



Young blood in an old church

Building a multi-generational congregation

If you're an adult living in an empty nest, you can go for days at a time surrounded only by what you like:

- You can listen to your favourite music on an Internet radio station and enjoy all the tunes.
- You can read editorials by your pet pundits and never get upset.
- You can eat just what you want. (Evidently a lot of you like gum.)

But like a diet consisting entirely of gum, surrounding yourself with a life where everything agrees with you is . . . disagreeable.

It's disagreeable because it's unbalanced. And just as you need variety in your diet, it's good to be in contact with people of different opinions and backgrounds. Connecting with people who don't think like you do

can be a tough exercise, but the workout is good for your head. And your heart: being with people of different ages broadens your perspective and deepens the meaning of your own life.

Deepening the meaning of life is what Knox-Metropolitan United Church is about, and frankly, engaging younger people in the church will assure that it continues to the next generation.

Any church with an eye to its future needs to embrace that future when it enters the sanctuary carrying a skateboard. To stimulate thinking about directions for the congregation, the Knox-Met future planning committee asked the downtown Regina church, "How will we grow into an engaged multi-generational congregation?"

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Young blood — continued from front page
The generations we're talking about

There are four age groups in today's congregations: Builders, Boomers, Busters, and Bridgers.

- **The Builders.** Born before 1945. Builders are the "get-it-done" generation. They tend to be faithful, loyal, and committed. They remember the Depression, World War II, and days with no TV.
- **The Boomers.** Born between 1945 – 1965. Boomers grew up in a strong economy. They remember the Vietnam War and can't imagine life without TV.
- **The Busters.** Born between 1965 – 1983, they were raised during a fluctuating economy and remember Operation Desert Storm and MTV.
- **The Bridgers.** Born after 1983. They have known only a volatile economy and the war against the Taliban. They can't imagine life without the Internet and cell phones.

Churches with equal amounts of these generations engaging with each other are rare. Gary McIntosh is a professor of Christian ministry and leadership at Talbot School of Theology. He runs a consulting company that has worked with over 500 churches wanting to grow. He writes in *One Church, Four Generations* that most churches target

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only one generation exclusively, while often ignoring the others.

Other generations certainly notice when their church isn't speaking to them. David Kinnaman is a pollster researching issues at the intersection of faith and culture. In his book, *You Lost Me: Why Young Christians are Leaving Church . . . and Rethinking Faith*, Kinnaman reports on a survey of 5,000 young adults in the 18 to 29 age group. Time and again the study reveals the sentiment that "older people seem more important than younger people in my parish".

What we've got at Knox-Met may be good enough for you, but it's not good enough for the generations who aren't coming here.

There is an absence of people between the ages of 18 – 40 at Knox-Met. We are not alone among churches in this way. And there is a concern that this age group might never return to the church. Kinnaman reports that this "lost generation" places the

blame for their departure at the religious establishment.

Sometimes they leave because to stay is just too painful or damaging. One revealed that to stay with the church was "damaging my relationship with God and my relationship with myself and I felt no choice but to leave."

Edward Hammett has spent 20 years in church consultant work. In *Reaching People Under 40 while Keeping People Over 60: Being Church for All Generations*, he states, "if the congregation decides to keep the over-sixty crowd satisfied, the church will not grow numerically, and, in time, the congregation will die. . . ."

Choose to be multi-generational

Becoming an engaged, multi-generational church does not happen by accident. Like meeting new people at a party when you're comfortable on the couch with your friends, it doesn't come naturally.

We can certainly grow in *any* community. But a community with all age groups helps us grow better. As Holly Allen and Christine Ross say in *Intergenerational Christian Formation: Bringing the Whole Church Together in Ministry, Community and Worship*, "Intergenerational faith experiences uniquely nurture spiritual growth and development in both adults and children." Seeing people of all ages enjoying each other at church adds a deeper understanding to the Christian message that we are not alone.

Passages



A downtown church: The mayor weighs in. We asked Mayor Michael Fougere (left) to speak on Knox-Met's role in revitalizing the downtown. He remarks that Knox-Met is a city landmark and a neighbour of City Hall, adds to the vibrancy of today's downtown Regina, and will be an active part of the future of this city. It provides an "exceptional glimpse into Regina's culture and history." Jamie Mason at the Regina Downtown Business Improvement District shared that, "churches are about seeking answers and mitigating the difficulties people face in real life while pursuing a spiritual path that allows that to happen naturally and authentically." She also thinks art has a lot to do with spirituality; so artistic ventures are appropriate.



