

# Becoming/Being An Intergenerational Church



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## Generations Theory



### ✓ 4 Types of Generations

- ✓ Civic
- ✓ Adaptive
- ✓ Idealist
- ✓ Reactive

- ✓ These types of generations have repeated in the same order, with one exception, through U.S. history.
- ✓ We develop natural ease with those who experience the same formative events at similar developmental stages.
- ✓ In understanding the past, we anticipate the future.

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## The Living Generations

Generation	Birth Years	Generation Type
»GI Generation	1901-1924	Civic (hero)
»Silent Generation	1925-1942	Adaptive (artist)
»Boomer Generation	1943-1960	Idealist (prophet)
»Thirteenner (Xer) Generation	1961-1981	Reactive (nomad)
»Millennial Generation	1982-2004	Civic (hero)
»Homeland Generation	2005-present	Adaptive (artist)

Neil Howe and Bill Strauss, *Generations: The History of America's Future, 1584 to 2069*.  
Quill: New York, 1991, and <http://www.lifecourse.com/>.

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### What Formed Your Generation?

- ✓ Instinctively, we know the answer ...
  - ✓ Generations formed early in lifecycle
  - ✓ Generations formed by
    - ✓ historical events  
Where were you when?
    - ✓ technological developments  
Model Ts and The Walkman
    - ✓ cultural trends  
sex, drugs, rock and roll

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### Gifts to the Mainline Church ... the **GI Generation**

- Organization at the local level
- Centralization at the national level
- Efficiency of mission, i.e. the power of combined efforts and resources
- Strong emphasis upon learning and passing on the Christian tradition
- Church buildings more than large enough to carry out our local mission
- At a time of national crisis, applied Christian faith to the national identity

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### Gifts to the Mainline Church ... the **Silent Generation**

- Maintained – and sensitized – the church’s governing bodies
- Ordained women
- Unity and reunion; brought an instinct for reconciliation (Confession of 1967)
- Inspired the church’s imagination for social justice
- Unlike their seniors who “hand down the tradition,” encouraged their own children to question the tradition before making it their own
- Opened the church’s mind to a) ecumenical commitments, and b) liturgical renewal

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**Gifts to the Mainline Church ...  
the Boomer Generation**

- Forced the church to refocus upon the individual
- Encouraged renewal of worship in liturgy and music
- Challenged the conflation of Christian faith with citizenship
- Reversed organizational assumptions from top down to bottom up
- Further committed the church to social justice
- Birthed the church's sensitivity to "spirituality"
- Opened the church to seekers from other denominations

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**Gifts to the Mainline Church ...  
the Xer Generation**

- Are seeking to bring pendulum to a midpoint ... on liturgy, polity, and personal vs. corporate faith experience
- Redefine boundaries (on sexual orientation, for instance)
- Will re-invent the church, restoring "what works," starting from scratch where old answers no longer apply
- Display an ability to take disparate genres, ideas, and traditions and weave them together (music, liturgy, theology)
- Thinking globally

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**Gifts to the Church ...  
the Millennial Generation**

- Hands on ministry has replaced worship as the central experience of Christian community.
- Interested in history, broadly defined. Willing to incorporate spiritual practices which appear eclectic, even contradictory to others.
- Drawn to God's mystery in a broad minded way, beyond Protestant or even Christian boundaries.
- Seek authenticity – from the church and its leaders

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Data from the  
Pew Charitable Research Trust

America's Changing Religious  
Landscape

<http://www.pewforum.org/2015/05/12/americas-changing-religious-landscape/>

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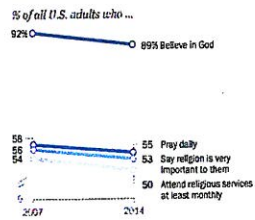
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U.S. Public Becoming Less Religious



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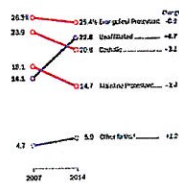
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Changing U.S. Religious Landscape



