THE RELEVANCE OF CORPORATE WORSHIP FOR
GENERATION X AND THE MILLENNIAL GENERATION
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Introduction

Over the last several decades, church membership has changed in a variety of ways (i.e., worship preferences, attendance, and spiritual engagement). Gone are the days in which the members of the same family belong to the same denomination. Many demographic groups, such as men and singles, abandoned church because their needs were never addressed (Duin, 2009).

Many people are no longer content to waste part of their Sundays on an institution that gives them nothing (Duin, 2009). Even for those who are committed to it, church attendance is difficult. Sunday morning is no longer "sacred" time:

Job responsibilities, sports leagues, family outings, housework and many other things get in the way of traveling to a church building for worship at a scheduled time. And if you happen to miss church next weekend, will anyone know if you slept in, comforted a sick child, left town on business, or decided to have brunch at the Hyatt? Church attendance is increasingly a private matter, and it is correspondingly easier for each of us to maintain an idealized image of ourselves as regular attenders when in fact we may only manage to attend church two or three times a month at the most. (Hadaway & Marler, 1998, paragraph 30). According to Christian Broadcast Network News (2009), most Protestant Churchgoers are open to a different denomination other than the one they currently attend. CBN News also reported that Ellison Research found 51% prefer their denomination, but would consider others. Thirty-three percent of churchgoers do not prefer any one denomination.

While traditional thought about church affiliation has changed, some aspects of church life have not. Conflict within a congregation, for whatever reason, may exist. Church conflict over music preferences is common (Dawn, 1995). Churches try to hold on to their older members, and still attract new members. Attracting new members is often accomplished by utilizing modern music and other more contemporary styles of worship (Johnson, Rudd, Neuendorf, and Jian, 2010, paragraph 2). According to Barna (2005, 2012), choice is a major reason many young adults, and others, are finding other ways of doing church. "Whether you examine the changes in broadcasting, clothing, music, investing, or automobiles, producers of such consumables realize that Americans want control over their lives" (Barna, 2005, 2012, paragraph 5). Also anyone that is familiar with the history of the Christian communities that were birthed in the 1960s and 1970s know that belonging to one was costly. Today's evangelicals are looking for something less costly personally, a house church (Duin, 2013).

These changes follow along generational eras. Today, only about 30 % of people born between 1964 and 1978, the so-called Gen Xer's, belong to a church (Winner, 2000). Race (2012) stated,

With the social and cultural upheavals of the 1960's, mainstream churches eventually realized that they were losing young people by the millions. Ironically, one of the earliest groups to realize this was the North American Roman Catholic Church, which adopted "guitar mass" after Vatican Two. Songs like *"We Are One in the Spirit"* (1966) quickly

caught on among young people of other denominations. On church campgrounds, the new choruses easily took their place alongside Folk Revival songs like, *"Kum Bayah,"* *"Do Lord,"* and *"Michael Row Your Boat Ashore."* (Race, 2012, para.8)

During a widespread movement in the 1960s, young people came to faith in Christ and wanted to express faith in a new way that was more relevant to themselves and to their peers. The desire of teens and twenty-something's to find a musical vocabulary to express their faith was growing exponentially (Race, 2012, paragraph 10).

A need existed for a new insight regarding the way we guide the development of young people's faith. As a faith community, we need to teach the Gen Xer's and Millennials to engage the world as disciples of Christ and realize the way we have been teaching them is inadequate for the issues, concerns, and sensibilities of the world we ask them to change (Kinnaman, 2011). Cultural influence has made a difference in how youth model their lives. Faith, worship, and church attendance have influenced youth differently in the ever-changing role of society. The role church plays for parents and grandparents created a different environment than that which currently exists for a younger generation. The nurturing of the Gen Xer's and the Millennials represents a global perspective to the next generation (Kinnaman, 2011).

Within organized religion and the churches in which young adults develop and mature, there does not seem to be a sense of trust. Most young adults do not feel safe to express their beliefs regarding real problems they are facing. Most feel the leaders are talking and not living the example of their message. They feel they would rather be working out their faith than just talking about their faith (Kinnaman, 2011).

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of the study was to investigate the phenomenon of Gen X and Millennial generations' erosion of faith in organized worship, decline of attendance, loss of personal faith, and contemporary spiritual engagement, that McDonald (2013) declared.

This study attempts to determine if corporate worship mattered to Generation X and the Millennial Generation. The results based on 247 survey responses and a focus group determined that the Millennial Generation attended church much less than Generation X, but showed that both groups preferred worship services that were blended in nature.

Rationale

Young adults make up at least 40 % of adherents of major faith tradition in the United States (Trinitapoli, 2009). Beyond sheer numbers, young adults matter because they will determine the future of religious organizations. While other adults are more religious by nearly all traditional measures (e.g., attendance, giving, volunteering, and religious salience), young adults are more actively shaping where American religiosity is headed, and according to Wuthnow as cited in Trinitapoli (2009) in their trajectory should trouble religious leaders of every faith tradition.

