

BOOMERS and beyond

INSPIRATION
AND
RESOURCES
FOR LEADERS
IN MINISTRY

Connecting.
Coaching.
Communicating.

Developing purposeful ministry for those in the Second Half of Life.
OCTOBER, 2006



The Counterculture Generation: God's Provision for Such a Time as This

Boomers have the arguable reputation for going against the flow.

"You say you want a revolution..." Remember the words of those unintentional architects of a new culture, the Beatles? Those were words that defined a generation as one that wanted to change the world, making it a better place filled with love, peace and harmony. Today this Boomer generation is being analyzed, dissected, even recreated as it hurls toward its later years. Not surprisingly, the world is taking notice, as it has whenever the generation makes a communal sneeze or even a hiccup.

The Boomers began turning 60 in 2006, and they are causing an uproar in marketing, politics, fi-

nances, families, healthcare and yes, even religious circles.

While we could talk about the generation's questionable distinctive, it may behoove us to consider God's purpose for this uniquely designed generation. Consider for a moment that this generation may be one of the most educated, most financially secure generations ever. Consider that this cohort, while tagged the "me-generation," reportedly contributes more dollars a year toward charitable causes than any previous generation. Consider that while the Boomers have dabbled in numerous philosophies and religions, they are also seeking truth and finding, or returning to, faith in Christ in notable numbers.

While midlife and older adult ministry leaders are scratching their

heads trying to develop programs that will meet the needs of Boomers, consider that perhaps God, in his sovereignty, has constructed such a revolutionary, activist, intelligent, generous, spiritual, and determined people to face head-on the problems and pains of a needy world. Perhaps our assignment as ministry leaders is not to pamper this generation, but to inspire it to take on its God-given responsibilities. In other words, it's time we encouraged the Boomers to accept the mantle of leadership – for such a time as this!

LB



Ideas for Effective Ministry with Boomers and Beyond

Leaders across the country are developing new ideas and strategies to meet the needs of people age 50+. Here are a few!

Please send your best ideas to share with others! Send to leonaberg@comcast.net or call 206-362-2621!

Missions

Short-term Missions and Service

This is high on the list for Boomers and early retirees. There are abundant opportunities.

BGC Global Outreach:

- Project Forget Us Not. Hurricane relief. Clean up, construction teams. 1 wk
- Teaching in international schools in Philippines, Japan, Cambodia, Senegal, Cameroon and Ethiopia. 1-2 years.
- Teachers to train national pastors and missionaries in Nigeria. 1 year
- Short-term to Nigeria - teach parenting classes, medical teams, work teams. 3-4 weeks.

Information: Contact Debbie Castic at dcastic@baptistgeneral.org or 1-800-323-4215

Finishers Project matches your skills with opportunities in global missions. Visit www.finishers.org

Short-term missions trip to Nicaragua in March. Contact Richard Bergstrom at richardb@nsb.org

Social

Relationship Building

A priority for this generation is building relationships and having FUN!

BOOMER BASHES

Planning a party that celebrates the Boomers is an idea that has caught on all over. Parties run the gamut - Birthday parties with live bands and pizza; comedy nights with professional comedians and dessert; 70s retro parties with bell-bottoms! Celebrate this generation coming of age!

CRUISING!

BGC Fire & Reign Western Caribbean Cruise.

Join the Bergstroms as your hosts for the 2nd 1/2 for Him Cluster! In addition to the great BGC fellowship activities and teaching sessions, you will enjoy a special 2nd 1/2 for Him Reception, a study session, and a special gift! <http://www.itgintl.com/cruise/index.asp> or www.chonline.org/bgc

Outreach

New and Improved Resource:

Senior Evangelism

Partnership has launched a new website to encourage and educate about outreach to midlife and older adults.

Check it out at www.seniorevangelism.org

A sister website managed by Senior Evangelism Partnership is www.SeniorLifestyles.org

Adult Learning Centers

Churches in Northern California and in Whittier, California are holding adult learning centers as a means to reach out to midlife and older adults.

Olde Fashioned Hymn Sing

Rocky Mountain District sponsors hymn sings to reach out to seniors the old fashioned way!

Continuing education is vital for leaders in ministry with Boomers and Beyond. Here are a few opportunities:

CASA Leadership Conference

November 9-10
Irvine, CA

Information:
www.gocasa.org

Masters in Gerontology Program

Bethel University
St. Paul, MN

Information:
email
k-black-lance@bethel.edu

Creating a Senior Friendly Congregation

Bloomfield MN
October 13, 2006

Information:
Bethel U. 651-635-8000

"Re-Thinking Aging" Conference

Chicago, IL
March 8-11, 2007

www.asaging.org

Boomers and Beyond Conference: A Clarion Call for Excellence, Creativity and Compassion

Leaders gather at Bethel to discuss aging issues

Nearly 200 leaders in midlife and older adult ministries representing several denominations from across the country, gathered on June 27, 2006, in Benson Hall on the campus of Bethel University for the first Boomers and Beyond Conference. The event was a cooperative effort of BGC 2nd 1/2 for Him Ministries, Bethel University and Seminary, and Senior Living Network, a coalition of retirement communities endorsed by the BGC.

