup>44</sup> They have never known anything but a post-9/11 era. According to McEvoy, Kulesh, and Cooper, “Starting with 9/11 in 2001, Generation Z (born approximately from 1995-2012) has been exposed to media coverage of mass shootings and terrorist attacks more than any other

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<sup>42</sup> Crouch, Daryl. “Four Guidelines for Mental Health Issues and the Church,” ERLC, February 16, 2018, accessed March 31, 2020, <https://erlc.com/resource-library/articles/four-guidelines-for-mental-health-issues-and-the-church>.

<sup>43</sup> Steed, Daryn. “The Global Events That Separate Millennials from Generation Z | Signpost,” January 8, 2020, accessed March 30, 2020, <http://signpost.mywebermedia.com/2020/01/08/the-global-events-that-separate-millennials-from-generation-z/>.

<sup>44</sup> Steed, Daryn.

generation in the past.”<sup>45</sup> This type of coverage has caused much strife amongst Generation Z. Many would say that terrorism is a large fear in their eyes, partially because of 9/11 and the many terrorist attacks.<sup>46</sup> Further, White says, “Even when news broke of the widespread terrorist attacks in Paris in November 2015, the younger people I engaged were shocked but not surprised. There’s a difference. And the difference is that attacks like these are not simply reality but what life has always been like.”<sup>47</sup> Terrorists attacks have become the norm for this generation, and it began with the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks.

**The 2008 Recession.** The second biggest cultural shift that has shaped Generation Z is the Great Recession that happened in 2008. Generation Z saw their parents having to go through financial situations like never before. Many people were struggling to survive financially, including people losing their homes.<sup>48</sup> This recession was the “backdrop of their early lives”<sup>49</sup> and because of it there has been significant impact. According to Du and Milligan, “Surveys show that unlike millennials, many members of Generation Z are cautious about excessive consumption.”<sup>50</sup> Frugality is something experts are seeing that is very different from previous generations.

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<sup>45</sup> McEvoy, Ben, Alina Kulesh, and Rich Cooper. “Generation ‘Fear’: How Bad News Has Created an Anxious Generation,” Accessed March 30, 2020, <https://www.cbc.ca/documentarychannel/features/generation-fear-how-bad-news-has-created-an-anxious-generation>

<sup>46</sup> Barenberg, Otto, and Sofia Corzo. “Generation Z Is Not Afraid | Harvard Political Review,” April 22, 2019, accessed April 5, 2020, <http://harvardpolitics.com/united-states/hpop-gen-z/>.

<sup>47</sup> White, James, 31.

<sup>48</sup> Stout, Noelle. “How the Foreclosure Crisis Shaped Gen Z,” Pacific Standard, April 2, 2019, accessed March 30, 2020, <https://psmag.com/ideas/how-the-foreclosure-crisis-shaped-gen-z>.

<sup>49</sup> Stout, Noelle.

<sup>50</sup> Du, Lisa, and Ellen Milligan. “In Regions Hit by Recession, Gen Z Is Turning Out to Be Frugal,” *Bloomberg.Com*, April 25, 2019, accessed March 30, 2020, <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2019-04-25/in-regions-hit-by-recession-gen-z-is-turning-out-to-be-frugal>.

Experts have not seen all of the trends, as Generation Z is just coming of age, but they are seeing how Generation Z does spend their money much differently than the millennial generation before them.<sup>51</sup>

### Key Voices

While researching, there are so many different voices that come about, but it is important to understand who key voices are when thinking about the topic of emotional health in Generation Z and how to create a safe space for them to dialogue about it. There are three key voices that are going to be discussed, each bringing different and unique aspects to the topic at hand.

**Peter Scazzero.** Peter Scazzero is one of the leading theologians for the church today on the topic of emotional health. Scazzero believes, “Very, very few people emerge out of their families of origin emotionally whole or mature.”<sup>52</sup> Many people are emotionally hurt from their family of origin yet have no idea the impacts this has on the rest of their lives. Many just continue to live life as they know it; yet, Scazzero imagines that these people are emotionally stunted.<sup>53</sup>

Throughout his book *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality*, Scazzero challenges the reader to think

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<sup>51</sup> Swain-Wilson, Savanna. “10 Ways Gen Zs Spend Money Differently than Their Gen X Parents,” *Insider*, November 28, 2018, accessed April 5, 2020, <https://www.insider.com/gen-z-vs-gen-x-spending-habits-2018-11>.

<sup>52</sup> Scazzero, Peter. *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality: Discipleship That Deeply Changes Your Relationship With God*. Updated edition. (Grand Rapid, Michigan: Zondervan, 2017), 12. He was a pastor of a growing church and seemed to have a great family life; he seemingly had his life all put together. But on the inside, something seemed to not be right. His lack of emotional health almost cost him his ministry, family, and marriage. Many of other pastors did not know how to handle Scazzero because he was asking deep and hard questions. He did not have the prior theology for what he was experiencing. Scazzero realized in his own life for the first seventeen years in his Christian faith, he never discussed his emotional world with anyone. There was no growth or development happening in this area because it was not being talked about.

<sup>53</sup> Scazzero, *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality*, 16.



“below the surface” and understand themselves at a deeper level.<sup>54</sup> Scazzero says, “In our more honest moments, most of us will admit that, much like an iceberg, we are made up of deep layers that exist well beneath our day-to-day awareness.”<sup>55</sup> These deep layers are important to understand to help people relate better to the world around them.

However, many people never truly touch these deep layers of themselves; rather they continue to live on the surface. Scazzero describes this when he says, “The vast majority of us go to our graves without knowing who we are. We unconsciously live someone else’s life, or at least someone else’s expectations for us. This does violence to ourselves, our relationship with God, and ultimately others.”<sup>56</sup> Further, Scazzero describes how we never truly know those deep layers within us. Many live with a shadow self.<sup>57</sup> Many times our motives are hidden which can cause a lack of understanding of our emotional health which can cause some serious damage either to ourselves and/or others.

One space where emotional health should be discussed is the church. However, the church, like Scazzero mentions, does not discuss emotional health very often at all; yet, emotional health is something deeply important to growth, especially spiritual growth.<sup>58</sup> According to Scazzero, “...emotional health and spiritual maturity are inseparable. It is not

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<sup>54</sup> Scazzero, *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality*, 17.

<sup>55</sup> Scazzero, *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality*, 17

<sup>56</sup> Scazzero, *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality*, 40.

<sup>57</sup> “Your shadow is the accumulation of untamed emotions, less-than-pure motives and thoughts that, while largely unconscious, strongly influence and shape your behaviors. It is the damaged but mostly hidden version of who you are.” Scazzero, Peter. *The Emotionally Healthy Leader: How Transforming Your Inner Life Will Deeply Transform Your Church, Team, and the World*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 2015), 55.

<sup>58</sup> Scazzero, *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality*, 15.

possible to be spiritually mature while remaining emotionally immature.”<sup>59</sup> In order to grow spiritually, understanding one’s emotional health will be vital. However, this understanding of emotional health is not easy. Many often want easy answers or their problems solved.<sup>60</sup>

Scazzero understood that as a person who was leading and guiding a church that he, himself would have to deal with his own emotional immaturity before asking others to look to do the same. He slowly began to ask his leadership to start looking below the surface with them.<sup>61</sup> Throughout his books *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality* and *The Emotionally Healthy Leader*, Scazzero takes the readers on a journey within in order for them to understand their emotional health on a deeper level. Some of the key aspects that are important for emotional health are knowing yourself, excepting grief and loss, looking at our past, and discovering rhythms in one’s life.<sup>62</sup>

Scazzero also writes about that state of emotional health within the church body.<sup>63</sup> Many good people are unaware of their own emotional state. Much of the Christian faith focuses on the spiritual aspects of life but forgets to dialogue about other areas of life, including emotional health.<sup>64</sup> In his book *The Emotionally Healthy Church*, Scazzero presents a different model that

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<sup>59</sup> Scazzero, *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality*, 19.

<sup>60</sup> Scazzero, “The Road to Emotional Health.” When describing a situation with his wife, Scazzero described how he wanted a quick fix to her problems. Scazzero quickly realized that there is much more to dealing with emotional health than a quick fix.

<sup>61</sup> Scazzero, *The Emotionally Healthy Leader*, 17.

<sup>62</sup> Scazzero, *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality*.

<sup>63</sup> “We have many people who are passionate for God and his work, yet who are unconnected to their own emotions or those around them.” Scazzero, Peter. *The Emotionally Healthy Church: A Strategy for Discipleship that Actually Changes Lives*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 2003), 37.

<sup>64</sup> Scazzero, *The Emotionally Healthy Church*, 49.

focuses on emotional health. Like previously mentioned, Scazzero believe emotional and spiritual health are inseparable.<sup>65</sup> The churches challenge today is to learn how to incorporate emotional health into the way in which they disciple those they are leading.

While Scazzero does not specifically write about Generation Z, his writings on emotional health are informing the way many are thinking about church, leadership, and more. Generation Z has an opportunity to learn from Scazzero and how his emotional immaturity and later growth affected his life. With all of the different turmoil Generation Z has experienced in their lifetime, they need spaces and people with whom they can go beneath the surface and dialogue about what is going on internally. If Generation Z is able to go beneath the surface and begin to understand their emotional health, they will be far better off than many prior generations. However, if they continue to deny themselves the ability to feel they are going to struggle to thrive.

**James Emery White.** James Emery White is an author and pastor in North Carolina. White has done some leading work on Generation Z. His book *Meet Generation Z* has been a helpful tool for people to understand Generation Z and how they are relating to the church. Much of his research has to do with the fact that Christianity is changing around the world and this is going to affect Generation Z. White writes, “The most defining characteristic of Generation Z is that it is arguably the first generation in the West (certainly in the United States) that will have been raised in a post-Christian context. As a result, it is the first post-Christian generation.”<sup>66</sup> Because of this the way the church interacts with Generation Z will be much different than any generation before. White describes Generation Z by saying, “They are lost. They are not simply living in

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<sup>65</sup> Scazzero, *The Emotionally Healthy Church*, 49.