Over the past several years, Kinnaman, who heads the religious polling company the Barna Group, and Lyons, co-founder of a Christian nonprofit, examined surveys and conducted interviews with 16- to 29-year-olds across the country, including 440 non- Christians and 305

churchgoers. The results were not encouraging. Kinnaman and Lyons found young people see the church as anti-homosexual, tied tightly to right-wing politics, too judgmental and hypocritical (Kinnaman & Lyons 2007).

It is true that more and more people have adapted to a new way of communicating, yet there is an ever-increasing gap between the younger and older generations (Barna, 2009). Technology plays a very significant role in the way younger generations interact with each other (Lyons, 2007). Technology has quickly become a driving force behind the generational divide. More than 50% of Americans age 12 and up are on one or more social media platforms today (Crawford, 2012). According to Crawford, the typical social media user is a thirty-five-year old Caucasian woman; however, only 43% of men use social media. Social media and social networking developed from the widely used yet experimental MySpace in the early 2000s to Facebook towards the end of the decade (Whittaker, 2010).

Since the iPhone's release in 2007, thousands of developers have begun creating downloadable apps for everything from games to photo sharing. In 2012 by the end of June, consumers had downloaded 30 billion apps from the Apple App Store where more than 650,000 apps were available. (Walker, 2012, para. 2) Gen X, born between 1964 and 1978 and the Millennial Generation also known as the Y Generation, born between 1978 and 1998, and those following, which one researcher termed "Mosaics" (Kinnaman, 2011), also represented a change not only in methods but in attitudes and values. No longer are the values and morals of one generation automatically assumed by the next generation.

Church leaders have engaged in discussion and debate regarding the decline in church attendance (Wuthnow, 2007). According to Wuthnow (2007), the younger generations never have been and never will be understood by religious leaders or scholars as a cohort. Much debate has centered on the premise that decline in church attendance consisted of a younger generation.

There had to be a way to reengage the Gen Xer's or the Millennials in church attendance and to get them reacquainted with the faith of their youth. Since January of 2011, the church that the researcher attended and was on staff began a second service aimed at reaching a generation that appeared to have given up on church attendance. One of the challenges presented was to create a service that would appeal to a younger generation. This service would include visual aids, contemporary music, ambiance, and possibly a different style of preaching. The question addressed, by the leadership team, was, would this type of service really be appealing to a younger generation? For centuries, church leaders who disliked certain kinds of music had confused their musical tastes with God's will and made broad, sometimes brutal pronouncements, on musical styles they did not understand or want to understand. Unfortunately, this tendency to demonize people who liked music different from the church leaders was aggravated by the 1960s Generation Gap (Race, 2012).

Contribution of the Study to the Problem

With churches all over the country trying various ways of doing church and worship, there still seemed to be a gap in the attendance patterns of Generation X, and the Millennial Generation. It appears that Generation X and the Millennial have a brand new way of "doing" church (Rob, 2011). Rob (2011) goes on to say that they are going to throw out the hymns and replace them

with 3 chords in 4/4 singing praises to "you," whoever you may be. This study sought to close the existing gaps between Gen X and Millennials way of doing things for worship leaders, pastors, worship teams, and church leaders.

Wuthnow (2007) stated, "Whatever decline may have happened in religious activity in the past was attributable to baby boomers and thus does not pertain to the current generation of younger adults" (p. 51). Apparently as baby boomers came of age, they attended religious services less frequently than their elders (Wuthnow, 2007). Baby Boomers did not participate in corporate worship as often as their parents, and neither did they encourage their children to attend (Wuthnow, 2007). The intent of this investigation was to provide church leaders with information that would assist in planning worship services that would attract Gen X and Millennials back to church.

Wuthnow (2007) said that music was a major difference between younger adults and older adults. This generation gap was a source of frequent conflict between parents and teenagers. The style of contemporary and pop/rock music seemed to be the largest contributor to the generational gap (Wuthnow, 2007). Nearly four-fifths of young adults in their twenties said they especially liked contemporary music; fewer than one-fifth of adults age 65 and older did (Wuthnow, 2007). The results of this study were pertinent in providing church leaders' strategies to blend traditional church music and contemporary church music.

The research intended to determine what time frame the Generation X and the Millennial Generation's decline of church attendance and faith began and how did, if in fact it did, congregational worship make a difference if the decline in church attendance between the Generation X, and the Millennial Generation was caused by the previous generation.

The Research Study

The research for this study was designed to answer each of the three research questions:

1. To what value was faith to Generation X and the Millennial Generation? 2. To what value was corporate worship to Generation X and the Millennial Generation? 3. To what value was spiritual engagement to Generation X and the Millennial Generation?

The design of this study used a mixed methods approach, using t-tests, chi-squares, with surveys, and a focus group of worship leaders, and music industry professionals.