The event commenced to the regal sounds of Dr. Stephen Self playing the grand pipe organ. The opening challenge was brought by Dr. Richard and Leona Bergstrom, co-directors of BGC 2nd 1/2 for Him. Keynote speaker Dr. Jay Kesler called participants to respond to the God-given task of passing on a healthy heritage of faith to the next generations. Two special interest forums and 12 workshops dealt with issues facing all churches as they minister to people 50+. Here are a few highlights:

The Local Church: A Shelter in the Time of Storm

Dr. Harley Schreck, anthropology professor and Director of the Master in Gerontology program at Bethel University, challenged participants in this special interest forum to consider the impact Boomers would have on the church and our communities as they head toward retirement. While the Boomers can be considered a "treat", the sheer numbers and demands will stress the current caregiving structure. The church, he believes, will need to consider an "Intergenerational Contract," wherein people are interdependent, caring for one another's

physical as well as spiritual needs. The church is the perfect place to offer quality programs, relationships, advocacy and spiritual guidance.

Evangelism at Heaven's Door

Lois Matson, VP of Christian Ministries at Fairview Village in Downers Grove, Illinois, shared her passion for leading older persons to Christ. Many have come to first time knowledge of Christ while facing last days in long term care. She begins with a simple Resident Spiritual Assessment, designed to begin a discussion about matters of hope, eternal life, end-of-life issues and personal faith. When a person makes a commitment to Christ, it is important to follow up with written materials, personal contact, and invitation to study and prayer groups. Lois encourages us all to remember that just because one is old and may attend a Christian church or live in a Christian retirement facility, he or she may not know the Lord personally. It is a rich mission field.

Growth or Change: Injecting New Energy in Old Programs

Bill Damberg, Pastor for Senior Adults at Galilee Baptist in Loveland, Colorado, shared in this workshop that he believes that today's seniors must focus on *growth*, not change. Growth is one stage building upon the other. Change means leaving the past behind and starting a new page. Given the rich heritage of our churches and denomination, we must build on those foundations, not bypass them. Seniors ministry can be reenergized by being prayer rooted, growth-focused, visionary, proactive, diverse and welcoming.

Watch for announcements about the next Boomers and Beyond Conference in Anaheim, June, 2007!

Boomers and Beyond Leadership Network

Newsletter

This newsletter is produced bimonthly by BGC 2nd 1/2 for Him. Editor: Leona Bergstrom. To subscribe for free electronic editions via your email, or to submit articles or ideas, please write to leonaberg@comcast.net or call 206-362-2621

Training

Our goal is to train leaders who are effective in leading the local church toward powerful midlife and older adult ministry. The annual conference is one of those opportunities. 2nd 1/2 for Him leaders are available to come to your church or district for on-site training. Call Richard Bergstrom at 360-676-4824.

Resources

We are continually updating our resource list to provide you with up-to-date information. Check our website at www.chonline.org/bgc

BGC 2ND 1/2 FOR HIM

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RESOURCES FOR VITAL AND EFFECTIVE MINISTRY TO BOOMERS AND BEYOND:



Short Film, "Musical Chairs" Challenges the Dominant Paradigm of Life in the Second Half

Angst and uncertainty often accompany the feelings of relief and excitement when one is facing retirement. While for many a life of leisure is a fulfillment of dreams and planning, others embark on a search for meaning and significance.

This short film, produced by BGC 2nd 1/2 for Him Co-directors, Richard and Leona Bergstrom, and Smallfire Films (www.smallfire.net) challenges the dominant paradigm.

In an entertaining yet provocative manner, this 10-minute DVD will make you laugh, cry, and ask some hard questions about purpose in the second half of life. It is being used as a discussion starter in churches, small groups, and senior living communities. For more information visit www.musicalchairsthemovie.com, www.chonline.org/bgc. email lbergstrom@chonline.org or call 206-362-2621. The DVD is available for a donation of \$24.99 + S&H. A discussion guide, written by Dr. Bergstrom, is included with the DVD.

"If the powerful message of this short film spreads over our nation, we might see a massive mobilization of mature adults impacting communities and the world in unprecedented ways." - Don Wilcox, Leadership Network, Dallas, TX

Boomers and Beyond
LEADERSHIP NETWORK

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