

INTERGENERATIONAL

S T E P S

A collaborative resource produced at an Intergenerational Writers Retreat in Mathesons Bay, November 2022.

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KIA ORA

This guide is for those who are already exploring the benefits of an intergenerational journey within their faith communities, and are wanting to be more intentional.

This document assumes that, as a church community, you have already done some reading and thinking around intergenerational ministry.

If you are still currently exploring the 'why' of intergenerational ministry, contact us for suggested readings. See page 2 for our contact details.

**Great is the Lord
and most worthy of praise;
His greatness no one
can fathom.
One generation commends
your works to another;
They tell of your mighty acts.
Psalm 145:3-4**

1. YOUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

These guiding principles reflect an Intergenerational Faith Community:

- * People are connecting and building relationships across generations.
- * The Body of Christ is serving, sharing and learning together.
- * Everyone has the opportunity to give and receive, and we honour the knowledge in the room.
- * We use language that is inclusive and easy to understand.
- * We welcome all. We are generous in how we include everyone, especially newcomers.
- * We respect the traditions of our church as we explore practical ways to include the whole community in the faith practices of our church, i.e. How will we share communion as a community?
- * Remember that there will be something for everyone, but not everything will be for everyone.

**"Every age
has gifts we
need and
every age has
needs we gift."**

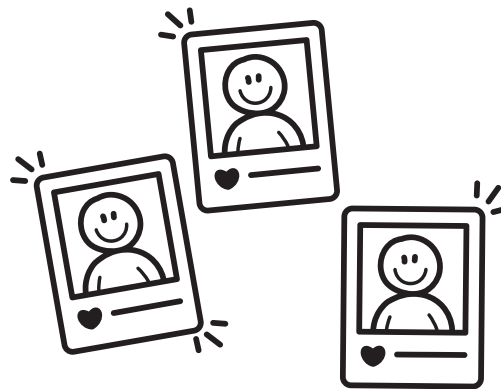
Rich Melheim



2. CREATE A TEAM

Gather a group of people together who are excited about this, to help plan and guide the process.

- * Consider a team of no less than three people for your planning. A good team can share the load, bring diversity and help with longevity.
- * Try to include a range of people eg: youth group member, parent of a preschooler, retiree, a member of your church leadership team (elder, vestry member).
- * At least one team member should be a relational connector/networker.
- * Consider who else can be included/co-opted to help plan for specific events.



Add the names of people you can invite to join the team

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3. CHOOSE YOUR APPROACH

In light of the guiding principles, and considering your faith community, what will your next step be?

- * Adapt something you are already doing?
- * Start something new?

Here are some suggestions:

- * Intergenerational homegroups
- * Intergenerational services
- * Intergenerational social events
- * Service projects
- * Part of a service
- * All together all the time
- * The core rituals, traditions or celebrations of your church e.g. The Lord's Supper or Baptism

Take time to pray together as a team.
Remember that change takes time.
Your church may need to begin with small steps.

Think big; start small.



So, what will your next step be?

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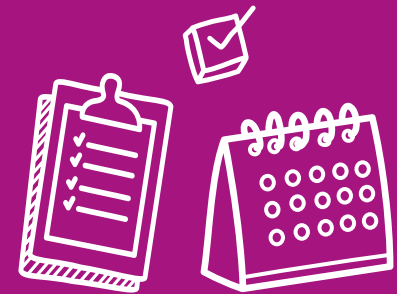
4. MAKE A PLAN

In order to make things happen, we need to be intentional, setting milestones and goals.

Practical Considerations

- * Look at your calendar and set some key dates for when things will happen and where. Book venues if needed.
- * Set a suitable time for your event to suit the ages that you want to attend. For example, consider young children or older people who do not like to travel at night when planning anything in the evening.
- * What health and safety considerations do you need to make a plan for?