The population for this study consisted of young adults born between 1965 and the early 2000s, commonly called Generation X and Millennials. The study was conducted at a large campus church in Olathe, Kansas, a mega church in the Chesterfield County, Virginia area, a university in Middle Tennessee, as well as two churches in the Metropolitan area of Middle Tennessee and the surrounding region. The researcher used t-tests and chi-square to analyze the survey.

As a means to determining the validity of the information from the interviews, focus groups were held to collect data on trends of church attendance, patterns of church attendance, and spiritual engagement of each of the participants In all, over 2600 survey were distributed with approximately 250 responses.. The survey data were analyzed quantitatively using Chi-Square

tests. Results that failed to return significant differences were noted but no P factor was determined in many cases. Focus group data were analyzed qualitatively using trends, patterns, and categories.

The first site studied was a large mega church located in a very affluent area of Middle Tennessee. The demographic of this particular church reflected the area in which the church was located. The church had gone from an obscure church to the status of a mega church in just a very short time (Rainer, 2009). The church administration distributed to and collected surveys from approximately 200 Generation X and Millennials using Survey Monkey.

The lead pastor of this church met with leaders of his church's singles ministry to discuss their perceived needs. In their discussion, it was determined numerous young adults were moving to the area for various reasons: to attend one of the many colleges or universities, to pursue careers in music, or a number of other reasons (Glenn, 2009). The author went on to say, because of what was offered in the area, a large number of these young adults chose to stay. The group of leaders wanted to find a way to engage young adults in a meaningful time of worship and study on a mid-week evening, in order to re- introduce them to church attendance in a non-threatening way. Because of the enthusiasm of the group, the Lead Pastor of this mega-church thought the time was right to begin a ministry that would accomplish the church's goal to regain youth and young adult attendance. The singles' leaders had engaged in study and research of the issues. From the research a determination was made that Tuesday night would be the best night to launch this new outreach (Glenn 2009).

The church at the second site was located close to the inner city of the same area in Middle Tennessee. This church sought to meet the needs not only of those who attended regularly but also those who were disenfranchised, those who were incarcerated, those who lived in and around the neighborhood of the church, and those who had been a part of the church in the past but were no longer there. The church administration distributed to and collected surveys from approximately 200 Generation X and Millennials using Google Docs. The survey data were analyzed quantitatively using independent t tests. Demographic data were analyzed using chi-squares. Focus group data were analyzed qualitatively using trends, patterns, and categories. This church began a second service in January of 2010 to address the need(s) of Generation X and the Millennial Generation. The conversation for this service began at a board meeting on August 11, 2009 (Trevecca Community Church board meeting, August 11, 2009). The church began the process by identifying perceived needs among this particular demographic and then began seeking ways of meeting those needs.

In board meeting minutes dated October 12, 2012, the pastor of this church shared with the board different ways to approach reaching those lost to our church, particularly the younger generation. The pastoral staff and church board determined that the look of the contemporary service would be different from the look of the first service (Trevecca Community Church board meeting, October 12, 2010). The first service took place in the sanctuary with all of the stain glass, pipe organ, orchestra and choir. The leadership of the church decided that this second service would take place in the gymnasium or what was called "The Courts." There would not be a choir in this service but the service would be "band" driven instead of choir and orchestra driven. The planning team, hereafter known as the Courts Ministry Action Team (CMAT) would meet each Wednesday to discuss the pastors' message and determine what elements would go into the

service to support the message. Although located on a University campus, the decision was made by the leadership team *not* to focus primarily on the university students but to focus on a younger demographic, not excluding the university students.

The site of the third church studied was in the Midwestern state of Kansas. Surveys were distributed to and collected from approximately 200 Generation X and Millennials using Google Docs through the church administration. The survey data were analyzed quantitatively using independent t tests. Demographic data were analyzed using chi-squares. Focus group data were analyzed qualitatively using trends, patterns, and categories. This church, which was organized in 1931, sat on the campus of one of its denomination's major universities. It was considered one of its denominations largest North American churches with the weekend attendance of this church approximately 2,400 (Bear and Lamb, 2009).

The final site studied was also located in Middle Tennessee. Surveys were distributed to and collected from approximately 200 Generation X and Millennials using Google Docs through the church administration. The survey data were analyzed quantitatively using one-way ANOVAS. 13 Demographic data were analyzed using chi-squares. Interview data and focus group data were analyzed qualitatively using trends, patterns, and categories. Opposing organized missions, ecclesiastical centralization, and instrumental music, the church vowed to live according to the Bible as absolute authority (Wade, 2012)**.** From a small chapel to a ministry complex, their campus spread beyond the four corners to become an epicenter of worship, teaching, world and community outreach, creative arts, and equipping for wholeness, integrity, leadership, and ministry. The church had transitioned to a cell-based model of ministry where homes were reclaimed as kingdom centers, neighborhoods were taken for God, and every member was a minister and ambassador of Jesus. (Wade, 2012, para. 7)

Findings and Conclusions

The purpose of this research endeavor was to determine the relevancy of corporate worship, personal faith, and church attendance of Generation X and the Millennial Generation to modern day, contemporary spiritual engagement. The researcher intended to discover even though Generation X and the Millennial Generation appeared to have left the organized church, they still had a strong faith. Although they had a strong faith, they exercised their faith differently than their forefathers and previous generations. The independent variables being researched were each group's faith, frequencies of corporate worship, to what extent either group was involved in spiritual engagement. The researcher also sought to find out to what extent they were involved in spiritual engagement. The groups investigated were Generation X, those that were in the age range between thirty and fifty years old, and the Millennial Generation, those in the age range of eighteen and twenty nine years old.

