



This material has been provided by Asbury Theological Seminary in good faith of following ethical procedures in its production and end use.

The Copyright law of the united States (title 17, United States code) governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyright material. Under certain condition specified in the law, libraries and archives are authorized to finish a photocopy or other reproduction. One of these specific conditions is that the photocopy or reproduction is not to be *“used for any purpose other than private study, scholarship, or research.”* If a user makes a request for, or later uses, a photocopy or reproduction for purposes in excess of “fair use,” that user may be liable for copyright infringement. This institution reserves the right to refuse to accept a copying order if, in its judgment, fulfillment of the order would involve violation of copyright law.

**By using this material, you are consenting to abide by this copyright policy. Any duplication, reproduction, or modification of this material without express written consent from Asbury Theological Seminary and/or the original publisher is prohibited.**

### **Contact**

B.L. Fisher Library  
Asbury Theological Seminary  
204 N. Lexington Ave.  
Wilmore, KY 40390

**B.L. Fisher Library’s Digital Content**  
[place.asburyseminary.edu](http://place.asburyseminary.edu)



**Asbury Theological Seminary**  
205 North Lexington Avenue  
Wilmore, Kentucky 40390

800.2ASBURY  
[asburyseminary.edu](http://asburyseminary.edu)



## **ABSTRACT**

### **EXAMINING EFFECTIVE OUTREACH TO BOOMERS, XERS, AND MILLENNIALS IN SOUTH-CENTRAL OHIO VINEYARD CHURCHES**

by

J. Michael Cuckler

This dissertation is a study of three Vineyard Association churches in south-central Ohio that have had uncommon success in attracting consecutive generations. All three churches—Vineyard Chillicothe, Vineyard Columbus, and Vineyard Grove City—have effectively drawn from the Boomer, Xer, and Millennial generational groups. A fourth non-Vineyard church that appears limited in attracting multiple generations was examined for the purpose of comparison and contrast. The aim of the study was to identify and analyze strategic, reproducible principles for reaching multiple generations. To accomplish that aim, a flexible, descriptive, and explanatory case-study design was employed. This study resulted in significant findings in the following areas: structures, intentionality, communication, personal relationships, and small groups. Personal relationships proved to be the most influential reason why members of the three generational groups were attracted to the churches studied; however, the mission, vision, values, and structures of the churches were also key ingredients in positioning them to draw and respond to young adults of different generations. Among these factors, multiplying small groups was important, as was a receptor-oriented style of communication that was rated effective by over 90 percent of Boomer, Xer, and Millennial respondents.

DISSERTATION APPROVAL SHEET

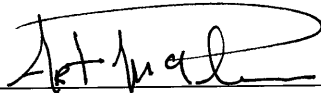
This dissertation, entitled  
EXAMINING EFFECTIVE OUTREACH TO BOOMERS, XERS,  
AND MILLENNIALS IN SOUTH CENTRAL OHIO VINEYARD CHURCHES

written by

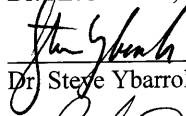
J. Michael Cuckler

and submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Missiology

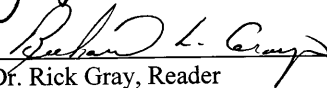
has been read and approved by the undersigned members of  
the Faculty of the E. Stanley Jones School  
of World Mission and Evangelism  
Asbury Theological Seminary



Dr. Art McPhee, Mentor



Dr. Steve Ybarrola, Reader



Dr. Rick Gray, Reader

November 6, 2007

EXAMINING EFFECTIVE OUTREACH TO BOOMERS, XERS,  
AND MILLENNIALS IN SOUTH-CENTRAL OHIO VINEYARD CHURCHES

by

J. Michael Cuckler

A Dissertation

Presented to the Faculty of the

E.Stanley Jones School of World Mission and Evangelism

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Doctor of Missiology Degree

Asbury Theological Seminary

Wilmore, Kentucky

November 6, 2007

© 2007

James Michael Cuckler

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
LIST OF FIGURES .....	viii
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS .....	x
CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION AND AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND .....	1
Statement of the Problem and Missional Significance .....	2
Research Questions.....	4
Delimitations .....	6
Possible Limitations of the Study .....	6
Definition of Key Terms.....	7
Attraction .....	7
Assimilation.....	8
Boomers, Xers, and Millennials .....	9
Evangelism and Discipleship.....	9
Pre-Christian/Unchurched .....	10
Structures .....	10
Modernism and Postmodernism .....	10
Theoretical Framework.....	11
Communication Theory .....	11
Social Group Theories and Homogeneous Unit Principle Theory .....	13
Conversion Theory .....	13
Grounded Theory.....	14
Review of Relevant Literature.....	15