<sup>66</sup> White, 36.

and being shaped by a post-Christian cultural context. They do not even have a memory of the gospel. The degree of spiritual illiteracy is simply stunning.” The world they are growing up in is drastically different than many other previous generations. Generation Z is even being raised differently than many others before them. White describes how parents of millennials were like helicopter parents and this tactic was deeply looked down upon. So many parents of Generation Z seem to have shifted to the opposite extreme and allowed their children much more freedom. This has caused Generation Z to feel both lost and leaderless.<sup>67</sup>

Because of all of this, Generation Z has much to learn and grow, as all do, but they seem to be a generation struggling to identify who they are. White also agrees with many experts that many in Generation Z struggle with their emotional health. He says, “Gen Z feel anxious. Always connected, their unfiltered view of the world fuels anxiety. Mindful of digital overload, they desire immersive, real-life moments that capture their full attention and alleviate their stress.”<sup>68</sup> They believe they are deeply connected yet often feel distant from others. This idea is something that is deeply profound.

James Emery White also has challenged the church to think deeply about how they are going to respond to the lostness that the world is seeing in Generation Z. He believes the church can be a space where Generation Z can come and be loved and served by those who have gone before them.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> White, 39, 41.

<sup>68</sup> White, James Emery. “Update on Generation Z,” Church & Culture, March 12, 2020, accessed April 5, 2020, <https://www.churchandculture.org/blog/2020/3/12/update-on-generation-z>.

<sup>69</sup> White, “Update on Generation Z.”

**Barna Group.** The Barna Group is a research organization located in California that is doing leading research on many different areas. One of those areas is generations.<sup>70</sup> The Barna Group is seeing a trend among the younger generations that is going to shape the understanding of how the church is going to engage with Generation Z. According to the Barna Group, “Most Americans say they are Christians, but few follow that up with deep, heart-level, life-directing commitments.”<sup>71</sup> Generation Z is growing up in a world that seems to not be committed to going to church and faith in Christ may begin to look different. Those in Generation Z who do attend church are looking for more of their peers to join them.<sup>72</sup> Many young people are not finding their communities at church rather they are finding it elsewhere. The Barna Group says, “Maybe young Christians don’t see community as a primary motivator to be at church because their community doesn’t exist there to begin with.”<sup>73</sup> The church has an opportunity to create spaces for Generation Z to gather together and potentially dialogue about their emotional health.

The Barna Group also speaks to the emotional health problems plaguing Generation Z. One of their recent projects the Barna Group partnered with World Vision to produce a study called *The Connected Generation* about Generation Z and the Millennial Generation.<sup>74</sup> Two of the findings included the fact that many feel lonely and anxious. With regards to loneliness, the

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<sup>70</sup> Barna Group. “About,” Accessed April 5, 2020, <https://www.barna.com/about/>.

<sup>71</sup> Barna Group. “What Do Young Adults Really Mean When They Say They Are Christians?” Barna Group, Accessed April 14, 2020, <https://www.barna.com/research/resilient-discipleship/>.

<sup>72</sup> Barna Group. “What Young Adults Say Is Missing from Church,” Barna Group, Accessed April 14, 2020, <https://www.barna.com/research/missing-church/>.

<sup>73</sup> Barna Group. “What Young Adults Say Is Missing from Church.”

<sup>74</sup> The Connected Generation. “The Connected Generation – A Barna Project in Partnership with World Vision,” Accessed April 14, 2020, <https://theconnectedgeneration.com/>.

study revealed that “while young adults feel very in tune with events around the world, they also feel disconnected from the people closest to them.”<sup>75</sup> This feeling of loneliness can lead to a lot of emotional instability. Anxiety is another area in which Generation Z seems to struggle causing emotional health problems. Much of their anxiety revolves around “the future, a fear of failure, and a pressure to be successful.”<sup>76</sup> The Barna Group believes the church has an opportunity to speak truth into these anxieties rather than continue to push them under the rug.<sup>77</sup>

### ***SECTION 3: SYNTHESIS AND CONCLUSION***

Generation Z is in a trying time with regard to their emotional health. This topic is something that has never been easy to talk about and now the world is seeing this trend continue among Generation Z. However, emotional health is important to understand for better overall health, which can be seen throughout Scazzero’s work as well as throughout scripture.<sup>78</sup> Esther is a great example in scripture of someone who went through difficult circumstances yet was able to confide in her Uncle Mordecai as well as stay emotionally healthy when going before the king. The church has an opportunity to present stories like Esther and others to Generation Z, not out of condemnation but rather as an example of how to trust others and the Lord in the midst of difficulty.

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<sup>75</sup> The Connected Generation. “Key Findings from The Connected Generation,” Accessed April 14, 2020, <https://theconnectedgeneration.com/key-findings/>.

<sup>76</sup> The Connected Generation. “Key Findings from The Connected Generation.”

<sup>77</sup> Youngblood, Alyce. “Barna Takes: Peace for an Anxiety-Ridden Generation,” Barna Group, October 14, 2019, <https://www.barna.com/anxiety/>.

<sup>78</sup> Scazzero links emotional health and spiritual health brilliantly throughout his writings. Emotional health is an area that the church lacks in development and Scazzero points this out as he writes. Further, the Barna Group is doing leading research on Generation Z and seeing the lack of emotional health among this generation.

## The Church and Generation Z

As time continues, the church has an opportunity to become a safe space for Generation Z to discuss their emotional health. Pastors and churches can invite Generation Z to bring all their brokenness to the table, including their emotional health.<sup>79</sup> Jesus invited all types of people to the table. One example was the Samaritan woman at the well. Jesus invited this woman to share parts of her heart and story in a way that no one else had before. This woman was the outcast in the community, yet Jesus invited her in and spoke truth to her. Through his example, the church can learn to do the same. Church leaders can invite even the most hurt and broken to the table as Jesus did in order to dialogue about their emotional health.

Emotional health is something that for a long period has had a negative stigma, but the church has an opportunity to dispel these lies and protect against destruction of overall health.<sup>80</sup> Akande states, “We need others to help carry the load.”<sup>81</sup> Generation Z has a heavy load with their emotional health and the church has an opportunity to provide a space to help carry the load. This carrying of each other’s load and offering space to Generation Z exemplifies the love that is described in 1 Peter 4:8-11 (ESV). Further, the church can help Generation Z see the importance of Jesus carrying burdens in Matthew 11 (ESV). Generation Z needs to be reminded that Jesus’ burden is light and he will help carry them.

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<sup>79</sup> Crouch.

<sup>80</sup> Tolan, Patrick, and Karen Taylor-Crawford. “Clifford Whittingham Beers | American Author,” Encyclopedia Britannica, March 26, 2020, accessed April 3, 2020, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Clifford-Whittingham-Beers>.

<sup>81</sup> Akande, Carmille L. “How the Church Can Support Emotional Health,” WomenLeaders.com | Women Called to Ministry, February 3, 2014, accessed March 31, 2020, <https://www.christianitytoday.com/women-leaders/2014/february/how-church-can-support-emotional-health.html>.

There are a few ways in which the church and church leaders will be able to reach and create a safe space for Generation Z. One way is through authenticity, since Generation Z is struggling to see the authenticity or need for the church.<sup>82</sup> If Generation Z were to see the way the church loved, would they be reacting differently today? Rather, Generation Z is seeing the opposite. White says, “Instead of sharing your pain, your struggles, your heartaches, your anxieties, you interact with others in a superficial manner.”<sup>83</sup>

Another way is for the church to have an impact on society throughout the week and not just on Sundays.<sup>84</sup> If people say they are Christians, Generation Z wants to see Christianity be an integral part of their lives outside of just on Sunday’s. Because this integration is not happening in the eyes of Generation Z, they do not want to be associated with the church.<sup>85</sup> One final way the church can create a safe space and reach Generation Z is through diversity. Generation Z is one of the most diverse generations and is looking for diversity when it comes to their church communities. Many from Generation Z will turn away from a church that does not show diversity within their leadership or their congregation.<sup>86</sup>

There is a lot of work for the church to do in order to effectively create a safe space for Generation Z to dialogue about their emotional, however, there is not many church communities that are trying to effectively reach this generation. Generation Z is the future of the church and

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<sup>82</sup> White, Meet Generation Z, 60.

<sup>83</sup> White, James Emery, and Ford, Leighton. *Rethinking the Church: A Challenge to Creative Redesign in an Age of Transition*, Rev. and Expanded ed, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Books, 2003), 81.

<sup>84</sup> Mwaura, Maina. “What Should Pastors Know About Generation Z?” CT Pastors, Accessed March 31, 2020, <https://www.christianitytoday.com/pastors/2019/spring/what-should-pastors-know-about-generation-z.html>.

<sup>85</sup> White, Meet Generation Z.

<sup>86</sup> Mwaura.



church leaders are going to have to dive deep into this upcoming generation if the church is going to survive.

#### Further Research

There are a few areas for further research to be done. Emotional health is obviously an issue for Generation Z; however, the church is not a space in which Generation Z communicates about their emotional health. While there is some important research done by Scazzero, White, and the Barna Group, there is not much about how to specifically minister to Generation Z's emotional health and create a space where they can talk about this. It will be important to understand what Generation Z constitutes as safe spaces, whether that be particular people, the way the environment is set up, or a specific location or group. Further, it is important to develop an understanding on how Jesus created safe spaces in his environment in order for people to feel comfortable to dialogue about their emotional health. Jesus is the best example the church and others have to follow when thinking about creating spaces for people to dialogue about their emotional health.

Another area to gather more research is to look at specific church models or retreat spaces where they are leading discussions for young people around emotional health. There was not any research done to look at specific models, even if these models did not relate to Generation Z. Scazzero's *The Emotionally Healthy Church* is a ideal model to start with and then adapt to thinking more deeply about how it relates to Generation Z.

The final area for further research is to understand more deeply the effect technology is having on Generation Z and how its effect will be addressed by the church. Clearly through the research presented, experts know that technology is having an effect on Generation Z's

emotional health.<sup>87</sup> Technology will likely be a part of the space Generation Z is in. Therefore, the church is going to have to actively engage in technology in a way that is healthy and helps Generation Z with their emotional health.