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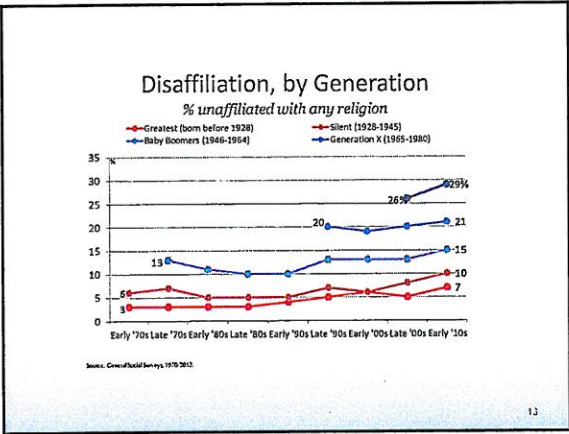
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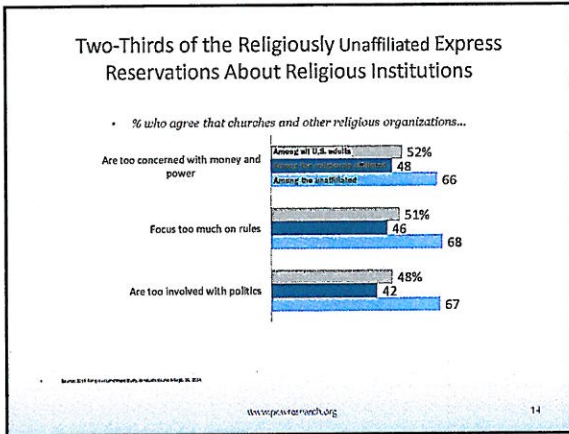
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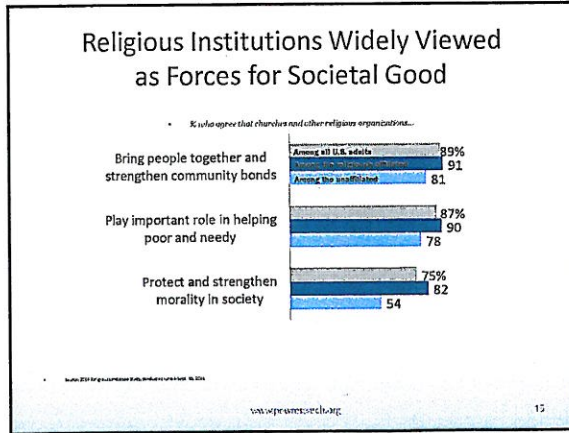
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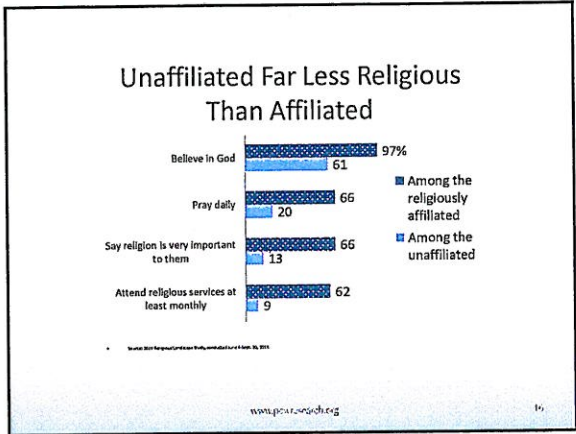
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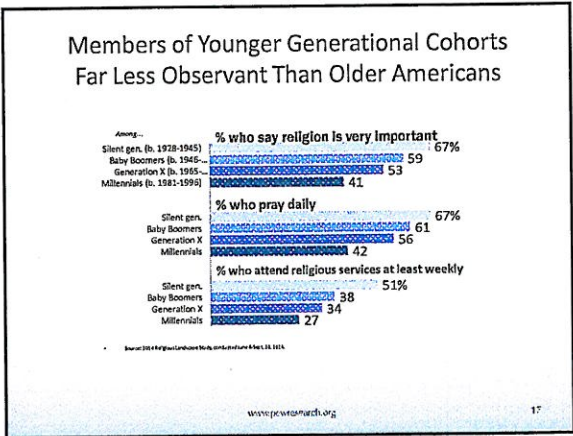
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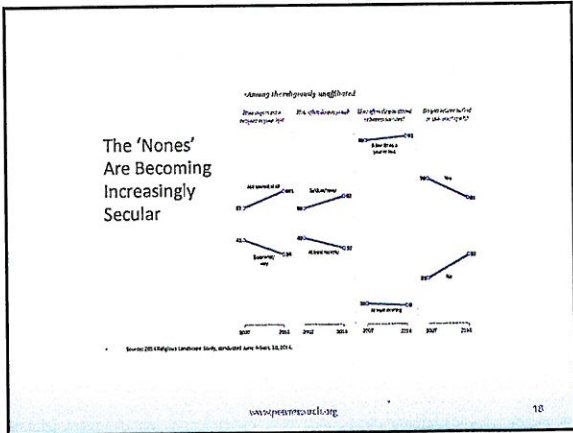
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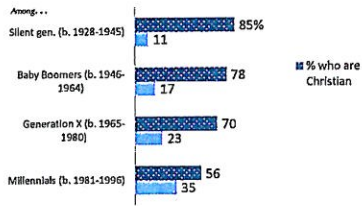
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## Generational Replacement Helping Drive Growth of Unaffiliated