History of the Association of Vineyard Churches.....	21
The Vineyard Genetic Code .....	24
Methodology and Data Collection.....	30
Data Analysis.....	30
Qualitative Interviews.....	31
Participant and Nonparticipant Observation.....	31
Numerical Data.....	31
Published Reports.....	32
Significance of the Study.....	32
Ethical Consideration .....	33
CHAPTER 2 CASE STUDIES .....	34
Vineyard Columbus Case Study.....	34
Demographics of Columbus and Westerville.....	34
Vineyard Columbus Mission, Vision, Values, and Priorities.....	35
History of Vineyard Columbus.....	35
View of Evangelism and Outreach.....	38
Groups and Outreach Strategies .....	38
Vineyard Grove City Case Study .....	46
Grove City Demographics.....	46
Grove City Mission, Vision, and Values.....	46
History of Grove City Vineyard .....	47
View of Evangelism and Outreach.....	49
Groups and Outreach Strategies .....	50



Chillicothe Vineyard Case Study .....	52
Ross County Ohio Demographics .....	52
Vineyard Chillicothe Mission, Vision, and Values .....	52
History of Vineyard Chillicothe .....	53
Evangelism and Outreach.....	57
Groups and Strategies.....	58
Tyler United Methodist Church Case Study.....	63
Ross County Ohio Demographics .....	63
Tyler United Methodist Mission, Vision, and Values .....	64
History of Tyler United Methodist Church .....	64
Evangelism and Outreach.....	64
Groups and Strategies.....	65

CHAPTER 3 DATA ANALYSIS OF CHURCH CASE STUDIES AND

GENERATIONAL GROUPS .....	70
Data Analysis of Vineyard Church Case Studies .....	70
Mission, Vision, and Values.....	72
Structures .....	73
Data Analysis of Tyler United Methodist Church.....	75
Mission and Vision.....	76
Structures .....	76
Data Analysis of Boomers, Xers, and Millennials .....	78
Sample .....	79
Factors of Influence or Attraction .....	80

Generational Members' First Experience with the Vineyard .....	86
Generational Members' Perception of Christianity.....	93
Personal Felt Needs .....	94
Generational Needs.....	98
Boomer Generational Needs.....	99
Xer Generational Needs.....	99
Millennial Generational Needs .....	100
Sticking Around.....	100
Communicating .....	106
Social Issues Important to Each Generation.....	108
Satisfaction with Leadership .....	110
<b>CHAPTER 4 SUMMARY OF MAJOR FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR</b>	
<b>FURTHER STUDIES.....</b>	<b>112</b>
Church Case Studies.....	112
Generational Factors of Attraction or Influence.....	113
Context of Generational Members' Initial Experience of the Vineyard .....	113
Initial Visit Impressions, Observations, Feelings of Generational Members.....	114
Factors That Caused Generational Members to Stick Around the Vineyard .....	114
Generational Members' Perception of Christianity.....	115
Individual Felt Needs of Generational Members .....	115
Corporate Generational Needs.....	116
Communication to Multiple Generations .....	117
Social Issues .....	117

Generational Satisfaction of Vineyard Leadership.....	118
Recommendations for Further Research .....	118
National Study .....	119
Multi-Church Tradition Study .....	119
Longitudinal Study .....	119
Nontraditional Church Structures .....	119
Conclusion.....	119
 APPENDIXES	
A. Leader Interview Questionnaire .....	121
B. Boomer, Xer, and Millennial Online Survey .....	123
C. Open-Ended Responses to Research Question 1 .....	136
D. Open-Ended Responses to Research Question 2A .....	142
E. Open-Ended Responses to Research Question 3A.....	164
F. Open-Ended Responses to Research Question 4.....	167
G. Open-Ended Responses to Research Question 5 .....	169
H. Open-Ended Responses to Research Question 6 .....	184
NOTES .....	187
REFERENCES .....	189