Findings

1. To what value was faith to Generation X and the Millennial Generation?

In this study, the researcher studied two groups, based on age, to see if there was a difference in the way these groups valued their faith. The researcher utilized a Generation X and Millennial Generation Church Attendance Survey to get the groups to respond to questions about their faith.

The 27-question survey consisted of 10 Likert scale questions, 14 multiple-choice questions, and 3 open-ended questions, where the respondent had to write their responses.

To determine if there were differences in the responses about their faith, Independent samples *t* tests were used to compare the survey responses of questions 11, 20, and 21. Question 11 asked the respondents how important is faith to them. There were no statistical differences. See table 1

Table 1

Responses to Q11, Q20, Q21 by Faith Value

	Condition				
	Gen X		MG		
Item	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	t^a
Q 11	3.5658	.69925	3.4800	.81913	2.096
Q 20	79	3.3544	128	2.8984	1.214
Q 21	80	3.2750	128	2.9063	1.041

[a] *df =*

When asked how important is faith to you, three percent responded not very important, 19% reported important, 64% percent responded very important, and 67% reported that it is one of their highest priorities. (See Figure 1)

Figure 1
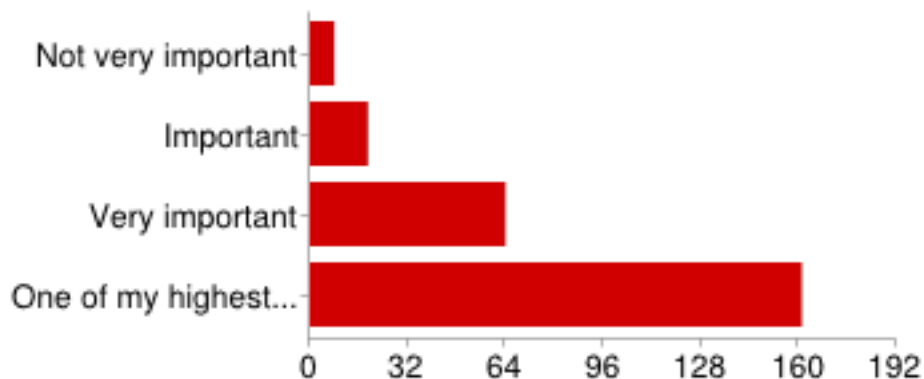
For Q18, the researcher employed a chi-square test to determine whether there was ever a time Generation X and the Millennial Generation questioned their faith. Of those that responded, 38.8% said no, there had never been a time they questioned their faith, and 61.2% of Generation X said yes, there had been a time they questioned their faith. Within the Millennials, 31.8% said no, they had never questioned their faith, and 68.2% said yes, there was a time they questioned their faith. There was no significant difference between the two groups. (See table 2)
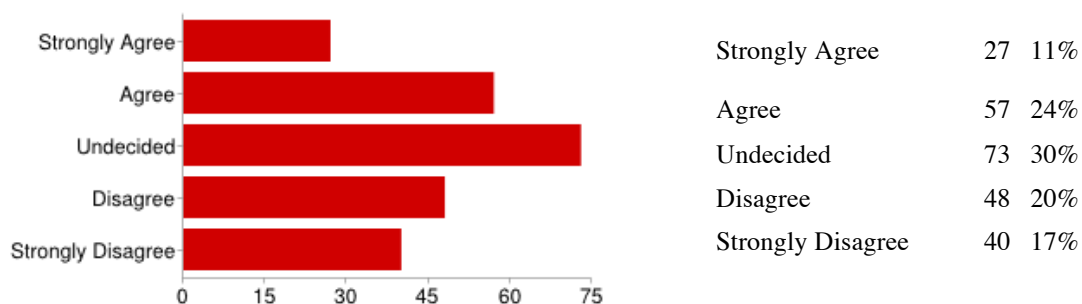
Table 2

Response to Q18
Question of Faith

	Age				
	Gen X		MG		
Item	N	Y	N	Y	F
Q 18	31	49	42	90	.303

In response to question 20, contemporary worship impacted my journey back to faith, 11% strongly agreed, 24% agreed, 30% were undecided, 20% disagreed, and 17% strongly disagreed. (see figure 2)

Figure 2

Strongly Agree	27	11%
Agree	57	24%
Undecided	73	30%
Disagree	48	20%
Strongly Disagree	40	17%

2. To what value was corporate worship to Generation X and the Millennial Generation?

Research question 2 was addressed with survey questions 3, 4, 7, 8, 9, 10, 23, 24, 25, 26, and 27 on the survey. Question 3 on the survey dealt with the respondents' frequency of church attendance of the two groups. One percent said that they are brand new to church, 3% said they had been attending from one to three years, 3% said they had been attending four to ten years, while 85% said they had been attending ten years or more. Only 7% said they don't attend church (See figure 3).