### Conclusion

The church has an opportunity to create a space for Generation Z to talk about their emotional health. Currently, not many churches are trying to develop spaces in which to do so. If the church does not start to engage with Generation Z and their emotional health, there is a potential to see a drop off in the Christian communities because of a lack of engagement by Generation Z. Because of this gap within the research there is a unique opportunity for the church to step up and help the future generations.

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<sup>87</sup> Mwaura, Maina.

## APPENDIX C—MILESTONE 3 DESIGN WORKSHOP REPORT

### ***INTRODUCTION***

My approach to researching the NPO is to have an open mind, listen well, and recognize I will not solve all of the world's problems through this research. My desire is to grow in my understanding of how to create spaces for people to dialogue. Creating space is important and if we cannot create spaces for people, I believe we will lose much of our relationality as humans. Through this research I hope to gain perspective on an upcoming generation as well as encourage all generations to engage with one another well.

### ***NPO STATEMENT***

Older generations have an opportunity to equip Generation Z with tools to engage with and create safe spaces – a relationship that provides the freedom to dialogue about their personal journey.

### ***NPO SCOPE AND CONSTRAINTS***

I have noticed that many individuals in Generation Z do not have safe spaces – a relationship or place where they can come wherever they are at in their journey to talk about the deeper issues in life without fear of judgment. Generation Z seems to not have been taught how to engage with, much less create spaces like these; rather, they have turned to technology. Older generations appear to struggle to engage with this technological generation and are not modeling how to create safe spaces. Creating a safe space to freely dialogue about the journey of life is not something that is often done even though it is critical for growth to happen both for oneself and others.

## ***NPO CONTEXT***

The context for my NPO is a coffee shop ministry in Northville, Michigan. The coffee shop has been opened as a business with the dual purpose of ministry. The purpose of the ministry is to create a space for people to come in and have conversations with others because we recognize many people do not have a space for this. As a coffee shop ministry, we have slowly begun to realize that our primary ministry is with our employees, who are mainly in Generation Z. However, we have also seen many Generation Z customers come into our space and enjoy what we have to offer – an environment that fosters personal discovery and growth within community. From conversation with this upcoming generation, we have recognized this generational misunderstanding that is occurring. Our hope is to create a space for people to come and dialogue wherever they are at in their story.

## ***ROOT CAUSES***

There are many possible root causes but here are some of the ones discussed in my Discovery Session, Design Workshop, and 1on1 interviews:

7. Fear
8. Lack of understanding
9. Lack of skills to have deeper, more meaningful conversations
10. Lack of trust
11. Stress/Busyness
12. Sin/Brokenness

One of the main root causes mentioned was different types of fear. Generation Z seems to be fearful of dialoguing in person and other generations do not know how to engage with that fear. Another root cause is there is a lack of skill developed by Generation Z Christians to create

spaces besides through technology. With lack of skill also comes the lack of understanding from other generations in how to help create safe spaces for Generation Z. It is a two-fold problem: older generations do not know how to help create safe spaces for Generation Z that they will engage in and Generation Z is not creating safe spaces for themselves.

### ***THREE BIG IDEAS***

1. Training and Educating Leaders on how to create spaces for Generation Z
2. Bible studies on emotional and spiritual health geared towards Generation Z
3. Clubs for Generation Z centered around common interests with trained leaders

### ***DEFINITION OF 'DONE'***

Generation Z would have an understanding of and experience safe spaces and would be able to create these types of spaces for themselves and others.

### ***3 NAPKIN PITCHES***

- ***Big Idea 1:*** Train and Educate Leaders (Bosses, Teachers, Coaches, Gen Z Leaders, etc.) on how to engage with and create spaces for Generation Z.
  - ***Audience: For whom is this intended?*** The audience of this idea is geared towards those in leadership, whether that be Gen Z leaders or other leaders.
  - ***NPO: What is the unmet need/problem/opportunity we are addressing?*** The problem we are addressing is that leaders (older generations or Generation Z) do not know how to relate to Generation Z in a helpful way.
  - ***Benefit: How does the user benefit? How do you benefit?*** Through training/educating, leaders would be able to help Generation Z feel more known, see the importance of relating to one another, and see growth happening.

- **Approach: What is our approach to meeting that need, and how is it novel?**  
**Illustrate or describe how it works.** Creating a curriculum for leaders to help create spaces for dialogue between generations. This curriculum could be used in the workplaces, universities, homes, churches, etc.
- **Risks. Why might it fail?** People may be afraid of being uncomfortable, pride coming from both generations, and people may not think that dialogue is important.
- **Assumptions/hypotheses to test: What specifically are you testing to figure out if it does or doesn't work?** Testing whether or not creating space for Generation Z to dialogue can occur and if it is important.
- **Benchmarks of success: What information do you need to either confirm or disprove your hypothesis? Articulate the 2-3 benchmarks (or indicator, clue, criteria, test, metric, or milestones) that verify that the project is successfully addressing the NPO.** Some benchmarks would be: 1. an acknowledgement of growth – an ability to articulate where Gen Z sees growth 2. More Gen Z could say they have physical safe spaces to dialogue 3. Numerical growth in relationships.
- **Other Approaches: How are others addressing this NPO? What sets this approach apart?** One of the advantages is the idea of a “walk rather than fix” mentality. This approach takes away from the idea that Generation Z is the problem that we have to fix.

- **Big Idea 2:** Clubs centered around common interests with trained leaders.
  - **Audience: For whom is this intended?** The audience of this approach is Generation Z and leaders.
  - **NPO: What is the unmet need/problem/opportunity we are addressing?** The opportunity is using common space to create dialogue among Generation Z.
  - **Benefit: How does the user benefit? How do you benefit?** The user would realize that they are not alone through seeing common interests/struggles and a base level for deeper conversations.
  - **Approach: What is our approach to meeting that need, and how is it novel?**  
**Illustrate or describe how it works.** Creating clubs with common interests (ex: pottery club) where the leaders are trained to utilize the time and space to foster dialogue among generations.
  - **Risks. Why might it fail?** Some of the reasons this may fail is because of fear, no one ends up dialoguing, and/or a sense of inauthenticity.
  - **Assumptions/hypotheses to test: What specifically are you testing to figure out if it does or doesn't work?** Testing whether or not clubs create the needed space for Generation Z to dialogue.
  - **Benchmarks of success: What information do you need to either confirm or disprove your hypothesis? Articulate the 2-3 benchmarks (or indicator, clue, criteria, test, metric, or milestones) that verify that the project is successfully addressing the NPO.** Three benchmarks of success: 1. Positive response from the group 2. Numeric growth of the group – more young people desire to come 3.

Emotional growth within the group – young people are able to dialogue with one another about their emotions

- **Other Approaches: How are others addressing this NPO? What sets this approach apart?** The advantage to this approach is it is community based, common interest focused, and creates a comfortability level for others in hopes of deeper conversations.
- **Big Idea 3:** Bible studies on emotional and spiritual health geared towards Generation Z
  - **Audience: For whom is this intended?** The audience of this idea is Generation Z and their emotional and spiritual health.
  - **NPO: What is the unmet need/problem/opportunity we are addressing?** The problem that is being addressed is there is a lack of space to dialogue about emotional and spiritual health as well as a lack of understanding.
  - **Benefit: How does the user benefit? How do you benefit?** The benefit of this idea is that Generation Z is receiving a reliable source of truth through Scripture and they are able to see healthy and unhealthy examples of emotional and spiritual health.
  - **Approach: What is our approach to meeting that need, and how is it novel?**  
**Illustrate or describe how it works.** Developing Bible study curriculum that focuses on a deeper understanding of scripture with a format that helps to encourages dialogue among all generations.



- **Risks. Why might it fail?** This may fail because there could be a lack of diligence, a lack of a spiritual leader to lead the studies, or the Bible study becomes more of a “fix it” mentality.
- **Assumptions/hypotheses to test: What specifically are you testing to figure out if it does or doesn't work?** We are testing to understand what emotional and spiritual health is in scripture.
- **Benchmarks of success: What information do you need to either confirm or disprove your hypothesis? Articulate the 2-3 benchmarks (or indicator, clue, criteria, test, metric, or milestones) that verify that the project is successfully addressing the NPO.** Some benchmarks of success are: 1. The ability for Gen Z to discover scripture themselves 2. The ability to help others with discovering scripture 3. An articulation of their own beliefs through the lens of scripture.
- **Other Approaches: How are others addressing this NPO? What sets this approach apart?** This approach is set apart because it puts Scripture at the top, it takes out other opinions, anchored in truth, and helps relate other areas of life to scripture.

### ***DESIGN WORKSHOP STAKEHOLDERS***

1. Coffee Shop Owner
2. Local Pastor
3. Co-Worker
4. Generation Z Student
5. Generation Z Student
6. Generation Z Student

### ***ONE-ON-ONE INTERVIEWS***

1. Author and Director of Residence Life
2. Professor researching Generation Z
3. Resident Director at a University

### ***3–5 KEY BIBLICAL TEXTS***

1. 1 Samuel 18:1-4 (The friendship between David and Jonathan)
2. 2 Timothy 1:1-7 (Relationship between Paul and Timothy)
3. Ruth 1:16-17 (Bond between Naomi and Ruth)
4. John 4:1-28 (Jesus creating space for the woman at the well)
5. 1 Peter 4:8-11 (Importance of Hospitality)

### ***ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY***

Grubb, Valerie M. *Clash of the Generations: Managing the New Workplace Reality*, Hoboken, New Jersey: Wiley, 2016.

The book revolves around the workplace; however, has a lot of great information about all of the different generations that are currently in the workplace. Reading through the section about the different generations, it is interesting to see how each of them are interacting with the workplace as well as with other generations. Generation Z is obviously the newest of all the generations and is one that seems to be a bit difficult for older generations to understand. This book will help to understand how each of the generations are interacting with one another as well as how to interact with Generation Z.

Tulgan, Bruce. *Bridging the Soft Skills Gap: How to Teach the Missing Basics to Today's Young Talent*. 1st ed. San Francisco, California: Jossey-Bass, 2015.

In this book, Tulgan describes the importance of helping young people learn soft skills. This will be important to understand as the growing of Generation Z continues yet they seem to not be learning many of the soft skills required of them to function today. Generation Z will benefit from learning some of these skills as they will in turn be able to better relate to others in their generation as well as older generations. Some of these skills have been lost in young people and Tulgan gives ways in which to help them learn. These skills will help them in all aspects of life.

