

CPWM CONVENTION WORKSHOP “Hands Together Across the Generations”

Lord you have been our dwelling place in all generations...from everlasting to everlasting you are God.

Psalm 90:1 and 2b

“God gifts God’s People at every stage of life to bless and receive blessings”

75 minute workshop

10 minutes: **Welcome and Introduction**

- 1.) “**Stand up** if you can agree with the statement that *God gifts people at every stage of life to bless and receive blessings.*”
- 2.) “**Stand up** if you agree with the statement that *God’s intent is for people at every stage in life to participate in ministry (kingdom building).*”

“These are two assumptions that I am making for the purpose of this workshop.” If you do not agree-it does not mean that I’m right about my assumptions, and that your perception is not correct. However, because we do not have time to debate these assumptions, and these ideas are foundational for the purposes of our time together, I hope you’ll keep in mind that we are assuming that God blesses people at every stage of life and that God has a plan (intent) for all people.

5 minutes: To **break into five age groups** (50 people will result in 10 people per group) and receive instructions and supplies for this exploration. **NO ONE SHOULD BE IN A GROUP THAT REPRESENTS THEIR ACTUAL AGE.**

The age groupings are:

- children
- youth
- young adults
- adults who are able to be actively engaged in ministry
- adults who are no longer able to be engaged/active

3 minutes: to **determine the unique realities of life** for your selected/assigned age group. “What’s going on in their lives?”

3 minutes: to **identify unique talents, gifts, & abilities** of your selected/assigned age group. “What does your age group do well?”

3 minutes: to **identify the unique needs** of your selected/assigned age group. “What do they need?”

3 minutes (x 5 groups): for each small group to **testify for/advocate for the selected/assigned age groups** to the total group.

10 minutes: Return to actual age groups (with representatives of children and inactive adults) and identify which are myths and realities of each age group?

- *children
- *youth
- *young adults
- *adults who are able to be actively engaged in ministry
- *adults who are no longer able to be engaged/active

10 minutes: to **talk about ways we might engage in ministry across the ages**

“Now that you’ve heard from each age group regarding their unique characteristics, talents/skills/abilities, and needs... and if we go back to the assumptions that *God gifts God’s People at every stage of life to bless and receive blessings, and that God’s intent is for people at every stage in life to participate in ministry.*”

15 minutes: What **have you heard about how we might engage in ministry across the ages?**”

For example let’s look at the discussion related to children...

The realities for children might be that they must rely totally on others (primarily parents, babysitters, daycare and teachers), the circumstances of their lives are pretty much out of their control, and they have short attention spans. A few of abilities of children might be that they can often times share without inhibitions, that they are usually open to new things, and that they enjoy a variety of approaches to learning, worshipping, etc.;

A few of the needs of children might be for someone to listen to them, for them to have some “say-so” in their lives, and the need to be loved/accepted unconditionally, just as they are.

1.) There are:

- a number of shared or similar needs regardless of age, (*we all need to be love unconditionally, to be valued, to be heard*)
- some peoples’ gifts meet other peoples’ needs in very natural ways (*those who need to be heard by others who are lonely, those who are seeking answers with can be blessed by persons with a lot of experience/wisdom*)
- we sometimes assume a myth to be true and we allow it to become a barrier to asking someone their real feelings
- we make generalizations about people (*all old people are...all young people are...*) that may or may not be true

Other findings are:

10 minute closing:

“As we have discovered, individual gifts, talents, abilities, needs, etc. are unique to all persons at every age. The most significant thing we can do as Christians is to honor and VALUE individuals where they are in life, and to connect with people at all stages of life – listening to their circumstances and developing relationships that meet peoples’ unique needs and celebrate (and engage/use) their God given gifts and talents- allowing people to grow into all that God has intended.

How can we be more intentional in our Christian journey to value the gifts, contributions, needs of everyone- children, homebound persons, professional people, homemaker, church volunteer, clergy, equally (embracing the priesthood of all believers) LIST SUGGESTIONS from people....

The call of Christ is not to tolerate one another, rather Christ calls us to love one another- as he has loved- unconditionally, sacrificially, and joyfully- to be about transforming the world and everything in it through love - co-creating, with God, the Holy dwelling place the psalmist is singing about in the 90th chapter of the Psalms –“Lord you have been a dwelling place in all generations- from everlasting to everlasting, you are God.”