Figure 3
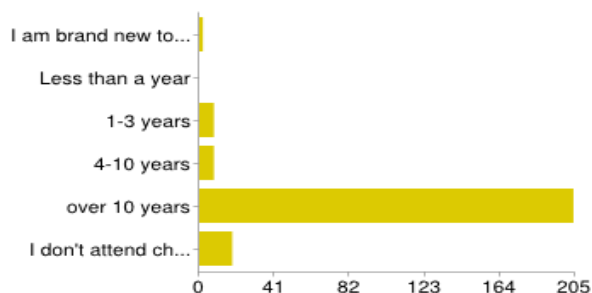
For question 3, a chi-square test was used to determine how long the respondents had been attending church. There was found to be no statistical difference between the two groups.

For Q4 R1 the researcher used a chi-square test to determine whether there existed a significant difference between Generation X and Millennial Generation regarding a once a month church attendance level. "Q" stands for question and "R" stands for response. Twenty one point two percent of Generation X indicated they attend church once a month, while only 8.5% percent of Millennials attend church once a month. There was a statistical difference between the two groups, X^2 (1) = 7.01, p < .01. (See Table 3)

Table 3

Response to Q4
Question of Faith

	Age				
	Gen X		MG		
Item	*N*	*Y*	*N*	*Y*	*F*
Q 4	63	17	119	11	.008

Questions 7, 8, 9, and 10 asked respondents about their preferred worship styles. "Q" represents question and "R" represents responses.

For question 7, a Likert scale was used to determine the importance of Contemporary worship. Thirty four percent of the respondents' said that Contemporary worship was not very important to them. Forty four percent said that is was important, 19% said that Contemporary worship was very important, while only 7% said it was one of their highest priorities. (See figure 4)

Figure 4

Not Very Important	82	34%
Important	105	44%
Very Important	46	19%
One of my highest priorities	17	7
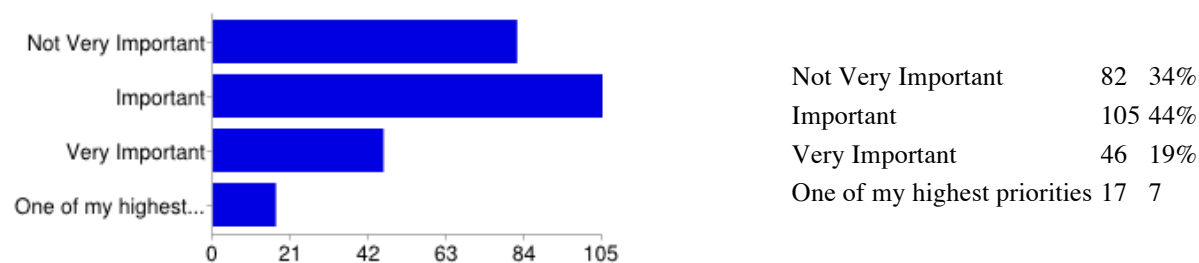
An independent samples *t* test was used for question 7 and question 9, to determine if there was a statistical difference in the importance of Contemporary worship or Traditional worship for Generation X and the Millennial Generation. There was found to be no statistical difference. (See Table 4)

Table 4

Descriptive and Inferential Statistics for Survey Items

Q	GX		MG		t^a
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	
7	1.974	7.89	2.05	.941	.063
9	1.923	.864	1.85	.757	.398

^{a}*df* = 201.
df = 203.

A chi square test was run to answer the Q14 to see if there was ever a time the respondents ever ceased attending church. Sixty six point two percent of Generation X said yes, there was a time they ceased attending church, and forty seven percent of the Millennial Generation said there was a time they ceased attending church. There was a significant difference between the two groups,

X^2 (1) = 7.46, *p* < .01. (See Table 4)

Table 4
*Cease attending church*

	N	Y	Sig
GX	27	66.2	.006
MG	70	47.0	

Question 23 Response 1, asked what aspects of worship were important to Generation X and the Millennial Generation.

A chi-square test was used to determine whether there was statistical difference in what aspects of corporate worship, Generation X and Millennial Generation thought to be important. Thirty six percent said that reverence and awe were important, 20% said expressive celebration was important, 60% said, feeling moved to care and action were important, 8% responded none of the choices provided were important, while 12% said other. There was no statistical difference. See Figure 5.