Caliguire, Mindy. *Spiritual Friendship*, Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2010.

Caliguire describes the importance of spiritual friendship in her book. She also describes ways in which to seek spiritual friendship as well as barriers that may hinder spiritual friendship from happening. This book will help prove the importance of spiritual friendship and hopefully see the importance even with the generational gap. Spiritual friendship can often be lost in our culture and Caliguire does a great job sharing it's importance. Generation Z seems to be creating friendships in new ways so it will be interesting to read Caliguire's book to see her understanding and how it can relate to this next generation.

Lukianoff, Greg and Haidt, Jonathan. *The Coddling of the American Mind: How Good Intentions and Bad Ideas Are Setting up a Generation for Failure*, New York, New York: Penguin Press, 2018.

Lukian and Haidt describe the increase in mental health issues that we are seeing in the younger generations today. They suggest that there are solutions that if the younger generations are aware of can help with these issues. This book will help to think about the different issues Generation Z is facing as well as what safe spaces can actually be or should look like for this

generation. Safe spaces is often not described well and Lukianoff and Haidt do a great job at asking the reader to think of how to challenge the next generation rather than coddling them. So many of Generation Z have been coddled by their parents, causing them to struggle in ways we have not seen in other generations before.

## APPENDIX

***DESIGN WORKSHOP DESCRIPTION:***

- Location: The Red Dot Coffee Company
- Date: Nov. 2, 2020
- Agenda:
  - Introductions
  - Overview of NPO
    - Activity 1 – Context Map
    - Activity 2 – Pain-Gain Map
  - Explore Activities
    - Activity 1 – Brainwriting
    - Activity 2/3 – Post-up & Affinity Diagram
  - Closing Activities
    - Activity 1 – Dot Voting
  - Napkin Pitch
  - Debrief
- Stakeholders:
  - Coffee Shop Owner
  - Local Pastor
  - Co-worker
  - Generation Z student
  - Generation Z student
  - Generation Z student

- Likert Scale Assessment: 3

## DESIGN WORKSHOP DOCUMENTATION

### Napkin Pitch Worksheet

Use this template to solidify an idea. Gain clarity on how to execute and pitch your idea. A good idea can be communicated simply, often on the back of a napkin.

Create a napkin pitch for each concept you propose to address the NPO.

WHAT IS THE BIG IDEA?

bible studies on emotional / spiritual health

WHO IS IT FOR?



WHAT IS THE NPO?

- lack of space
- lack of knowledge
- don't know what it is

HOW DOES THE USER BENEFIT?

- reliable source for truth
- ability to read healthy or not

ILLUSTRATE OR DESCRIBE HOW IT WORKS

- focus on a specific issues, progressive talk, different Scripture w/ examples
- deeper into single passages, easy load to study
- dialogue w/ mixture of generations + perspectives

WHY MIGHT IT FAIL?

- diligence
- finding someone who knows what they're talking about
- becomes "fix"

WHAT SPECIFICALLY ARE WE TESTING?

- understand / see emotional health
- what does Scripture say?

HOW MIGHT WE MEASURE SUCCESS?

- ability to discover Scripture themselves
- ability to help others
- transformation
- truth knowledge

WHAT MAKES THIS STAND OUT FROM OTHER APPROACHES?

- specifically puts Scripture at the top
- takes opinions out
- anchored in truth
- relating things ~~across~~ Scripture studying Bible for these things

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# Napkin Pitch Worksheet

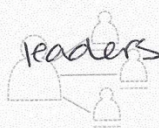
Use this template to solidify an idea. Gain clarity on how to execute and pitch your idea. A good idea can be communicated simply, often on the back of a napkin.

Create a napkin pitch for each concept you propose to address the NPO.

WHAT IS THE BIG IDEA?

gen Z  
train + educate leaders on how to relate to gen Z  
↓  
bosses, teachers, coaches.

WHO IS IT FOR?



WHAT IS THE NPO?

leaders don't  
know how to  
relate in a helpful  
way

HOW DOES THE USER BENEFIT?

gen Z feels  
known  
gen Z knows how  
importance of relating  
joy to the leader to  
see growth in gen Z

ILLUSTRATE OR DESCRIBE HOW IT WORKS

- look deeper than the surface
- read personalities
- job training program w/ emphasis on creating spaces
- curriculum?
- peer to peer
- one of each generation
- package leaders can buy for staff.
- retreats leaders can send managers to? go to themselves?

WHY MIGHT IT FAIL?

- too afraid of being uncomfortable
- people may think it isn't needed in their context
- becomes a "fix it"

WHAT SPECIFICALLY ARE WE TESTING?

- understand / see emotional health
- what does Scripture say for spiritual health? Are we lining up?

HOW MIGHT WE MEASURE SUCCESS?

- acknowledgement of growth
- more Gen Z could say they have a safe space if needed
- relationships growing

WHAT MAKES THIS STAND OUT FROM OTHER APPROACHES?

- walk rather than fix
- starts top down
- takes focus away from gen Z being the "problem"

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## Napkin Pitch Worksheet

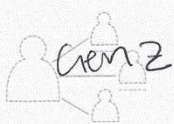
Use this template to solidify an idea. Gain clarity on how to execute and pitch your idea. A good idea can be communicated simply, often on the back of a napkin.

Create a napkin pitch for each concept you propose to address the NPO.

WHAT IS THE BIG IDEA?

clubs centered around common interests  
w/ trained leaders

WHO IS IT FOR?



WHAT IS THE NPO?

- common space to relate  
- space to share

HOW DOES THE USER BENEFIT?

- not alone, can see common interests  
AND common structures  
- base for deeper conversation

ILLUSTRATE OR DESCRIBE HOW IT WORKS

- FCA is a great example
- just opportunity to dialogue
- flexible
- club specifically to dialogue
- understanding among leaders to push students to ask questions

WHY MIGHT IT FAIL?

- fear
- no one talks
- in-authenticity

WHAT SPECIFICALLY ARE WE TESTING?

- can clubs create the needed space for gen Z to talk?

HOW MIGHT WE MEASURE SUCCESS?

- positive responses  
- growth of the clubs

WHAT MAKES THIS STAND OUT FROM OTHER APPROACHES?

- community based
- common interest focused
- comfortability level, kinda a hand for deeper things.

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Problem: LACK OF SPACE FOR GENERATION Z TO PROCESS THEIR EMOTIONAL AND SPIRITUAL HEALTH

	IDEA 1	IDEA 2	IDEA 3
PARTICIPANT 1	(include) Game night GEN Z and Senior Citizens	Weekend Retreats for GEN Z	(include) Storytelling from Gen X and beyond with GEN Z
PARTICIPANT 2	active and mental games to create comfortable and real relationships. avoid unwanted "ice-breakers" and forced talking.	Great place for real, authentic sharing of struggles bonding through Sun Jam also bonding through "real talk"	Seek advice and experience from elderly/older people. [Don't try so hard to split up "groups or cliques" that it takes away their opportunity with people they're really close with.]
PARTICIPANT 3	AMAZING IDEA! MAYBE MILLENNIALS CAN HOST THE GAME NIGHT FOR GEN X & GEN Z TO INCLUDE MULTIPLE PERSPECTIVES?	HAVING PEOPLE FROM OTHER GENERATIONS HOSTING AND WORKING THE RETREATS SO LEARNING & ORGANIC CONVERSATIONS CAN TAKE PLACE.	THIS CAN BE DONE IN ALREADY ESTABLISHED SPACES I.E. COFFEE SHOPS, PARKS, ETC.

ALL THREE OF THESE IDEAS ARE  
EXCELLENT, TANGIBLE WAYS TO BEGIN TAKING  
STEPS TOWARD LEARNING, LISTENING &  
UNDERSTANDING.



Problem: LACK OF SPACE FOR GENERATION Z TO PROCESS THEIR EMOTIONAL AND SPIRITUAL HEALTH

	IDEA 1	IDEA 2	IDEA 3
PARTICIPANT 1	Look at/inside yourself first, and be humble, transparent, and have an attitude in every day life that creates a safe place for people not necessarily a location but with you. Be nonjudgmental, but still offer your real thoughts and opinions about the subject/problem, with kindness, and don't force anything, simply be there.	Set aside an allotted time for them to do something specific to what they want/need, even if it's not necessary for deep talking, because that's not always what they need. Find out what they do need, whether it's sports or Bible study, or etc. and then make that available, making sure there are people who are available and equipped to talk with them if they need it.	Be flexible with spaces that are already provided or that are in the process of being created. If the kids don't want it, listen to what they do want and actually consider it! Make sure to focus on them and not you.
PARTICIPANT 2	MENTORS, TEACHERS, COUNSELORS BEING EQUIPPED & TRAINED IN HOW TO BE MORE PRESENT & CREATE THESE SPACES.	THIS TIME COULD BE SET ASIDE SPECIFICALLY DURING CLASSES/AFTER CLASSES AS WELL AS AFTER PRACTICE.	PARENTS BEING MORE AWARE & JOINING TOGETHER W/ COACHES & TEACHERS TO CREATE THESE SPACES TO MEET THEM WHERE THEY ALREADY ARE!
PARTICIPANT 3	just staying self aware of other people	✓	✓
	Being Aware and knowing that people have things going on and finding ways to help	Try to find time	overall being more aware and being open to come



Problem: LACK OF SPACE FOR GENERATION Z TO PROCESS THEIR EMOTIONAL AND SPIRITUAL HEALTH

	IDEA 1	IDEA 2	IDEA 3
PARTICIPANT 1	inviting others to younglife/ church	Creating a group of like-minded individuals in the same place, to come together to share their difficulties	a place that combines school with students lives outside of school to create a more authentic relationship
PARTICIPANT 2	and activities that YL and church may offer (outside of YL church)	Like-minded individuals meet at the same place <del>at</del> home, restaurants, etc... then spend weekend together somewhere fun	
PARTICIPANT 3	Make sure not to sacrifice the teachings of studying at youth groups simply to make it more "fun and inviting"	Real connections, whether with familiar or <del>new</del> newly familiar people, so that people are <u>actually</u> comfortable with each other.	Especially now, school is a subject of stress and struggle so coming together about school might make quick connections & on real and

for people. )  
keep values in mind.

reach out to people, and ~~for~~ <sup>connections</sup> and comfortability, potentially for ~~messy~~ <sup>expand</sup> events. weekend retreats.

