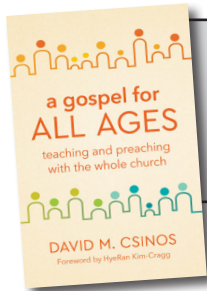




# BEING AN INTERGENERATIONAL CHURCH

## Resource Paper #8 | INTERGENERATIONAL PREACHING

*The Uniting Church in Australia seeks to be a genuinely intergenerational church in which all ages are welcomed and valued, where every generation is engaged together in active discipleship, growing in and sharing faith in Jesus. This paper is one of a series that has emerged to assist the church in being and becoming more intentionally intergenerational. It is offered as a resource for all those who share the dream of a more intergenerational church – a church comprised of lifelong followers of Jesus, of all ages, caring, praying, celebrating, learning and serving faith-fully together.*



“Try as we might to make our faith communities intergenerational – that is, environments in which relationships are fostered amongst people of all ages – we all felt as though the pulpit was the final frontier, a bastion of adult-centredness with-in the liturgical landscape. Sure, young people might be present during homilies and sermons, but the messages preached aren’t really for them...they’re in the room, but it’s easy to overlook them.” (p 3)

A Gospel for All Ages seeks to assist ministry practitioners in crafting preaching times that foster faith in people of all ages. In the book, Dave explores several strategies for proclaiming the gospel among intergenerational faith communities, including meaningful conversation, vibrant worship, and experiential meaning-making.

Significantly, A Gospel for All Ages identifies and introduces Eight Hallmarks of Intergenerational Preaching, noting...



*“These hallmarks are not concrete practices or specific tactics for preaching the gospel... they are assumptions, attitudes and postures that clear a path and guide us as we experiment with intergenerational preaching” (p.75)*

### 1 A GOSPEL FOR ALL

The Gospel is for everyone, no-one ought to be excluded on the basis of age

### 2 LANGUAGE MATTERS

We don’t need to simplify the concepts, we need to simplify the language

### 3 MUTUAL FORMATION

People of all ages can teach one another and learn from one another

### 4 DURABLE SCRIPTURES

The Bible is rugged and durable, it doesn’t wilt in the face of our doubts and questions

### 5 DE FACTO DIVERSITY

Recognising the reality of diversity – inclusive of age, of traditions, of styles – is vital

### 6 EXPERIENTIAL PARTICIPATION

Proclamation is not a passive enterprise, active engagement is required

### 7 INFUSED CREATIVITY

God creates and God is present in creativity. By God’s Spirit, God’s creativity is part of us.

### 8 GOD’S SPIRIT FOR ALL

God’s Spirit doesn’t differentiate on the basis of age

Amongst much wisdom and thought-provoking content, three concepts from A Gospel for All Ages to whet your appetite:

#### Practicing Intergenerational Preaching

Intergenerational preaching can involve...

- Interpreting together
- Speaking together
- Experiencing together

#### Wisdom for the Journey: Four Traits

“Focusing, finding, failing, flying... these four traits can help faith communities make the move toward intergenerational preaching” p.169

- Focus on a point of departure
- Find Allies...to share the journey
- Fail Gloriously...and learn from it
- Fly High...and celebrate the wins

#### Wisdom for the Journey: Three Practices

“Letting go, letting be and letting come are not sequential steps...we need to engage in all three practices at many different times and sometimes simultaneously” P.183

- Letting Go...of long held assumptions we may not even be aware of
- Letting Be...maintaining a posture of receptivity, not rushing or pushing
- Letting Come...being open and responsive to new possibilities as they emerge

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To see the complete set of original AIR Resource Papers and other information, visit the [AIR Library Folder](#).

To contact AIR email [au.intergenerational.roundtable@gmail.com](mailto:au.intergenerational.roundtable@gmail.com)



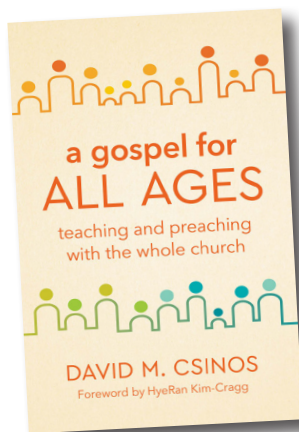


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### Quotes and Questions for Reflection

- p.18 "...the church entered the new millennium as the disembodied of Christ. While there are certain benefits of age-based ministry, many local congregations underscore the positive elements and overlook the deeply problematic aspects involved in dividing the generations". What are some of the "positive" and "problematic" elements that you see in "dividing the generations"?
- pp.35,36 "Preaching as testimony to God's story, preaching as empowering transformation, and preaching as an encounter with God". How does this sit with your understanding (and experience) of preaching? What other elements of "preaching" are important to you?
- p.63 "Once we name the fact that preaching is culturally conditioned, we become free to move beyond the norms and standards that tend to place parameters around what makes a sermon, well, a sermon". For you, to what extent does recognising "the sermon" as a cultural artefact make it easier/harder to change in form?
- p. 94 "These are innovative approaches to sharing the gospel that achieve the purposes of Christian preaching while fostering relationships and nurturing connections among people of any and every generation". How does your current practice/experience of preaching "foster relationship" and "nurture connections"?
- p.104 "Rather, it has been my experience that preaching is often seen and predominantly used as form of instruction – not the kind of formational, enculturating, transformational experiences we see in the life of Jesus". How is preaching currently "seen" in your particular context?
- p. 117 "We are a story-formed people. Our lives are first shaped by narrative, not by information". To what extent is this assertion reflected in the sermons you speak/hear?
- p.126 "When God became human, it exposed the importance of not simply being present but sharing experience"/p.137 "To create is to be active and fluid, to co-create is to be active and fluid together". How do notions of "shared experience" and "co-creation" shape your preparation for preaching?
- p.169 "Focusing, finding, failing, flying...these four traits can help faith communities make the move toward intergenerational preaching". What might you need personally in order to embrace/enact these traits (should you wish to)? What might be needed for these traits to be embraced/enacted in your community?
- p.183 "Letting go, letting be and letting come are not sequential steps...we need to engage in all three practices at many different times and sometimes simultaneously". As you reflect on the possibility of more intentionally intergenerational preaching in your context, what might you/your community need to let go, let be and let come?



Find out more in **A Gospel for All Ages:  
Teaching and Preaching with the Whole  
Church**

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