



Attracting & Retaining Younger Members

Best Practices

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Learning Objectives

1. Different approaches for different generations
2. What we need to know about younger generations & Church
3. What to do (and not to do) about liturgy, design, pledges, and methods of giving

Introduction



Generational Differences impact Donor Motivation

How you message to different generations matters

- ▶ Let's take a look at how generational demographics impact donations in your community



Different Generations = Different Approaches

The “Matures”

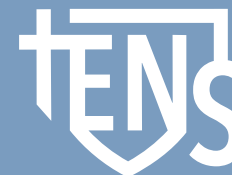
- ▶ Born before 1945
- ▶ 60% donate to a church*
- ▶ 51% volunteer with a church*
- ▶ Most interested in
 - ▶ Institutional support – they trust the institution
 - ▶ Pastoral care
 - ▶ The Church “being there” for them and future generations
 - ▶ Planned, Capital, and Annual Giving

From the Lake Institute of Faith & Giving, 2023

**Of church-going individuals*

Different Generations = Different Approaches

MATURES
1945 & EARLIER



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The “Baby Boomers”

- ▶ Born 1946 - 1964
- ▶ 48% donate to a church*
- ▶ 49% volunteer with a church*
- ▶ Most interested in
 - ▶ Wanting to know the finances before they decide to donate
 - ▶ The Church “being there” for them and future generations
 - ▶ Planned, Capital, and Annual Giving
- ▶ This is the wealthiest generation ever to have lived

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Different Generations = Different Approaches

BABY BOOMER
1946-1964



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Generation X – The Lost Generation

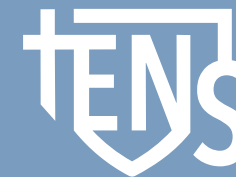
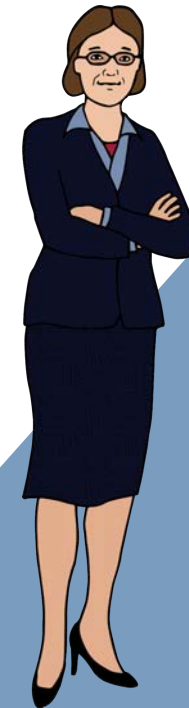
- ▶ Born 1965 - 1976
- ▶ 56% donate to a church*
- ▶ 50% volunteer with a church*
- ▶ Most interested in
 - ▶ Far more interested in volunteering than donating to their church – or see volunteering as a first step
 - ▶ Less trusting of the institution, more interested in the work
 - ▶ Annual and Capital Giving
- ▶ This generation will inherit +\$40 Trillion in the next 15 years

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Different Generations = Different Approaches

GENERATION X
1965-1976



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The Millennials

- ▶ Born 1977 - 1995
- ▶ 56% donate to a church*
- ▶ 65% volunteer with a church*
- ▶ Most interested in
 - ▶ Results – what is the church doing in the community and why does it matter?
 - ▶ Even less trust in organization and institution, more interested in donating to grassroots or defined ministries than to overall budgets
 - ▶ Largest online donors
- ▶ 89% of this generation donates to nonprofits, they are very generous

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MILLENNIAL
1977-1995



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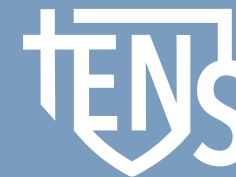
Generation Z

- ▶ Born 1996 +
- ▶ By 20 years old 30% have made a donation to a nonprofit
- ▶ 97% of this generation has made an online gift for a charitable purpose
- ▶ Most interested in
 - ▶ They want their work to make a difference, therefore their church needs to prove the same
 - ▶ 76% are worried about the planet, and want to see their faith communities do something about it
 - ▶ Prefer apps and mobile giving. They don't write checks
 - ▶ Least likely to pledge, but will give when asked
- ▶ This group makes up 40% of all customers – they have buying power, and they're using it

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Different Generations = Different Approaches

GENERATION Z
1996 & LATER

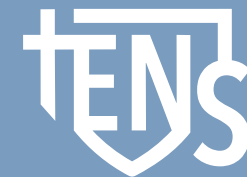


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Preparing for Younger Members

MILLENNIALS are becoming the most CHURCHED GROUP in the United States.