Collect close Combine aspects and like-minded of life further people & real than <sup>surface</sup> topics.

Maybe sensitive subjects

Problem: LACK OF SPACE FOR GENERATION Z TO PROCESS THEIR EMOTIONAL AND SPIRITUAL HEALTH

	IDEA 1	IDEA 2	IDEA 3
PARTICIPANT 1	THE CHURCH PRAYING FOR OPPORTUNITIES TO LOVE GEN Z IN TANGIBLE WAYS.	TEACHERS & COACHES GETTING TOGETHER TO INTENTIONALLY BE MORE AWARE OF THEIR GEN Z STUDENTS & PLAYERS	GEN X & MILLENNIALS INVITING GEN Z TO TEACH & TRAIN THEM ON LATEST SOCIAL MEDIA TRENDS & TECH ADVANCEMENTS.
PARTICIPANT 2	<del>the church</del> <del>also have gen z</del> also have gen z communicate and get their input on how to help.	have a group of teacher and coaches but allow students and athletes to come to make it a huge discussion	this and to help understand the new ways of communication
PARTICIPANT 3	the church offering specific times for gen z students to come + talk w/ trusted pastors, church offering prayer for them not just solutions to their problems. see church leaders specifically walk alongside gen z students	semester or 2x semester check ins b/w students + teachers/ coaches to hear what is going well, where help/improvement is needed + wanted discussion based w/ goal of teachers listening + learning	yes! "open mic" night for gen z to use their tech savvy to teach + share knowledge w/ older generations

SUMMARY: church leadership going out of their way to connect, listen, pray specifically with + for gen z

quarterly discussions for better connection/ understanding b/w students + teachers/ coaches

put gen z in drivers seat, highlight their knowledge in tech for benefit



Problem: LACK OF SPACE FOR GENERATION Z TO PROCESS THEIR EMOTIONAL AND SPIRITUAL HEALTH

	IDEA 1	IDEA 2	IDEA 3
PARTICIPANT 1	Create clubs for interests that provide a space that is open to conv.	A coffee shop or some sort of Food/Activity place where you can talk but also socialize with alike people	Maybe a camp or place where there were leaders of groups and the groups highlighted all different personality types so the people attending feel safe.
PARTICIPANT 2	Leaders of clubs are trained to know better how to ask good questions, connect w/ gen 2, promote open conversations	Baristas are actual trained counselors or those w/ a passion to talk w/ gen 2. Staff is w/ the intention of connecting w/ gen 2. environment caters to them. or 1-2 counselors always present - gen 2 knows they're there to talk with	Camps + leaders broaden their focus of activities to be things that many people enjoy, feel comfortable with
PARTICIPANT 3	Clubs that want to come to where the students are, not change who they are, but help better themselves in a healthy env., using engaging, age appropriate activities	incorporating coffee tables/chairs into places gen 2 is, coming to them w/ something that may comfort them	Camps that are accessible to everyone and not labeled for a specific group or people, easily accessible to all levels of income

Clubs w/ trained personal who can meet <sup>gen 2</sup> students where they are and take specific interest in their lives

Having the aura of a coffee shop or an actual coffee shop w/ trained counselors that are able to focus on gen 2

Camps that are accessible to all despite economic <sup>difficult</sup> or political beliefs, and w/ activities that will engage gen 2



Problem: LACK OF SPACE FOR GENERATION Z TO PROCESS THEIR EMOTIONAL AND SPIRITUAL HEALTH

	IDEA 1	IDEA 2	IDEA 3
PARTICIPANT 1	Conference for gen Z to talk w/ counselors + one another	app that allows for genuine connection w/ goal of talking about hard things connects gen Z to older gens to meet in real life to talk <del>things</del>	<del>not</del> training for other gens to learn how to talk w/ relate to, understand gen Z
PARTICIPANT 2	like a huge seminar where there can be dialogue back & forth, not just a Q&A time, get to hear from all sides	A way for people w/ the same <sup>or religious beliefs</sup> morals to be matched on the app	training for all generations to better understand each other to help better bridge the gap.. and make it a "team" effort rather than one generation
PARTICIPANT 3	At huge seminar breakout groups, <del>also</del> smaller in size to create intimacy	once connected on app and <sup>(3 people)</sup> met in real life (can set up a group <sup>6-8 people</sup> meeting in real life as well)	Training for all gens at Conference - breakout sessions for Gen Z and GenX Gen Z and Baby Boomers etc.

we cant fix it if gen z isnt also willing to learn & grow

Conferences that offer:

- Gen Z to share, talk; meet with counselors
- breakout <sup>smaller</sup> groups creating intimacy for back-n-forth dialogue
- App idea introduced
- Training/educate (other) gens <sup>all</sup>



# FAMILY

- disconnected in morals btwn. generations
- different levels of maturity, responsibility, personality affect overall family space
- difficulty/inability to bridge the gen. gap
- parents/grandparents own experiences being passed down
- inability to hold different opinions w/in a family unit + still feel welcomed + loved
- fear of what parents will think of me

# Technology

- mental busyness
- distraction
- false images
- isolation
- fosters good connos/connection
- false relationships
- different type of communication
  - can check out easily
  - not really present
- easy to hide
- find new things/information/young life
- FAMILY strife over diff. in understanding technology
- opportunity to hear from voices not in your immediate available context

## LACK of SPACE for GEN Z

(EPIC generation)

## EVENTS/EXPERIENCES

- politics/voting focused on what they want/not allowing space to think for ourselves
- friendships/break in friendships
- grieving experiences - how others exp exemplify how to handle it.

## CHURCH/Religion

- discussion is needed!
  - rift b/c of politics
  - stigma of who is "part" or not
  - gen Z feels very not accepted
    - ↳ has tried to adapt to parents beliefs but starting not to
  - need to think "how do we include this gen?"
  - "lets just fix their problems"
  - pressure to fit what older gens say is "Christian"
- "[Generation Z] is a weird word for gen Z → feels awkward thinking this way"



# Generation Z Student

## GAINS

- PCA offering knowledge of other safe people in school hallways
- more likely to share when struggling
- growth from being heard
- helpful to have other positive outlooks on situations
- confidence in struggles / seeing ways forward / not alone / experience would help
- ability to talk w/ others who differ from you
- higher probability of mental health
- knowledge of being created for more than the right now
- growth for spiritual/mental health

WHAT ARE SAFE SPACES?  
what are the actual helpful "safe" spaces?

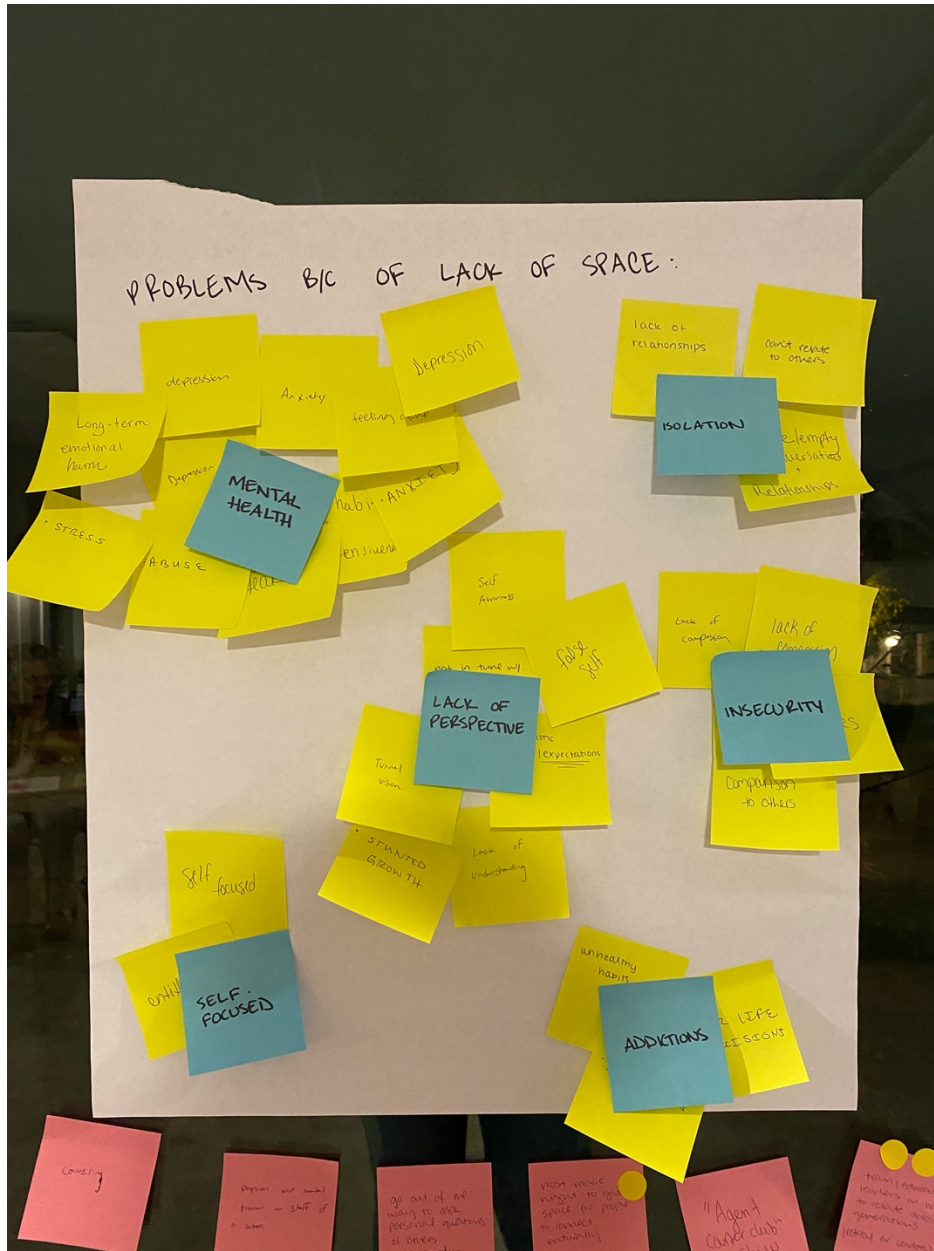
- people listening
- no judgement
- genuine questions
- set aside specific time