Figure 5
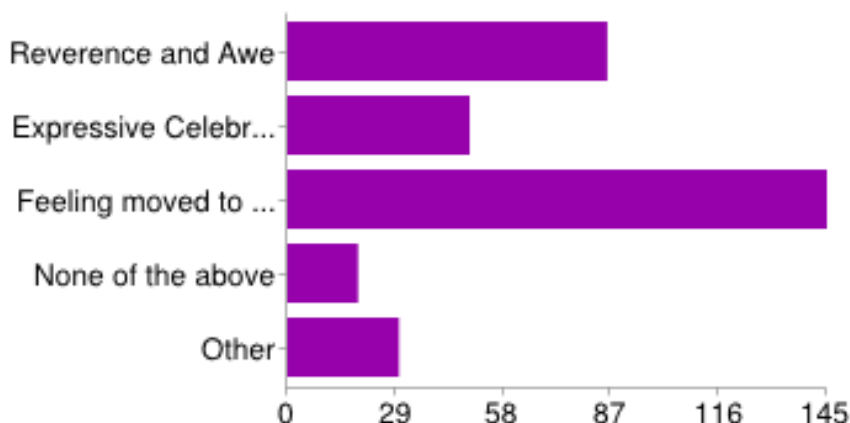
For Q 24 on the survey, 2 x 2 chi square tests were run to compare Generation X and the Millennial Generations preference of things included in a worship service. There was a significant difference found between the groups, X^2 (1) = .006. $p. < .001$. See Table 5 for the descriptive statistics for this test.

Table 5
Elements included in a worship service

|	N	Y	p-value
GX	76	5.0	.006
MG	108	18.2	

Fourteen percent responded congregational singing, 1% said offering, 12% responded scripture reading, 11% stated an invitation to accept Christ, and 6% responded silent prayer and meditation. Twenty three percent responded a sermon should be included, while 8% responded greeting one another. Only one percent responded singing by a choir as well as reciting the creeds, singing the doxology, gifts of the Spirit, visual projection and an orchestra. (See Figure 6)

Figure 6
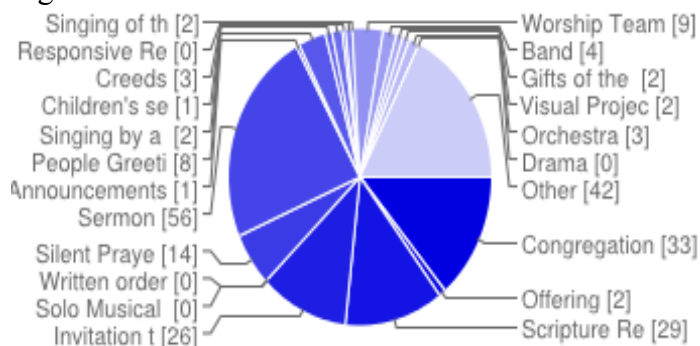
Questions 25, 26, and 27 addressed Generation X and the Millennial Generations preferences of singing style, instrumentation and worship style, in corporate worship. Ten percent preferred traditional worship, seventy seven percent preferred blended worship, and fifteen percent preferred contemporary worship, while ten percent preferred other. (See Figure 7)

Figure 7

Traditional	24	10%
Blended	186	77%
Contemporary	37	15%
Other	25	10%
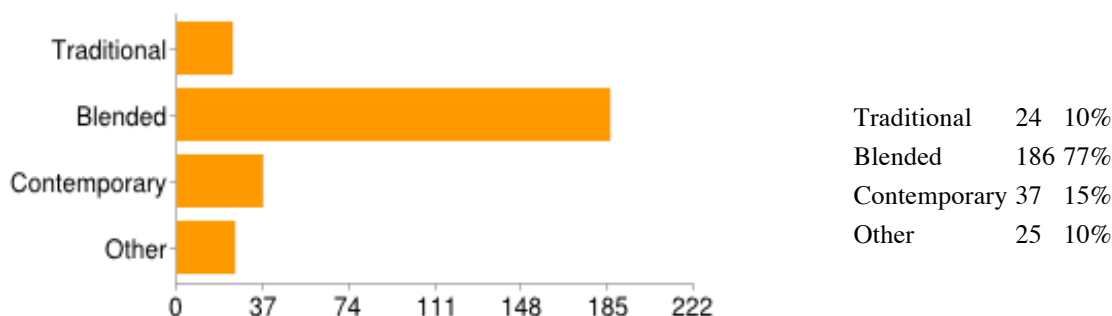
A chi square test was run to determine the preferred singing style, instrumentation and worship style, in corporate worship. There was found to be no significant difference.

3.To what value was spiritual engagement to Generation X and the Millennial Generation?