Source: Giving USA 2023 *Key Findings*



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Attracting Younger Donors

Preparing for Younger Members



Those who say they attend in person almost every week or every week:

Millennials	45%
Gen X	27%
Boomers	31%



Those who say they attend virtual services almost every week or every week:

Millennials	30%
Gen X	15%
Boomers	13%

Source: Giving USA 2023

Strategies to Adopt to make our Church ready for Younger Members

In order to encourage Millennials and Generation Z to become donors, the Church needs to adopt and adapt

1. How we engage the wider community
2. How we increase volunteer engagement
3. How we expect to raise funds
4. How we make disciples



Show Them Results

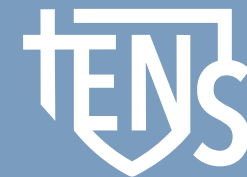
- ▶ Gen Xers and Millennials are not motivated to give to simply maintain the status quo.
- ▶ They want to see results. They want to know how their sacrifice (and at this age and income experience, giving is sacrificial) is making a difference.
- ▶ **Make a concerted effort to help people see how their giving is having an impact.**



Attracting Younger Donors

Preach Sermons that are Honest

- ▶ Young members are hungry for thoughtful, provocative engagement on the Gospel and age-old questions
 - ▶ Engaging science and climate science
 - ▶ Honest conversations about health and wellness
- ▶ Engage the News
 - ▶ Respond rather than react to today's headlines
 - ▶ Relate today to the Gospel, to our lives
- ▶ Healthy, Whole Relationships
 - ▶ Preach about relationship values that are in line with the culture. Model reality, not morality



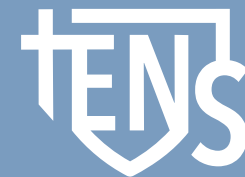
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Make Church like ... Church!

- ▶ 2014 Barna study on “Designing Worship Spaces with Millennials in Mind” revealed that most younger members appreciate traditional architecture and elements: pews, aisles, and altars that resemble traditional altars.
- ▶ The same study revealed that church spaces that are medium-sized – not cavernous, and not too intimate – make them feel at home

<https://www.barna.com/research/designing-worship-spaces-with-millennials-in-mind/>



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Make Church like ... Church!

▶ SELECT THE **ALTAR** IMAGE THAT IS MOST APPEALING TO YOU ◀



All Millennials	19%
Churched	17%
Marginally Churched	18%
Unchurched	21%

All Millennials	33%
Churched	37%
Marginally Churched	32%
Unchurched	31%

All Millennials	37%
Churched	34%
Marginally Churched	41%
Unchurched	38%

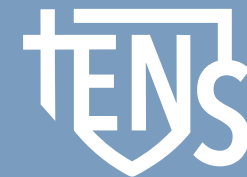
All Millennials	11%
Churched	13%
Marginally Churched	8%
Unchurched	11%

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Get Good on Tech

- ▶ Know how to post engaging copy on social media – questions that promote dialogue
- ▶ Do you know how to use #?
- ▶ Don't ditch bulletins for screens and hymnals for projected lyrics unless your tech team is ready to go. Check out this resource from the United Methodist Church on how to time your Powerpoint to your music

<https://www.resourceumc.org/en/content/powerpoint-tools-and-timing-techniques-for-churches>

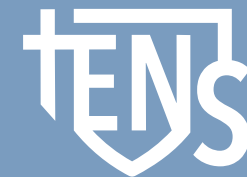
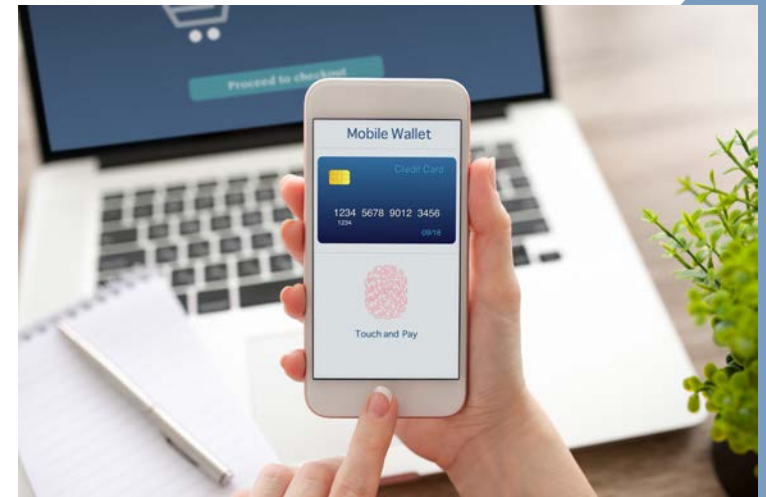


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Focus on Retention

- ▶ The number one goal is helping people understand the importance of regular consistent giving.
- ▶ This means **encouraging them to see the value of generosity as a discipline.**
- ▶ It also means using digital giving solutions as a way to promote recurring giving as an option.



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Encourage Volunteerism

- ▶ The key to encouraging generosity among these generations is **emotional involvement**.
- ▶ They are much quicker to give when they're invested in the cause and work.
- ▶ By making volunteerism an organizational priority, you're making it easier for people to give.



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Don't Forget Discipleship

- ▶ Ultimately, every discipleship and mentoring program needs to help people **understand how spirituality impacts their financial decisions.**
- ▶ The best way to do this is through the example and encouragement that comes from a one-on-one relationship.