## Pains

- isolation
- expressing feelings in unsafe ways
- not going to the right places for solutions
- choosing who to go to based on what we want to hear
- tunnel vision
- break in relationships / false relationships
- suppressing feelings/emotions
- anxiety
- living in a state of ~~dead-end~~ defensiveness
- self-centered / entitled
- inability to see people as Jesus sees them
- lack of compassion

WHAT ARE WE NOT OFFERING

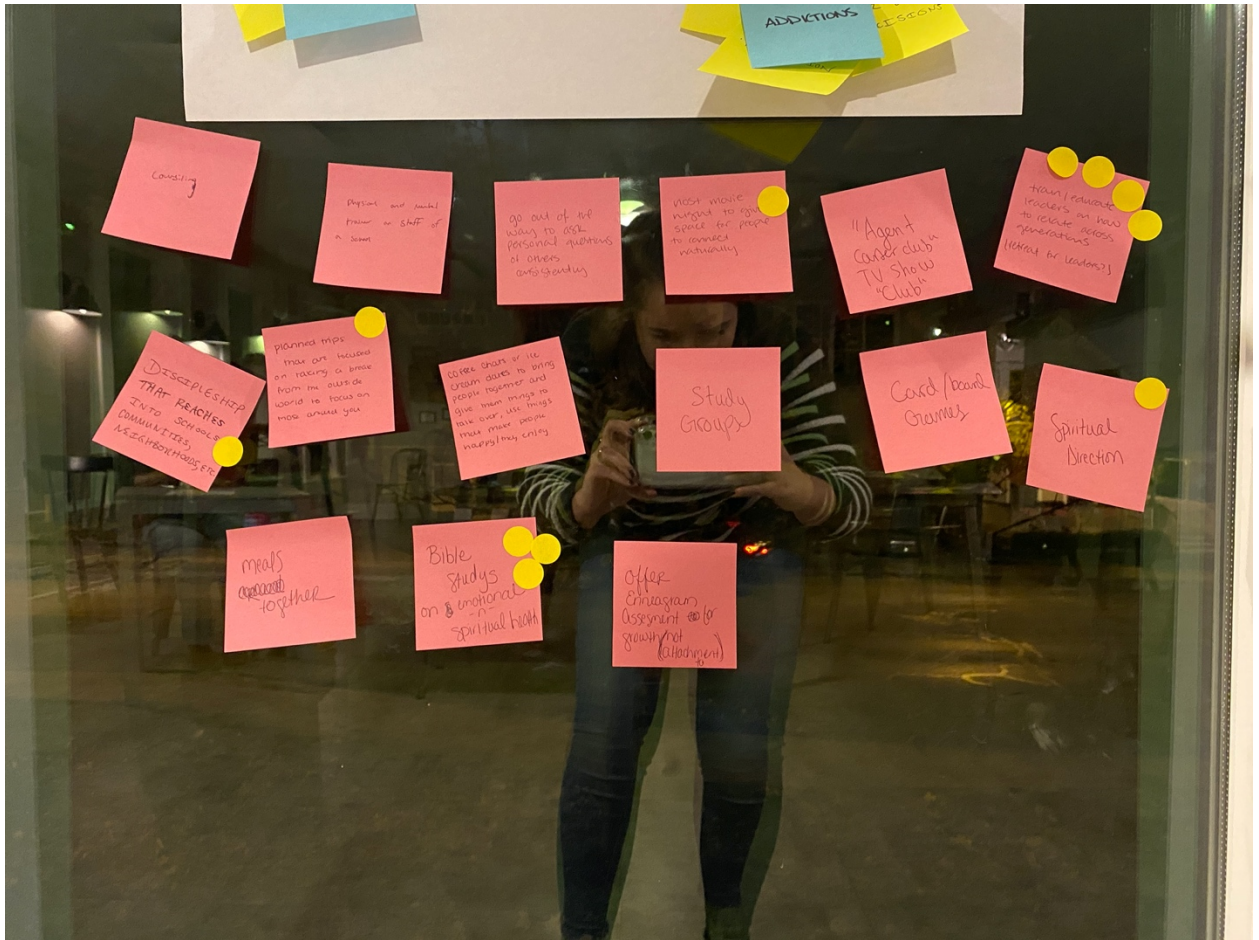
- lack of people listening
- lack of transparency on other people's pain
- not walking w/ them





# Brainwriting Activity

1. broader awareness of how to create/boost safe spaces.
2. finding specific times to connect + be available for others.
3. amplify + connect the spaces where people already are connecting.
4. game night for gen 2 and senior citizens - break the ice w/o it being awkward. goal to get below the surface.
5. retreat to talk deeper than the surface. different generations hosting retreat.
6. storytelling - stories shared from different generations to share experiences, life lessons.
7. reaching out / inviting others into VL or similar spaces.
8. creating opportunity to bring like-minded ppl together for real connect.
9. bringing school / common connection points to bridge the gap to other areas of life.
10. conferences where gen 2 can share / talk. small groups for dialogue.
11. App for gen 2 to connect w/ people or groups to talk.
12. Training + education for all generations to connect w/ one another.
13. Clubs centered around common interests w/ trained leaders.
14. coffee shops w/ trained staff/baristas that gen 2 knows is available. "Coffee Circles"
15. Camp - economically accessible to all, not biased.
16. Church leadership going out of their way for direct connection w/ gen 2.
17. quarterly discussions b/w teachers/coaches + students.
18. opportunity for gen 2 to use technology knowledge to help others.





1. Retreat to talk deeper
2. clubs centered around common interests
3. Church leadership going out of their way
4. Train + educate leaders on how to relate
5. bible studies on emotional + spiritual health

## ***ONE-PAGE POST-WORKSHOP MESSAGE TO STAKEHOLDERS***

### NPO Overview:

- In our world today, there are not many spaces for Generation Z to dialogue about their emotional and spiritual health. I have seen this in my interactions with Generation Z themselves. In conducting my research, I have been able to see the different struggles Generation Z is facing as well as key voices speaking into the importance of emotional and spiritual health. In my Design Workshop, the stakeholders confirmed much of my findings of the struggles that Generation Z is facing and that there are not spaces for them to dialogue. Below is my NPO Statement that I am researching and working to come up with a solution to.
- NPO Statement: The lack of space for Generation Z to dialogue about their emotional and spiritual health.

### DESIGN WORKSHOP FINDINGS

#### The Big 3 Ideas:

1. Training and Educating Leaders on how to create spaces for Generation Z
2. Bible studies on emotional and spiritual health geared towards Generation Z
3. Clubs for Generation centered around common interests with trained leaders

#### Definition of Done:

- Generation Z has spaces to dialogue about their emotional and spiritual health: an understanding of how to help Generation Z dialogue with all generations

#### Benchmarks of Success:

- More dialogue happening between generations
- Growth in Relationships

- Personal growth happening among Generation Z
- Space for Generation Z to dialogue about their emotional and spiritual health

Other Key Insights:

- Finding ways to use technology positively for and with Generation Z
- Generation Z is likely to attend clubs and bible studies
- Focus on Mental Health

Further Research:

- How to create spaces
- Mental Health
- Technology and Generation Z
- Generational Gap – researching the relationships between generations

## ***ONE-ON-ONE INTERVIEWS DOCUMENTATION***

### Professor Researching Generation Z

- What are your initial thoughts and questions?
  - Didn't surprise that this is what I am pursuing
  - Generation Z – challenges are woven into the opportunity
  - Don't go anywhere without their phone
  - Can't all be done through phones
  - Yearn for person to person interaction – part of the reason is their phones are there
  - Can't be detached from their phone – how do you spin that towards
  - Space to have horizontal relationships –
  - Vertical communication too!
  - Social media is so horizontal in its nature
  - Example of his daughter
  - How do you create both horizontal and vertical space? – resources may not come from just the horizontal relationships
  - Generation Z is not the problem – see them as different and how do you engage with different
- With what do you agree and disagree with? Why?
  - Have not pressed far enough yet
  - Agree with the sociological and theological perspectives
  - Have both a strong and thin sense of identity
  - Trying to connect them into a deeper



- Cultivating the void that they feel – getting them to realize that they can be rooted in the biblical story
- Orientation of appetites
- Biblical narrative is a resources – how do you accelerate their movement towards this? How do you introduce this as a value?
- Gen Z is not really reacting to anything – they have not had religion – but it is going to take more communication
- How do you introduce it?
- What is missing or directionally where I should take ?
  - Families still matter
    - Parents are for better or worse
    - Repackaging what parents are saying
    - Same is true for religion and spirituality – understanding what parents have or have not – what spiritual inheritance they have received?
  - Christian Smith – Sociologists at Notre Dame – influence of parents and spirituality
    - Some sense of understanding parent relationship – theological and emotional reasons
  - Parent/Guardian Narrative
  - Reaching the Generation Z but may also reach parents
  - We isolate the problem often – reach into who they are!

#### Author writing creating spaces for others

- What are your initial thoughts and questions?

- Training and educating
  - Education on Gen Z students – most likely will be Generation X and millennials
  - Understanding where we are starting
  - Digital age is so strong!
  - Demographic is going to change
  - Easy for us to say that it is Generation Z is wrong or the problem – what have parents done.
- Bible Studies
  - Barna Research – scripture is not the only authoritative voice for Gen Z
  - Training with how experience Scripture – history, emotions,
  - Generation Z is not upholding scripture like other generations are
  - Developmental research on spiritual health.
  - Sematic work – engaging their bodies
  - How am I going to measure? – through digital apps, through mindfulness, help each other?
  - Transformation – vision casting. Why does this even matter?
  - Business – soft skills: this generation doesn't have them.
  - Peer to Peer is huge with Generation Z
- Clubs
  - Work has to be backed up
  - Brain development with the digital age
  - “Digital Age” book!

