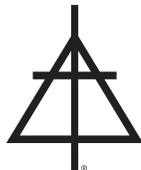


INTERGENERATIONAL

*Service*

SURVEY





Christian Reformed Church  
**Faith Formation  
Ministries**

# INTERGENERATIONAL SERVICE SURVEY

The **Intergenerational Service Survey** is designed to help your congregation identify strengths and weaknesses with regard to an intergenerational approach to service and community engagement.

Encourage as many people as possible to complete the survey. Then use the discussion ideas and suggested next steps found in the **Follow-Up and Exploring Further** sections to help shape your action plans.

This resource is adapted from *Together All God's People*, CRC Publications, 2005.  
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# INTERGENERATIONAL SERVICE SURVEY

The following survey is designed to help our congregation identify strengths and weaknesses with regard to an intergenerational approach to service and community engagement.

*Answer yes or no for each of the following statements about our congregation.*

- |   |                                   |                                   |
|---|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. One team/committee oversees and coordinates all the service and community engagement (outreach) projects of our church.  | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Y</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>N</b> |
| 2. The team/committee that oversees and coordinates our service and community engagement activities includes young people.  | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Y</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>N</b> |
| 3. An intergenerational team from our church has gone on a mission trip in the past year.   | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Y</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>N</b> |
| 4. The congregation as a whole participates in four or more service/community engagement activities per year (food bank collection, fundraiser for missions, Ride for Refuge, etc.) | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Y</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>N</b> |
| 5. Children and youth serve alongside adults during special service projects and fundraisers.   | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Y</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>N</b> |
| 6. Children and youth are taught about stewardship and financial giving and are encouraged and empowered to participate (for example, they are supplied with giving envelopes.)     | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Y</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>N</b> |
| 7. Children, youth, and adults are encouraged and equipped to share their faith with others.  | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Y</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>N</b> |
| 8. Ministry teams that focus on addressing specific community needs include children and youth.   | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Y</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>N</b> |
| 9. Children and youth understand the work and ministry of the deacons (or those in similar roles in our congregation) and work alongside them whenever possible.                    | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Y</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>N</b> |
| 10. Youth and young adults who go on SERVE projects or other service/community engagement trips are commissioned by the congregation, prayed for, and financially supported.        | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Y</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>N</b> |

- |   |                          |          |                          |          |
|---|--------------------------|----------|--------------------------|----------|
| 11. Teens are part of the decision-making process when it comes to selecting service projects and community engagement activities for our congregation.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>Y</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>N</b> |
| 12. Children and youth know the missionaries that the congregation supports and are encouraged and involved in supporting them.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>Y</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>N</b> |
| 13. Church leaders and families with children and youth are aware of resources (such as ServiceLink) and programs (such as SERVE) available for them to participate in.                               | <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>Y</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>N</b> |
| 14. Our congregation ensures that meaningful service opportunities and hands-on ministry experiences are available to all children, youth, and adults.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>Y</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>N</b> |
| 15. The majority of our congregation has participated in local and global intergenerational service projects that have helped to establish a lifestyle of learning, serving, and sharing one's gifts. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>Y</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>N</b> |
| 16. Our church partners with the agencies and ministries of the denomination to coordinate opportunities for service and ministry.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>Y</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>N</b> |
| 17. Every young person in our congregation is encouraged and equipped to complete one year of ministry/service experience by the age of 20.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>Y</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>N</b> |
| 18. Children and youth are helped to make connections between service and social justice through curriculum, debriefing experiences, and so on.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>Y</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>N</b> |
| 19. Community engagement and service opportunities are well thought out and organized sequentially according to age and maturity.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>Y</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>N</b> |
| 20. Consideration of the individual gifts and interests of participants is given when planning service projects and community engagement activities.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>Y</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>N</b> |
| 21. Young people are encouraged and equipped to discover their spiritual gifts alongside adults through service and community engagement activities.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>Y</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>N</b> |
| 22. The congregation models missional living for its children and youth.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>Y</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>N</b> |
| 23. The church assists children and youth in connecting with their peers in the community and building relationships with them.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>Y</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>N</b> |
| 24. The church provides welcoming "entry-level" programs for unchurched children, youth, and their families.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>Y</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>N</b> |
| 25. The church leadership communicates the biblical commands for every believer to serve and to share their faith.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>Y</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>N</b> |

## Scoring the Survey

Each “yes” answer is worth one point.

**23-25 points:** Your church knows what intergenerational ministry is all about. Consider leading workshops for other churches in your community!

**18-22 points:** Keep up the good work! You’re on the right track.

**11-17 points:** Things are looking up. Don’t stop now!

**10 or fewer points:** Taking this survey was a good start. Begin now to work toward a more intergenerational approach to service and community engagement.

