

# Intergenerational Ministry Program Overview...

***Here are some things you might consider if you are exploring developing an Intergenerational Ministry.***

## **Vision Statement**

Intergenerational ministry is one that serves every stage of life, infant to elder, through interactive, creative experiences and events that enhance and enrich the mind, body and soul; and allows for the fullest expression of the Christ Self.

## **PURPOSE**

### **Building Intergenerational Relationships**

- ◆ Provide opportunities for adult congregants to reflect together on their own relationships with kids. Identify their priorities for, and interests in making connections.
- ◆ Invite adults who do not have children to youth ministry to serve as teachers and sponsors.
- ◆ Encourage adults to share their journey, beliefs and values with young people. Invite young people to share their stories too.
- ◆ Link young people with adults in the congregation who have insights and life experiences that may be helpful to the particular young person, such as money management, dating relationships and vocational choices.
- ◆ Form informal mentoring relationships as part of youth ministry or important rites of passage.
- ◆ Examine your congregation's activities – from worship to youth ministry to social events – to determine if they are welcoming to all generations; explore whether these activities offer opportunities for more relationship building across generations.

### **Strengthening Families**

- ◆ Our children are born with open hearts and minds – how do we help keep them that way?
- ◆ Provide pastoral care and prayer support for families.
- ◆ Develop support and build relationships for families raising children.
- ◆ Provide parenting classes on various topics.

### **Learning Objectives**

- ◆ To understand that we are each an individual expression of Spirit with Spiritual gifts that are uniquely our own.
- ◆ To recognize that in each stage of life we have something essential to share and in the sharing Spiritual growth is enhanced.
- ◆ To understand that we co-create our life and the choices we make impact not only ourselves but others as well.
- ◆ To develop life skills that enhance our ability to work in community with others.

# ACTIVITIES

## COMMUNITY BUILDING

### **Family Night of Light**

*Adapted from: Children's Ministry Magazine – Jan/Feb 2005  
Corinne Newell, Upper Sandusky, OH*

Host a Family Night of Light at any time of the year. Ask families to bring food for a potluck meal, the have activities that will involve everyone.

After everyone has eaten, form groups by giving each person a jumbo-sized puzzle piece with a number written on it. People must find others with the same number to complete the puzzle and form their group.

Then have groups go on a scavenger hunt. Visit [www.cmmag.com](http://www.cmmag.com) for a Bible-based scavenger hunt. Once the scavenger hunt is over, have a volunteer read the parable of light from Luke 8:16-18 to everyone.

Encourage families to discuss ways they can show God's light at home, school or work, and play. Then have family members work together to create a lighted craft.

To make small lanterns from soft drink liter bottles, cut the plastic bottles in half and throw away the top half. Poke two holes opposite each other 1 inch down from the top of the remaining bottle half. Form a wire handle and insert the handle's ends into the holes, twisting each end to keep it in place. Line the bottom of the bottle with heavy foil. Then place a tea light inside.

Turn out the room lights and have everyone sit in a circle. Light the children's lanterns and sing an appropriate song, such as, "This Little Light of Mine." Close by thanking God for his light. Everyone can adjourn for snacks and cleanup.

### **Unbirthday Celebration**

Sent out with the church newsletter were the birthday mandalas to be colored and brought to the event as decorations. Children, youth, adults and elders sat together at tables grouped according to their birth months, and each table decorated its own birthday cake.

- ◆ There will be a table set up for each month of the year. Please sit at the table representing your birth month.
- ◆ Please bring a main dish or salad for 8 or a loaf of bread and your own place settings. Dessert and drinks will be furnished.
- ◆ Let us know how many in your family will attend, when their birthdays are and what you will bring.

P.S. Please color your birthday mandala and post this as a reminder at home. THEN...bring the mandala to the party and help us decorate.

## Wishing Time

This is an evening event, following a potluck supper. There were more adults than children attending, ages ranging from 5 to about 80. We eyeballed the group to choose the median age and asked all above that age to go to one end of the room and all under it to the other end. One leader spoke with the younger group and handed each a Magic Marker. They were told that they would need to share the Magic Marker with someone in the other group. They could choose their partner but must stay with that person for our activity. The other leader told the older group that they would be partners for our activity with someone from the other group and they should work on the project together. If their partner happened to be quite young, we would appreciate their assisting that person in reading and writing when necessary. After partners were chosen, we told all that they were to go around the room and look at the headings being written on the big pieces of paper posted. Then, they were to write in their responses to the headings. The other leader was writing the beginning of a statement on each paper. We had nine.

They were:

1. In this church, I wish I...
2. I wish this church would...
3. I wish the people of the church...
4. In our church school, I wish....
5. and so on...

When it looked as if most persons had written all they wanted to, we asked that they go back around the room, still with partners, read what others had written and put a check mark beside those statement they agreed with. Then we asked them to go around the room again and write in their names beside those items they were willing to do something about. When finished, we dimmed the lights, lit some candles and minister gave a short talk on the need to let our wishes be known – that when we do, we usually find others in agreement and then something positive can happen – making wishes come true.

## Intergenerational Activities

- ◆ Game Nights
- ◆ Movie Nights
- ◆ Family Camp
- ◆ Dances of Universal Peace
- ◆ Pot Luck
- ◆ Ice Cream Socials
- ◆ Have a music swapping event where each person brings their favorite song and gets to share it with the whole group.
- ◆ Form intergenerational music groups and ask them to lead in worship and at other occasions.
- ◆ Plan challenging, fun, intergenerational activities such as:
  - Hosting a church square dance
  - Painting a church mural
  - Setting up "Puzzle Fun"
  - Create a video story (or history) of your church. Have children and youth interview older members and include clips from various intergenerational activities. ***Could be done in now and shown at Annual meeting.***