- In this space, we can make change – what can they do transform their communities
- Mental Health
  - Lessen anxiety; giving the tools.
  - How do we buy in?
- Where can spiritual practices come into play?
- What is missing or directionally where I should take ?
  - Napkin Pitch – dialogue about emotional and spiritual health
    - What is dialogue
    - What is emotional
    - What is spiritual
  - What is spaces?
    - What are they doing in that space?
  - What is needed in the spaces that Generation Z is dialoguing?
  - Verbal dialogue with each other – learn Generation Z dialogue
    - How do you get comfortable with your own skin?
  - Neuro development
    - Develops empathy is not developed
    - Literally do not have a space that is not developing because of technology
    - Cortex part of the brain
  - Studying Empathy!

#### Residence Hall Director

- What are your initial thoughts?

- Appreciated
  - Training and educating leaders – you need that in order to create the space... not everyone has it or has a natural ability!
  - Technology – Biggest distinctions of Gen Z – always on Gen Z; example of RA who talks with people through technology all day but is not relating in the hall.
  - Mental health
  - The connection of technology and mental health.
- Experience with Gen Z
  - Categorize students who are just not interested... age group, if they are not into it. They are not into it
  - Learning how to connect on an emotional level – as humans, we all desire that connection
    - If you ask them the right questions, give them enough space.
  - “I am committed to your experience here.”
  - Seeing past the combative nature.
  - Very few are excited to open up – but have to know the right things to say.
- Being different than their parents – parents are often helicopter parents
  - Give them trust and respect up front
  - Either have to fight or someone is going to challenge them.
  - Someone is going to be aggressive
- Everyone thinks they are the best generations
- What is missing or directionally where I should take?

- Equipping and training
  - Sure there is hard skills
  - Emotional intelligence... a lot of the soft skills that will help the leaders to facilitate
  - Leader – doesn't mean they know how to do it.
  - How to ask good questions
  - How to read a room
- Clubs and bible study
  - What would this look like?
  - Trying to encourage students to join?
  - Trying to establish.
  - Approach would be different

## APPENDIX D—MILESTONE 4 PROTOTYPE ITERATION REPORT

### ***PROTOTYPE #1 SUMMARY AND FINDINGS***

- Prototype description.
  - Creating a website that could be a weekly Bible study with the focus of encouraging intergenerational dialogue to occur as well as creating spaces to dialogue about personal journeys.
- Goldilocks quality strategy.
  - Create content using technology (videos, games, apps, etc.) for an interactive study of Bible characters, encouraging intergenerational dialogue that occurs throughout the week and then the group gathers 1x per week
- Research question.
  - Does the use of technology within an interactive Bible study, as well as weekly in-person gatherings, help to bridge the spiritual gap between Generation Z and other generations?
- Assessment Benchmark(s).
  - Technology helps Generation Z feel like they would be able to interact better with older generations
  - Older generations do not feel hindered or confused by the use of technology
  - Content would encourage deep conversations revolving around one's faith journey
  - Intergenerational dialogue occurs
  - Intergenerational relationships form
- Prototype participant demographic description.

- 2 Generation Z
- 1 Generation X
- 1 Baby Boomer
- Summarize what you learned.
  - What worked?
    - All of the participants enjoyed the different options of Bible Studies that were available.
    - They all thought the idea of bringing together people from generations was something that is worthwhile.
    - Enjoyed the simplicity of the website.
  - What could be improved?
    - The older generations definitely had more difficulty using the website - they said that they would not normally get involved in something like this if they did not hear testimonies of it working.
    - The Gen Z participants thought it might be difficult for them to get involved with older generations but really was thankful for the technological piece.
  - What matters to the participants?
    - Gen Z would want to make sure it is more of a mutual learning - they do not want to be "taught" at.
    - Older Generations would want to feel that they would have something to offer to the space - the technology intimidates them and may be difficult to get involved.

- What was your important discovery?
  - The important discovery was that the participants saw the value of gathering people from different generations. However, there needs to be a way to get both generations to buy into the idea of an intergenerational Bible study. The website has to convey this somehow.

### ***PROTOTYPE #2 SUMMARY AND FINDINGS***

- Prototype description.
  - Simulate a Retreat/Conference Session revolving around a spiritual topic (i.e. Spiritual Disciplines) and encourage Generation Z and older generations to refrain from using technology in order to create dialogue
- Goldilocks quality strategy.
  - Generation Z and older generation would be asked to take a step away from technology in order to engage the topic at hand (i.e. Spiritual Disciplines)
- Research question.
  - Can Generation Z and older generations connect on a deeper level through more traditional ways of dialogue and spiritual topics without the use of technology?
- Assessment Benchmark(s).
  - Generation Z and older generations are willing to step away from technology
  - The topics create a sense of depth in conversation
  - There is a positive response to refraining from using technology
  - Each person has adequate space to share about their journey
  - Intergenerational dialogue occurs
- Prototype participant demographic description.



- 2 Generation Z
- 2 Generation X
- 1 Millennial
- Summarize what you learned.
  - What worked?
    - All participants loved the idea and were intrigued by the idea of doing no technology throughout the retreat.
    - Practicing a spiritual discipline together creates a common experience for all generations to dialogue or reflect upon.
  - What could be improved?
    - Making sure to clarify who is going to be the facilitator of the retreat.
    - Clarifying who is going to part of the retreat and making sure it is groups of people who are familiar with one another or in the same spheres.
  - What matters to the participants?
    - Participants desired to have a space to get away and step away from technology. It allows people to step outside of the ordinary. Removing technology helps people to engage.
    - Creating the space and time was important in order for dialogue to occur.
  - What was your important discovery?
    - If my focus is going to be on dialogue among generations, there will need to be more of a focus on the dialogue piece rather than particularly practicing spiritual disciplines. There needs to be some sort of emphasis on dialogue that would happen. This can happen in a retreat setting; there

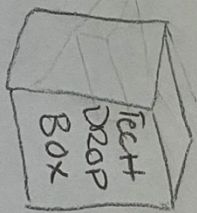
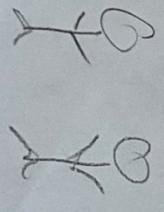
just needs to be a more clear understanding that it will happen if my focus is to try to create dialogue.

### ***MOST VIABLE PROTOTYPE***

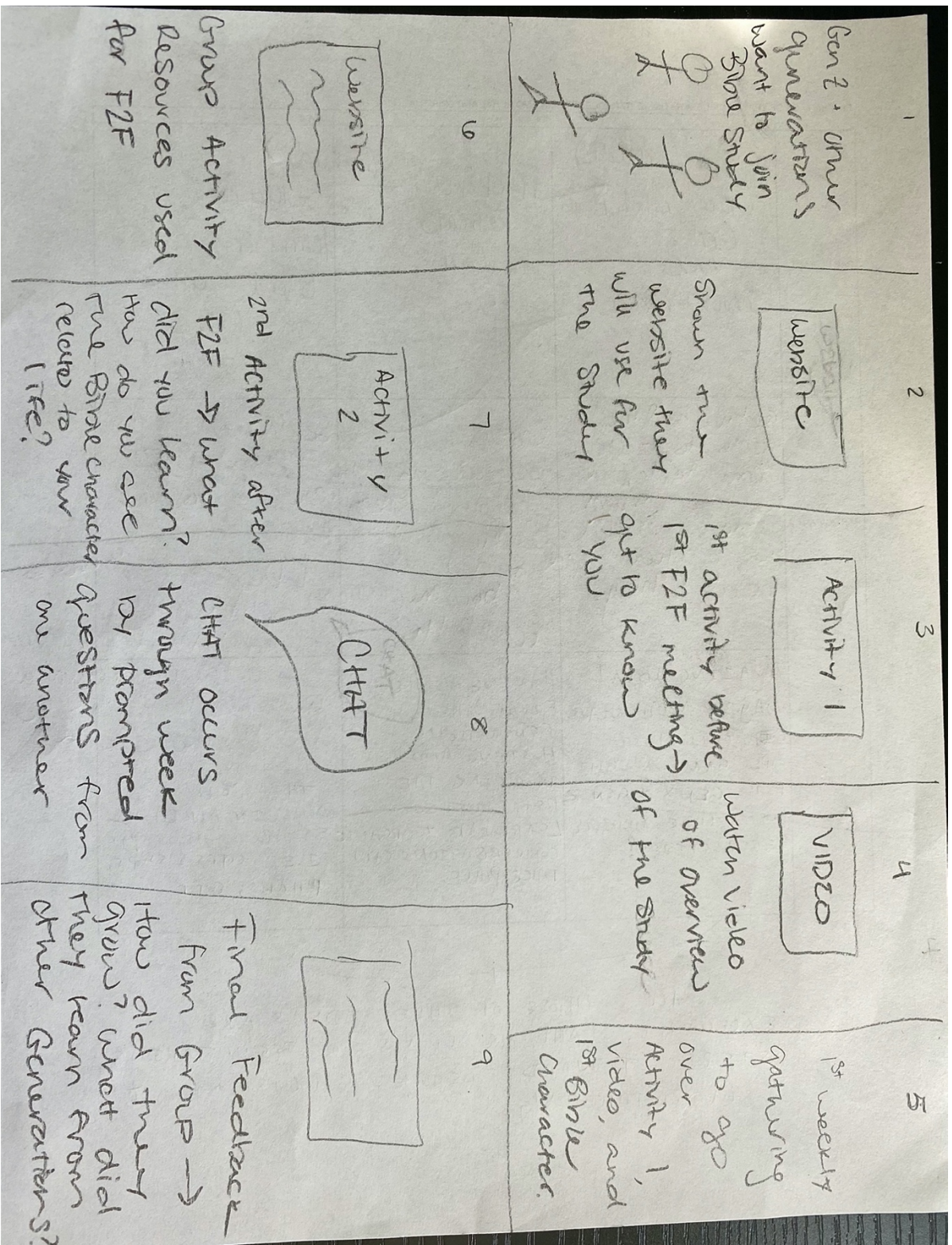
My most viable prototype is going to be a hybrid of my two prototypes that I have tested this semester. The reason I believe that I need to create a hybrid of the two is for multiple reasons. The first is because technology is going to be an important piece of connecting with Generation Z. It is not going to be the only way but I do think that in order to connect with Generation Z, technology must be integrated at some level into the prototype. The second reason for the hybrid is because I think that a retreat type space is going to create even more dialogue, which is the purpose of my research. Multiple generations expressed the importance of getting away from daily life and how this creates opportunity for dialogue with one another. The viable prototype would look like a cohort model that has a website the group is walking through during a six month to a year program that would include an online, in-person, and retreat component. The website would be created in order for the cohort to go through their online material each week. The in-person gatherings would be twice per month to go deeper into the material in which they are engaging with online. The retreat would be the extra space away in which further dialogue could occur. The reason for the cohort model would be to ensure mutuality and more dialogue among the generations. It would move away from the top-down type of model that Generation Z is traditionally used to in the Christian world. This will benefit them and will likely get them to buy into the idea at a deeper level.