Got some books you'd love to get rid of? How about sheet music, CDs and DVDs?

Right now Knox-Met is accepting new-ish items in good condition for our Book and Bake Sale coming on Friday and Saturday April 4 and 5. Get a good feeling today by leaving your pre-loved media at our church anytime during office hours.

Art gallery in our bell tower. The Regina Bell Ringers seek someone to help with the art for the Dead Air Space Art Gallery (located in the bell tower between the ringing room and the bells). Before the art is hung in the gallery for the year, curators Bev Lundahl and Helen McCaslin



Courtesy Mairnark Bellcraftmen

A good number for a handbell choir is 12.

But right now the Knox-Met handbell choir is running around six or seven ringers. Director Sandra Cosbey says musical literacy is not required but helpful. The group practises Fridays at 6 p.m. in Knox-Met's Centennial Room. Add some fun to your Friday evenings! Start your involvement by ringing Carol Benesh at 306-522-1888.

prepare the art for showing to the congregation in late February. The Ringers need a volunteer to deliver the art to the framer and

then back to the church; please contact Carol Benesh (306-522-1888) or Wayne Tunison (306-522-7244) if you can transport the artwork.



Keep your forks . . . there's pie!

The Congregational Life committee's annual Pie Auction and Social will be on Sunday February 23 after the worship service. This is a fun event and a great fundraiser, plus we get to eat some delicious pie and ice cream. The cost will be \$3.00 for a single piece of pie and \$8.00 for a family. We can also look forward to some great celebrity pies that will be auctioned.

Church directory. Planning for a new church photo directory is underway. If you're interested in working on this project, contact Dan Coggins by February 14 at d.coggins@pitchgreen.com.

Knox-Met works to right an old wrong



Library and Archives Canada PA-020921

The Regina Indian Industrial School, 1908

From 1890 – 1920 Knox Presbyterian Church operated the Regina Indian Industrial School, situated on the present site of the Paul Dojack Centre. A cemetery on Pinkie Road north of Dewdney Ave is the final resting place of several children who died while attending the school. There are possibly more than 30 native children buried in the cemetery — at this time detailed records are not available.

The United Church is participating in the Truth and Reconciliation process started by the federal government for survivors of residential schools. As Knox Presbyterian amalgamated with Metropolitan Methodist to form Knox-Metropolitan, the Outreach and Social Action Ministry has been approached to learn about the school and to explore possible methods of reconciliation with descendants of students who attended there. The outreach committee met with Rev. Dawn Rolke, followed

by a supper with Rev. Rolke, Don Black from the Regina Heritage Advisory Board, three Aboriginal Elders, and members of the Outreach Committee of First Presbyterian Church.

All are working together to plan some process of reconciliation. At Knox-Met, this will probably include a Minute for Mission and a follow-up meeting with interested members of the congregation.

February

8 Youth Treble Choir Project Final Concert Features Cantate Senior, Conservatory Juventus Chamber, and Saskatoon Children's Choirs. 7:30 p.m. Sanctuary ■ Tickets \$5 and \$15 at www.saskchoral.ca

9 Special birthday celebration If you or someone you know will be celebrating a 90+ birthday in the next few months, we want to help you celebrate with your church friends and family ■ Contact the church office 306-525-9128



28 The Heart of Drumming Workshop To March 1. Friday 7 – 9 p.m. and Saturday 9:30 – 11:30 a.m. No experience needed, drums supplied ■ Preregistration required. Free. Contact Marlene 306-789-3905

March

1 Amati String Quartet 7:30 p.m. Sanctuary ■ Tickets starting at \$15 available at the door and at www.persephonetheatre.org

2 Fat Sunday Fundraiser Tasty pancakes, sausage and fruit trays with all the trimmings. Free will offering. Lower Hall after the morning service.

8 Cool in the Furnace II To March 9. A musical money raiser for Lumsden Beach Camp. March 8 at 7 p.m., March 9 in the Knox-Met worship service. ■ Contact Corinne Groff 306-584-1274