## Follow Up

- Have the people in your group share one thing they learned from this exercise.
- Compare your responses. If there is a discrepancy (some people answered “yes” and others “no”), reach a consensus on which answer is most accurate.
- Choose several “yes” responses to highlight and celebrate. Decide how you will communicate these successes to the rest of the congregation. (Along with using written communication via the bulletin/newsletter/social media, are there creative ways in which people of different generations might share with the congregation their stories of God at work locally and globally?)
- Choose one component to which you answered “no,” and commit to taking a step toward improvement in the coming month. Plan that step in detail by focusing on the *who*, *what*, *when*, *why*, and *how* aspects of your strategy.
- Choose two more components to which you answered “no,” and plan several steps that you can take in the next six months to begin addressing them.
- Pray together, thanking God for the challenge of taking a more integrated approach to service and community engagement and asking for help in setting and meeting goals.
- Be sure to communicate to your council, leadership teams, and congregation what you have learned and planned so that everyone is on board.
- Continue working on weak areas and plan to reassess in one year’s time.

## Exploring Further

After evaluating the extent of your church's intergenerational service and community engagement ministries, you may discover that your church has already built up some experience. For example, many churches send their youth on a service project or missions trip. Such trips require adults to go along with the youth. Although the focus may be on working with the youth and helping them grow in ministry experience, this is an intergenerational event! Working and living side by side for the duration of the event develops friendship and respect among the generations.

Another example: during worship services most churches provide nursery care with the assistance of volunteers who come from different generations. Like mission trips, the nursery volunteers are serving side by side and have opportunities to get to know one another. (Read the post [How Your Church Can Become an Incubator for Intergenerational Ministry](http://tinyurl.com/hxow92j) (<http://tinyurl.com/hxow92j>) for ideas on how to build upon this opportunity.) Affirm positive intergenerational experiences within your congregation by asking participants about how their mission trip experiences nurtured their faith.

## Suggested Next Steps

1. As a team, encourage reflection and study on the call to have all age groups involved in service. The following Scriptures are a good place to start, as they provide a wonderful introduction to the biblical understanding of intergenerational ministry.
  - a. Deuteronomy 10:17-19
  - b. Micah 6:8
  - c. Matthew 25:34-36
  - d. Mark 10:21 (Luke 18:22)
  - e. Luke 4
  - f. Luke 12:32-34
  - g. Luke 14:13-14
  - h. Romans 15:25-27
  - i. 2 Corinthians 9
  - j. Galatians 2:10
  - k. James 1:27
  
2. Brainstorm together about all the service and community engagement ministries your church is currently engaged in, and list them on a large sheet of paper or a whiteboard. Be sure to include everything from mission trips to local retirement home visits. If the activity even hints of service or community engagement, write it down.

Next, go back through the list. Agree as a team how you will grade each item on the list. Use a scoring scale of 1-5 to indicate your team's collective conclusion, based on the meaning of each score, as follows:

- 1—totally *not* intergenerational
- 2—could involve multiple generations
- 3—involves at least two generations
- 4—involves a good mix of generations
- 5—designed to be intergenerational

3. After reviewing your scores from the preceding exercise, and with your responses to the Intergenerational Service Survey in hand, choose three or four events that could be strengthened or become intergenerational activities. For instance, if a single-generation group has been assembling Thanksgiving baskets for years, it would be valuable to introduce the concept of doing Thanksgiving baskets as families. The group that has been doing it for years could still be “in charge,” but the event could expand to involve other generations.
4. Make a plan. For each of the selected ministry events write down a desired outcome(s), list the necessary action steps (who, how, when), name possible obstacles and ways to overcome them, and write down prayer requests. Tip: When preparing action plans, be sure to include members who have been involved in the past. They are vested in the program and should be part of the planning.

## Tips to keep in mind:

- Take steps, but don't run. The very introduction of intergenerational ministry may raise questions and concerns. Celebrate small victories along the way and gather stories about them. For example, after becoming more intentional about developing cross-generational training and relationships among nursery volunteers, you discover that an older adult has begun a prayer partnership with the teen with whom she serves.
- When you form a team to coordinate a new project, be sure that the team is intergenerational.
- Keep records of projects, including feedback on what went well and how the project could be improved. In this way you'll begin to compile a significant resource file for other teams to use as new projects are being planned.

Get ideas and inspiration from the many resources found in the Intergenerational Church toolkit at [www.crcna.org/FaithFormation/intergenerationl-church-toolkit](http://www.crcna.org/FaithFormation/intergenerationl-church-toolkit). Faith Formation Ministries' Regional Catalyzers are also available for a coaching conversation over the phone, via email, or in person. Contact [faithformation@crcna.org](mailto:faithformation@crcna.org) or visit [crcna.org/FaithFormation/coaching](http://crcna.org/FaithFormation/coaching) for more information.