To address the question of spiritual engagement, for Q5R1, a chi square test was run to determine ways in which worship services helped engage spiritually. There was a significant difference between the two groups. Thirty three point eight percent of Generation X said that worship services help them engage spiritually, while 47.7% percent of Millennials said worship services help them engage spiritually. This difference is statistically different, $X^2 (1) = 3.98$, *p* < .05. (See Table 6)

Table 6

Ways Worship Services Aid in Spiritual Engagement

	N	Y	p-value
GX	53	33.8	.046
MG	69	47.7	

To address the question of spiritual engagement, for Q5R2, a chi square test was run to determine ways in which worship services in spiritual engagement. There was a significant difference between the two groups. Sixty five percent of Generation X says that places of service, or areas they are involved, help them engage spiritually, while 50% of Millennials say places of service help them engage spiritually. This difference is statistically different, $X^2 (1) = 4.54$, *p* < .05. (See Table 7)

Table 7

Places of Worship

	N	Y	p-value
GX	28	65.0	.033
MG	66	50.0	

An independent samples *t* test was used for Q 12, to determine if there was a difference in the importance of spiritual engagement between Generation X and the Millennial Generation. There was found to be no statistical difference between the groups. (See Table 8)

Table 8

Responses to Q12 Condition
Importance of spiritual engagement

	Spiritual Engagement				
	Gen X		MG		
Item	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	F^a
Q 12	3.129	784	3.119	.796	0.095

Summary of the Findings

Research question 1: To what value was faith to Generation X and the Millennial Generation?

While there were some that responded that faith was not very important to Generation X and the Millennial Generation, there was overwhelming evidence, 64%, said that for faith was one of their highest priorities. Thirty eight percent of Generation X respondents said there had never been a time they questioned their faith, and 61.2% of Generation X said yes, there had been a time they questioned their faith. Within the Millennials, 31.8% said no, they had never questioned their faith, and 68.2% said yes, there was a time they questioned their faith. This showed that more Millennials had gone through periods of faith questioning than Generation X.

Research question 2: To what value was corporate worship to Generation X and the Millennial Generation?

Research showed that the Millennial Generation's church attendance was far below church attendance of Generation X. Only about 8% of Millennials attend church at least once a month, while 21% of Generation X attend church at least once a month.

Out of all the elements of corporate worship, it was interesting to see that singing by a choir, reciting the creeds, singing the doxology, exercising the gifts of the Spirit, visual projection, and an orchestra were not a high priority, with only 1% indicating that this is a preference.

The preferred style of singing in corporate worship was a blended style, with 77% of the respondents indicating such. Traditional and contemporary styles of worship were close in preference, with 17% preferring contemporary and 10% preferring traditional worship.

Research question 3: To what value was spiritual engagement to Generation X and the Millennial Generation?

To both Generation X and the Millennial Generation, Spiritual engagement was very important. The most practiced Spiritual engagement was prayer, with 82% practicing prayer, followed by Bible reading, with 60% engaging in prayer. Sunday school classes and small groups were a close third and fourth with 44% participating in small groups and 42% participating in a Sunday school class.

Limitations

There were several limitations that could have had an impact on the results of this study.

1. Due to the electronic delivery of the survey, there was not a way to keep the respondents' from taking the survey multiple times. Where there appeared to be identical answers for a single question, the repeated answer was eliminated from the responses.

2. The researcher relied upon Worship Pastors', church leaders, and other administration to distribute the survey, and there was not a way for the researcher to know if the surveys were distributed or not.

3. The surveys were mailed in mass to the distributers' list of respondents and there was not a way to keep those who were not in the researched demographic from responding. The responses from those who responded and, were outside of the researched demographic were deleted from the total responses.

4. It is difficult to determine real *value* and explain just how valuable faith, corporate worship, and church attendance is.

Implications and Recommendations

This study was also done to try and determine reasons Generation X and particularly, the Millennial Generation did not attend church regularly. The results of this study seemed to support the belief that there was a drop off in church attendance for the Millennial Generation.

Of the 317 respondents to question 14, was there ever a time when you ceased attending church, 128 or 53% said yes, there was a time when they ceased attending church. Some of the reasons stated were, "church politics," "music being *too* cool," "lack of spiritual depth," "style of worship did not fit the leaders background or style," "the worship seemed fake," "the worship was too much of a performance," "people was why I left," just to name a few. Forty five percent of the respondents said there was never a time they ceased attending church, while 31% said other, with no explanation.

Faith was a big factor for Generation X and the Millennial Generation. Almost every respondent said they have questioned their faith at some point in their life. Reasons were varied, including, bad things happening in the world, the death of a father and the lack of support from the church, victim of physical and emotional abuse, the conflict between free will, God's omnipotence, and judgment, hearing many different opinions/ideas. Seeing a lot of people who claimed to be Christians but didn't always live that way, or lack on integrity or authenticity, the explanations of things that tend to make more sense than faith in the unseen, I'm gay, and theologically trained, asking questions is good and normal and healthy. Other reasons given were, generally hypocrisy of Christians as a whole. The moral truths provided in the Bible are too often overshadowed by trivial details, leading to anger and war. These were just a fraction of the reasons Generation X and the Millennial Generation gave for ceasing to attend church.

The underlying reason appeared to be the lack of authenticity and realness. The Millennial Generation is a generation that sees through some of the smoke screens churches and leaders put into place and they are looking for "real."