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## Number of Religiously Affiliated Americans Saying Religion 'Very Important' to Them Holds Steady

	2007	2014	Change
Number of adults in U.S.	227.2m	244.8m	+17.6m
Share of adults who are religiously affiliated	83.1%	76.5%	-6.6 points
NUMBER of religiously affiliated adults	188.8m	187.3m	-1.5m
Share of affiliated adults saying religion is "very important" in their lives	64.5%	65.5%	+1 point
NUMBER of religiously affiliated adults saying religion is "very important" in their lives	121.8m	122.7m	+0.9m

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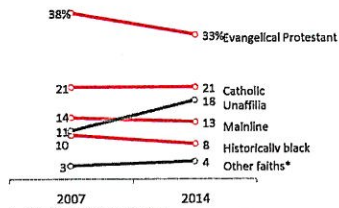
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## Trends in the Religious Landscape in Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma and Texas



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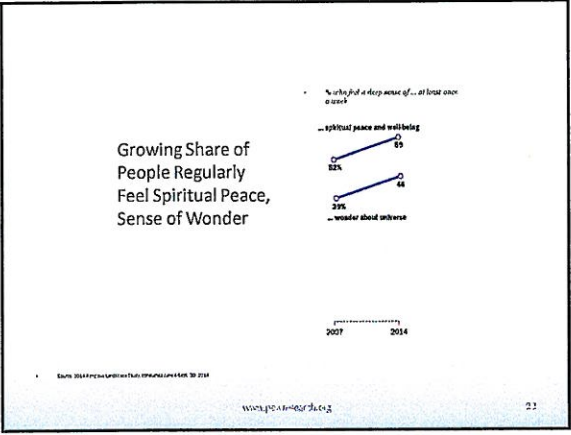
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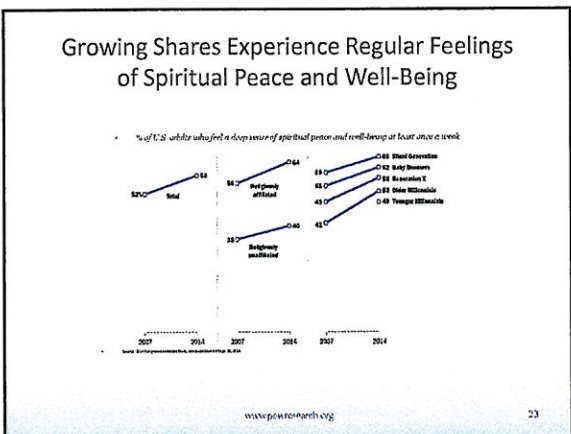
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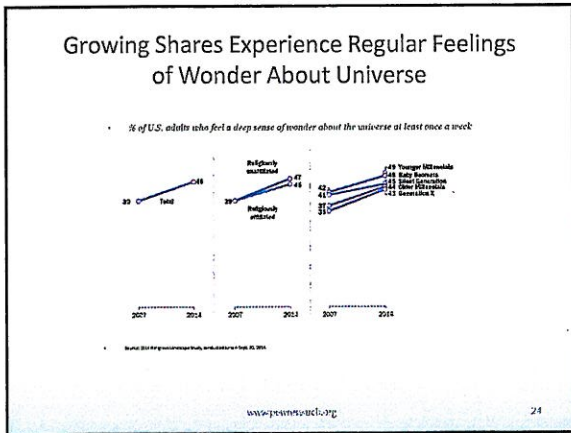
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