## APPENDICES

## STORYBOARDS

<p>1</p> <p><u>TECH FREE</u></p> <p>Conference</p> <p>Advertised through local news to Gen 2 and older!</p>	<p>2</p> <p>Gether Participants →</p> <p>Show overview of topic and expectations.</p>	<p>3</p> <p>Participants put technology in drop box</p> 	<p>4</p> <p>Topic Content discussed →</p> <p>i.e. Discipline of Silence</p>
<p>5</p> <p>Practice Silence as a group</p> 	<p>6</p> <p>Dialogue →</p> <p>What does Silence represent/ stimulate?</p> <p>Do you practice in your own life?</p>	<p>7</p> <p>Technology Fast →</p> <p><del>Discussed!</del></p> <p>What do?</p>	<p>8</p> <p>How do we take this home?</p> <p>Resources on Silence</p>
			<p>9</p> <p>Overview →</p> <p>How has the lack of tech influenced our dialogue?</p> <p>Did the topic enhance conversation?</p>





## ***RECRUITING SCREENER***

### PROTOTYPE #1:

- Invite:
  - Who is your NPO audience?
    - Generation Z
    - People from other generations (i.e. Millennials, Gen X, Baby Boomers)
  - What are their characteristics?
    - Male or Female
    - Anyone 18 and older
    - Christians
    - Those desire space to dialogue about their spiritual journey and learn how to engage across generations
    - Able to use technology
  - What exact criteria will you use to identify these people?
    - Older than 18
    - Proclaiming Christian
    - Willing to use technology within a Bible study
  - What questions will you ask for each criteria to screen participants?
    - Are you a believer?
    - Are you currently in a Bible study? If so, what are you studying?
    - For Gen Z: Are you in a Bible study with those from older generations?
    - Other Generations: Are you in a Bible study with anyone who is a part of Gen Z?
    - Are you open to mutual learning from and engagement with those outside of your generation?
    - Do you regularly engage with people outside of your generation?
    - Are you willing to interact with
- Exclude:
  - Who do you want to exclude?
    - Not a Christian
    - Someone involved in a Bible Study that is intergenerational with Gen Z
  - What exact criteria will you use to identify these people?
    - Younger than 18
    - Does not Proclaim to be a Christian
    - Not involved in an intergenerational Bible study with Gen Z
  - What questions will you ask for each criterion?
    - Are you a believer?
    - Are you older than 18?

## PROTOTYPE #2:

- Invite:
  - Who is your NPO audience?
    - Generation Z
    - People from other generations (i.e. Millennials, Gen X, Baby Boomers)
    - Christians
  - What are their characteristics?
    - Older than 18
    - Proclaiming Christian
    - Willing to not use technology for a session
    - Willing to engage with spiritual topics
  - What exact criteria will you use to identify these people?
    - Older than 18
    - Christian
    -
  - What questions will you ask for each criteria to screen participants?
    - Are you older than 18?
    - Are you a proclaiming Christian?
    - Do you regularly dialogue about spiritual topics?
      - Are you willing to?
    - How often do you use technology? And are you willing to refrain from using it?
- Exclude:
  - Who do you want to exclude?
    - Not a Christian
  - What exact criteria will you use to identify these people?
    - Younger than 18
    - Does not proclaim to be a Christian
    - Wants to use technology
    - Not willing to dialogue about spiritual topics
  - What questions will you ask for each criterion?
    - Are you older than 18?
    - Are you a Christian?
    - Are you willing to refrain from using technology?
    - Are you willing to dialogue about spiritual topics?

### ***INTERVIEW SCRIPT***

1. **Welcome.** A brief welcome and thank you for their willingness to participate in my research. Give a little background of where I am at in the process but do not over explain the research.
2. **Open-ended interview questions.**
3. **Introduction to the prototype.** Talk about the prototype itself and what it is we are actually doing in the interview. Remind them that the prototype is exactly as it sounds, a prototype. There may be glitches and not everything makes sense. That is good. We want to make adjustments to the prototype.
4. **Tasks.** Have them walk through the different parts of the prototype. Observe and answer questions as they go. If things do not work with the prototype, recognize that as a good thing and encourage your participants in this. Try to understand where the participants are coming from and how they can help with the prototype.
5. **Debrief.** What went well? What did you enjoy? What did not work well? What would you change? What parts of the prototype matter to you?

### ***DOCUMENTATION OF PROTOTYPE***

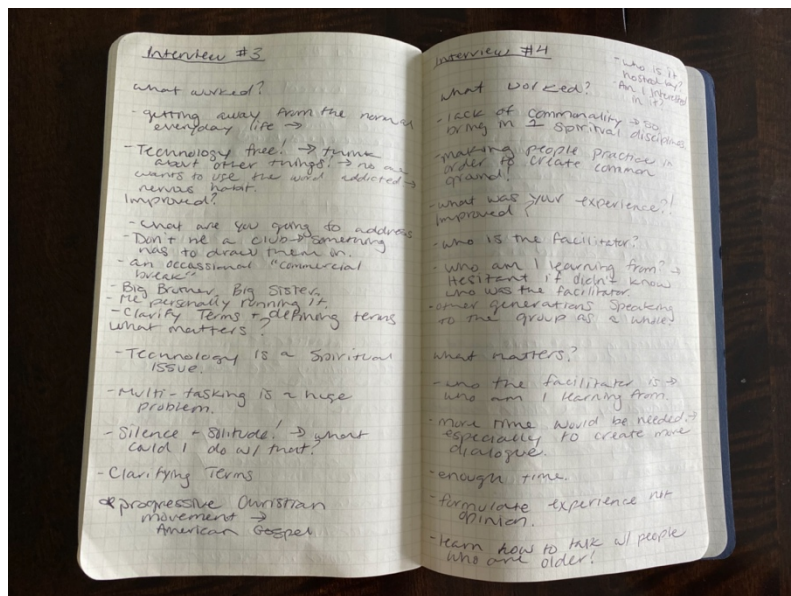
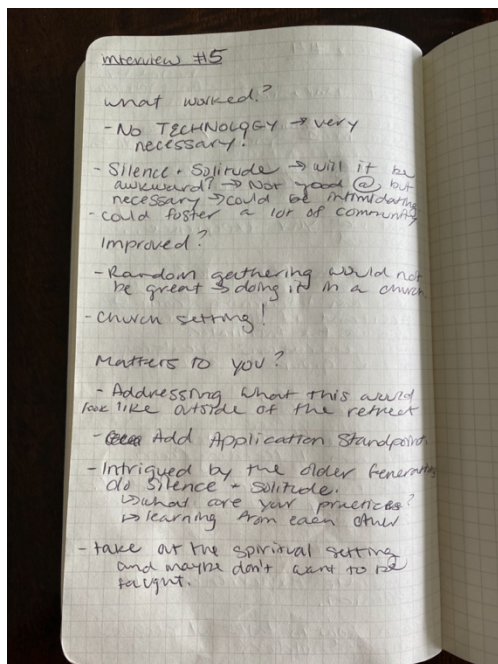
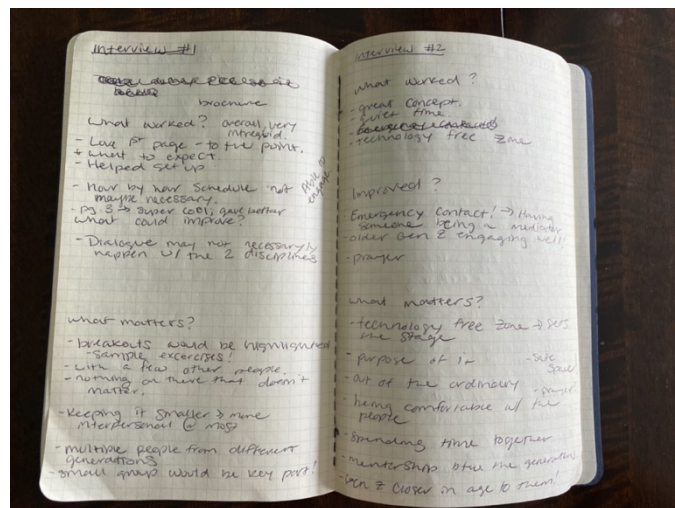
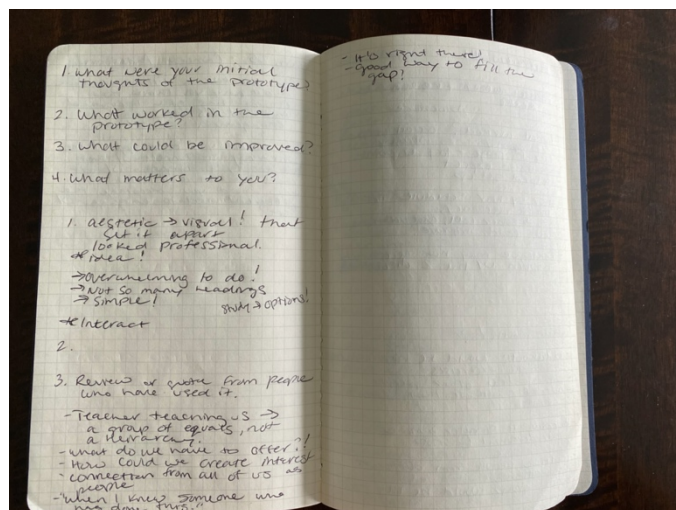
All prototype interviews were recorded over Zoom.

Prototype #1 Website Link: <https://ibachchad.wixsite.com/my-site>

Prototype #2 Brochure Retreat Simulation Link: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1mCjqyomC-QMOMux3iwT7qljqioK6yTS/view?usp=sharing>



## ONE-ON-ONE INTERVIEW NOTES





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