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Make Questions Normative

- ▶ 11% of Millennials say they do not believe in God
- ▶ 32% of Millennials say they do not know if they believe in God, or not
- ▶ As a whole, they are more comfortable with questions and uncertainty about faith, and open to learning

<https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/religious-landscape-study/belief-in-god/do-not-believe-in-god/generational-cohort/younger-millennial/>



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Diversity is Key

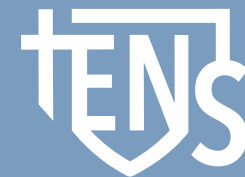
- ▶ Millennials and Gen-Z are the most racially diverse generations. **43% are non-white.**
- ▶ When the leadership and worship leaders are mono-racial, **there is a disconnect** with what these young people see in their workplaces, schools, and friend groups and what they experience in Church.
- ▶ Raise up non-white leaders
- ▶ Seek, recruit, and hire for diversity in gender, identity, and ability



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Optimism Attracts

- ▶ 19% of Millennials and GenZ think that leaders can be trusted.
 - ▶ Media, True-Crime TV, headlines of corruption
- ▶ The Christian Hope – the desire, conviction, and connection to change the world is a message that appeals
- ▶ We must learn to capture the hope of the New Jerusalem and use it to talk about the brilliant future God has for us

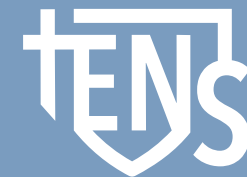


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Politics are Important ... locally!

- ▶ Half of Millennials and Gen-Z claim no party affiliation – independence is attractive. Ideas over Ideology
- ▶ We must avoid talking about politics by name in our church, but talk about issues instead.
- ▶ Local initiatives are more appealing than those of far-away Washington

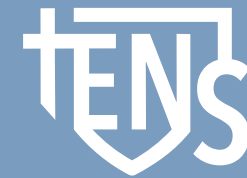
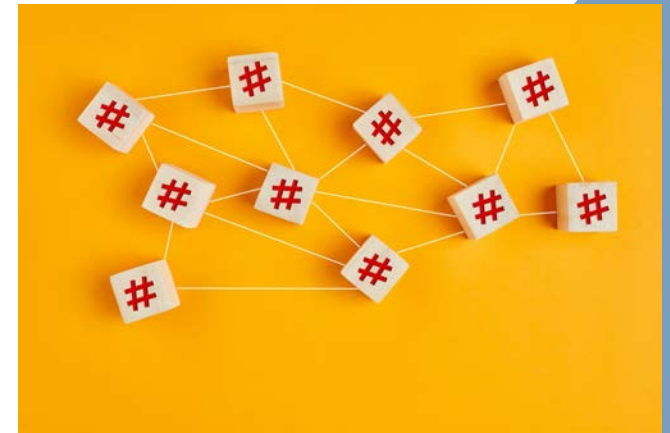


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Don't be Web 1.0 in a post Web 2.0 World

- ▶ Early websites provided information, but no interaction
- ▶ Social media created a generation of user-generated content and an exchange of ideas, even if often hard to control or distasteful
- ▶ Church must do more than have a presence on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram – *we must engage a story thousands of years old with the tools at our disposal today.*
- ▶ Dialogue, questions, meaningful interaction



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Giving is Easy: Here's how!

Adopt as many methods for accepting donations as your staff and volunteers can effectively manage

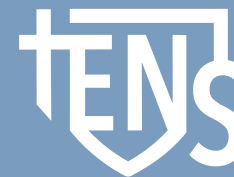
- ▶ **Online giving** platform/s
- ▶ **Mobile / App-based giving** platform/s
- ▶ Pledge forms or Intentions to Give are **easily available** (online is great!)
- ▶ Instructions on how to give by **ACH or bill pay**
- ▶ Instructions on how to give **securities**
- ▶ Reminder that members may give from their **required minimum distribution** (not in 2020) or **qualified charitable distribution**
- ▶ **Planned Giving** options are easy to find, and included on your pledge / intention cards

Don't forget to include time and talent intentions, too!

Broad Approaches to Fundraising



Did you miss our webinar on Virtual Stewardship 201? You can find it on our website at:
<https://www.tens.org/webinars-events/tens-webinars/virtual-stewardship-201/>



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TENS Theme for 2024

When we walk in love, there is clarity and purpose. We move in alignment with each other and with our values. Walking in love is also something we cannot do alone - by definition it implies connection, community.

Whether we walk with our children or our spouse, or form an orderly line, or rely on the help of a friend or a neighbor, we carry with us all with whom we are in communion and they carry us with them. Our journey is one made by millions, over thousands of years: a cycle of sharing and invitation.

*Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children, and walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.. **Ephesians 5: 1-2, NRSV***





Thank you!

For more information, resources, and videos,
find us at www.tens.org

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