



Build a Team & Let the Spirit Lead:

Adventures in Cross+Gen Faith Formation in Small Churches

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<https://feedmyfaith.weebly.com/let-the-spirit-lead.html>

1. Spirit of Experimentation: Let's try an experiment

Anatomy of an Experiment:

- A problem, a burning question, or something that you wonder about.
- A hypothesis of how to solve that problem, answer that question, or explore what you wonder about more deeply.
- Test the hypothesis through an experiment
- Record and report the results, including what you might try in the future, if your problem is not completely solved, answered, or explored.

Characteristics of an Experiment:

- Experiments don't last forever
- Experiments can be tweaked and changed as you go
- Experiments help us get our feet wet. What small thing can we try?
- Experiments help us to dive into the deep end. What completely new event or experience do you want to try to help all generations to connect to one another?
- Experiments often lead to more experiments, larger or deeper ones.
- Experiments are meant to be evaluated: What did we learn? How will this learning guide future work?

2. Spirit of Teamwork: When we work together, the work is sustainable

- Who is ready for a new thing?
- Who has an open mind and willing hands?
- Who keeps showing up as a participant?
- How many different generations can you include? (a strength of small congregations?)

3. Spirit of Vibrancy: No need to reinvent the wheel!

- What is already working?
- How can we intentionally and consistently invite more generations to participate?
- What might need to change to encourage more participation?
- What exciting ministry do we have that needs a more critical mass to make it go?

4. Spirit of Curiosity: Every generation is still learning

- Cultivate curiosity within ourselves as ministry leaders. What sparks your curiosity?
- Every generation is invited to be curious. What do we each have to learn from one another?
- Barriers to curiosity: How can we lower the stakes for those who are afraid to admit that they don't know something? How can we provide experiences which help us to be surprised by the Spirit?
- Set the tone for curious exploration every single time. Hosts become essential. In what ways can we issue clear invitations to participate where all feel welcome and included?

5. Spirit of Invitation: Each of us has something to teach

- Every generation has something to share, everyone is an expert in their own lived experience
- Youth often have enthusiasm, if we are willing to catch it. What sparks enthusiasm and passion in the youth whom you serve?
- Elders often have wisdom, if we intentionally slow down for it. Who are the wise among you? How can they be invited to share?
- Teaching pairs of different generations can harness the gifts of wisdom and experience with the gifts of enthusiasm and passion for the best of both worlds. In what ways could we facilitate these types of partnerships?
- Specifically invite each learner to reflect on what they do already know, and encourage sharing. Could be through Spiritual Gifts Assessment or other, less formal (but still intentional) conversations and connections. How could we provide such space for reflection and opportunities to share with one another?

6. Spirit of Tenacity: Culture shift requires consistent support

- Institutional memory is strong; it is easy to slip back into old habits. What are some ways that we can recognize this as it happens and shift back to the experiment at hand?
- Paradigm shift/culture change requires consistent cheerleading and advocacy. What are some ways that you can work to encourage and advocate for Cross+Gen, with your team and in your context? Where is the "Room where it happens"?
- Cast vision, invite, train, cast vision, invite, retrain (a cycle, not a checklist to complete)
- Engage a partner in this work to help you to "stay the course." Could be one on one, a regional group, or an entire state.