The researcher went into this study thinking there would be some clear-cut explanations for the lack of church attendance for Generation X and the Millennial Generation. The focus was originally on contemporary Christian music. Contemporary, meaning, whatever is current, was not a contributing factor in Millennials leaving or coming back to church. From its inception in the '70s to the present, contemporary Christian music has been used to try and reach a younger demographic with the Gospel of Christ, but from this research, the researcher has discovered that the preferred style of worship, by far, is blended. Utilizing the current forms of worship, combined with the tried and true forms of worship, that has stood the test of time through the ages. Worship style, is driven by the Worship Leader. Whether it is a paid leader in a church, or a layperson in the church, the DNA of the worship of a church, is driven by its leader. The passion of the worship leader usually determines the direction of the worship (D. Clark, personal communication, October 16, 2014).

> "During every phase of Christianity, there has always been something going on that was contemporary in worship in some framework, in every phase of the game," (C. Adams, personal communication, October 16, 2014). When something happened during that last century, and general worship was born, someone decided that it would be a good thing to

have something different for children, and children's church was born. All the children were pulled out of church to have their own worship services. When those children grew up and entered middle school, well, something else was needed so youth or teen church was born. When those kids grew up and reached twelfth grade, college worship or university worship was created, and suddenly there were these different generations worshipping, but they each had developed their own kind of worship, their own DNA, so to speak, their own style or preference of worship. Then, when churches tried to put each generation together in one worship service, there became a division in preferences and people began to talk about 'traditional verses contemporary,' (C. Adams, personal communication, October 16, 2014).

One of the issues regarding contemporary worship is, a lot of the songs are "radio songs," songs that artist record for radio play, and they are not sing-able for congregational worship. The writing of such songs are not theologically sound, in most cases, and most worship leaders try to lead them in the key of the artists, and that is not conducive to congregational singing. Rhythms are too complicated for the untrained singer and there usually isn't a distinct melody for the congregation to follow. Couple that with worship leaders trying to sing like the artists, congregations become confused as to what, exactly they are supposed to be singing (D. Clark, personal communication, October 16, 2014). The singing in a congregation stops when you have a 70 year old trying to sing the musical vernacular of a 20 year old; they stop and give up, because the songs are not attainable or singable (D. Diehl, personal communication, October 16, 2014).

As worship progressed, the visual aspect of worship became more prevalent in churches. Worship services became slick in their presentations. Visually, they are impressive, but it appears that fewer people are involved in worship. The songs were being presented in a new, hip way, but there was no "story" attached to the songs. The songs were being written to sell, not to testify to life changing experiences. Gospel songs began to become void of the Gospel. "It had all become trivial conversational language as opposed to things that were intentionally theological, and intentionally telling a story," (C. Adams, personal conversation, October 16, 2014). Without personal testimony being attached to songs being written, they become powerless. It seemed to have become, "turn up the glitz and glamour, to make up for the lack of substance." There was no power!

Most leaders or pastors of churches have bought into the assumption that in order to reach Millennials, they are going to have to go after rivaling the experience that a lot of people are having when they attend a Big-D theater, or an IMAX theater. In reality, what people want when they come to church is an experience with God. They want to experience something real, not something glitzy. They are seeking something with content that is transforming.

A lot of pastors are looking for excellence in their worship services, and excellence is a good thing, but the churches have made excellence an idol in a lot of cases. Worship has become defined as excellent if all the cues happened on time, we didn't miss words in the songs, all of the lyrics were spelled correctly in the power point, did the guitarist put his capo on at the right time in the right place, and all of a sudden, worship has become deduced to making sure everything looked, sounded, and felt good, not whether people experienced God (F. Heumann, personal conversation, October 16, 2014).

Millennials are looking for worship with a narrative. They are looking for story. They are looking for a story that they are a part of and be real. Millennials are looking for churches and church leaders that are authentic and transparent (F. Heumann, personal conversation, October 16, 2014).

Today's worship pastor has to be more than a song leader. Today's worship pastor has to do more than put a set list together each week and make sure all the transitions are right, and all the keys of the songs are correct, and all the lyrics on the power point are correct; Worship pastors' of today must be 'pastor' to their people. There are many challenges in life today and worship pastors' need to be prepared to help those under their care with life's challenges.

While on sabbatical, a worship leader was discussing his experience when attending the church of a friend of his, summed up

> "It was the first Sunday of my sabbatical. I went to my buddy's church, and when I walked in, this guy walked to the podium, opened the Bible, and began to read. He read for 45 minutes. For the first 5 minutes, everyone was looking around as if to say, what in the world is going on? This was not something they typically did in church. About 10 minutes into the reading, this sudden stillness settled over the church. Twenty minutes in, people were beginning to convulse beneath the weight of their own iniquity in the room. Thirty minutes into the reading, people were on the floor, prostrate before God. Forty five minutes into the reading, the most massive, corporate, natural, unplanned worship response that church had ever seen took place, because of the Word transformed lives, and they had no choice but to worship" (C. Adams, personal conversation, October 16, 2014).

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