Remember that it is important to move forward together



Key Elements

Take another look at the guiding principles. Choose some of these elements to include in your intergenerational experience to help you put these principles into action in your faith community:

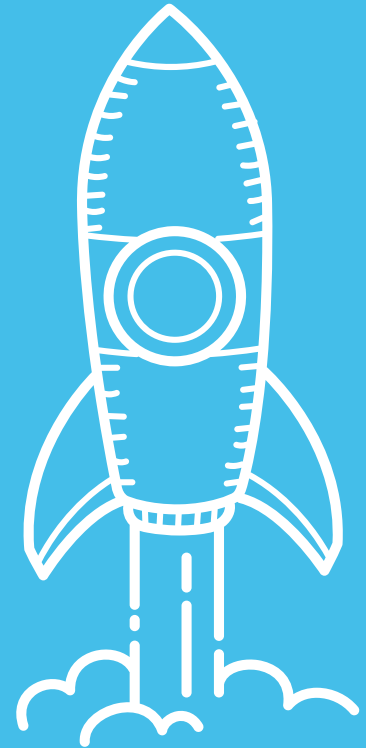
- * Storytelling and testimony
- * Space for conversation and sharing
- * Cater for people who learn through seeing, hearing, speaking and doing
- * Food and hospitality
- * Choose well worded questions
- * Space to respond to God individually and collectively
- * Serving each other and our community
- * Connection with God through the Bible and prayer
- * Guidance for integrating faith into everyday life
- * Communion or baptism
- * Include something unexpected, exciting, or fun!

As you plan, you may like to look at some templates. Please contact us for these.



5. RUN YOUR EVENT

- Trust that you have done all the hard work in preparation
- Trust yourself and your team
- Trust God!



6. LOOKING BACK TO LOOK FORWARD

Evaluation is important because it will enable you to plan, improve and grow together as you undertake the Intergen Journey.

Please do not skip this vital step!

Evaluation includes three components

- * Feedback from participants as part of ongoing and informal conversations.
- * A formalised process of gathering feedback from participants that may occur once a month, each term or as needed.
- * Evaluation carried out by your planning team.

Method

- * Make sure that you are gathering feedback from a range of people, including different age groups, abilities, gender and cultures. It is important to make sure the feedback you gather reflects the whole community, not just the loudest voices.
- * Choose a method of gathering feedback that will suit this range of people. For children or those for whom written feedback is a challenge, consider having a conversation. Consider talking with families and whānau together.
- * It is good to ask people how they would feel most comfortable giving their feedback.
- * When using written feedback, keep your questions short and simple. We have provided a simple example you can use and adapt.¹
- * It is best to not have anonymous feedback. If you know who has provided a certain piece of feedback, you are able to have a conversation with them if needed. This way, feedback is set in the context of a relationship.

Content

Begin by deciding what information you want to know, and how best to find out the answers. Ask simple questions that link to your purpose for gathering, and reflect back to the guiding principles.

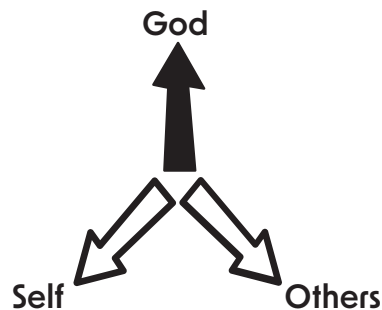
It is good to keep in mind these three components:

- * Connection with self
- * Connection with others
- * Connection with God

Consider asking specific people to provide you with in depth feedback, but it is good to decide on a few simple questions to ask more widely.

Here are some suggested questions:

- * Did you feel welcome today?
- * What surprised you?
- * Who did you enjoy spending time with today?
- * What helped you connect with God and others?
- * What didn't help you connect with God and others?



AND... REPEAT...!

We hope these six steps will provide a helpful framework for your intergenerational event

As you step out in faith to try new things, reflecting and learning along the way, keep a journal of your journey, so you can look back and see where God has been at work.

For additional resources and templates to go alongside this document, please contact us. See page 2 for our contact details.

Let us know how you get on!