## LIST OF FIGURES

	Page
Figure 2.1. Vineyard Church of Columbus .....	37
Figure 2.2. Vineyard Grove City Current Facility.....	49
Figure 2.3. Vineyard Church of Chillicothe (Former Facility) .....	55
Figure 2.4. Vineyard Church of Chillicothe (Current Facility).....	56
Figure 3.1. Percentage of Generational Respondents.....	79
Figure 3.2. Gender.....	80
Figure 3.3. Combined Generational Members' Length of Participation in Their Vineyard Churches.....	80
Figure 3.4. Factors That Influenced or Attracted All Respondents to a Vineyard Church.....	81
Figure 3.5. Factors That Influenced Boomers to Attend the Vineyard .....	82
Figure 3.6 Factors That Influenced Xers to Attend the Vineyard .....	84
Figure 3.7 Factors That Influenced Millennials to Attend the Vineyard.....	86
Figure 3.8 Context of All Respondents' First Experience with the Vineyard.....	87
Figure 3.9 Context of Boomers' First Experience with the Vineyard.....	89
Figure 3.10 Context of Xers' First Experience with the Vineyard.....	90
Figure 3.11 Context of Millennials' First Experience with the Vineyard.....	91
Figure 3.12 Respondents' Rating of the Friendliness of the Vineyard upon Their Initial Visit .....	93
Figure 3.13 Combined Percentage of All Respondents' Perception of Christianity after Vineyard Participation.....	94

Figure 3.14 Boomer Personal Needs .....	96
Figure 3.15 Xer Personal Needs .....	97
Figure 3.16 Millennial Personal Needs .....	98
Figure 3.17 Factors That Caused Boomers to Stick Around the Vineyard .....	101
Figure 3.18 Factors That Caused Xers to Stick Around the Vineyard .....	102
Figure 3.19 Factors That Caused Millennials to Stick Around the Vineyard .....	103
Figure 3.20 Combined Effectiveness Rating of all Respondents .....	105
Figure 3.21 Boomer Rating of Vineyard Communication .....	106
Figure 3.22 Xer Rating of Vineyard Communication .....	107
Figure 3.23 Millennial Rating of Vineyard Communication .....	107
Figure 3.24 Social Issues Important to Boomers.....	108
Figure 3.25 Social Issues Important to Xers.....	109
Figure 3.26 Social Issues Important to Millennials.....	110
Figure 3.27 Combined Generational Satisfaction with Vineyard Church Leadership ....	111

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank my dissertation committee, Dr. Art McPhee, Dr. Rick Gray, Dr. Steve Ybarrola, and the faculty of the E. Stanley Jones School of World Mission and Evangelism at Asbury Theological Seminary for their guidance and encouragement throughout my doctoral studies and dissertation. I thank Vineyard Pastors Stephen Van Dop, Eric Pickerel, Tom Pauquette, and Mark Francis for allowing me to conduct research in their respective churches. I thank fellow doctoral colleagues Mark Russell, David Durst, Duane Brown, and Dan Lewis for their friendship and advice throughout this process.

I thank Judy Seitz for being the primary editor for this study and her commitment to all doctoral students. I thank Dr. Art Nonneman, Dr. Steve Dawson, and the faculty of the Behavioral Sciences Department at Asbury College for their constant encouragement and friendship. I thank personal friends, Scott Whitaker, Joel Gerber, and Mike Miller, for their encouragement in this process. I thank my parents, Jim and Carol Cuckler for their enduring prayer and support during my studies.

Finally, I express my deepest gratitude to my wife Lora, and our two children, Jordan and Joshua, for believing in me and supporting me from the very beginning.

Thanks be to God through whom all things are possible.

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION AND AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND

Few churches have been effective in drawing young adults from successive generations. The purpose of this dissertation was to study three Vineyard Association churches that appear to have had uncommon success<sup>1</sup> in attracting members of Boomer, Xer, and Millennial generational groups.<sup>2</sup> The churches—Vineyard Chillicothe, Vineyard Columbus, and Vineyard Grove City—are in south-central Ohio. The aim in studying them was to identify and analyze strategic, reproducible principles for attracting multiple generations of young adults. To accomplish this task, a flexible, explanatory case-study design was employed. Two overarching questions guided this study: What do these churches know that other churches do not know, and what do these churches do that other churches do not?

Each month for the past two years, I have traveled home to Chillicothe, Ohio in order to preach at a Vineyard Church that I helped co-plant with a former young adult ministry colleague. I currently serve as one of the teaching pastors at this Vineyard and assist in organizational development. Along the route to our Vineyard church, I pass a small deteriorating white building that often causes me to pause and grin. I first took note of this structure several years ago because it has a full-size motorcycle mounted on the front gable just above the main entrance. During one of my trips, I stopped my car to take a closer look and discovered a handwritten sign next to the front door that reads, “Chillicothe Motorcycle Club.” I quickly realized that this building might have been one of the United Methodist churches my grandmother used to attend. With a rousing “old-time” story, my Grandmother confirmed that this new biker club used to be one of the

three-point charge churches she attended. Having my undivided attention, Grandma shared with me the slow and extensive demise of this church. Although I do not remember all the details of her story, I do remember with vivid clarity these words: “Michael, I remember the day that our church leadership refused to change (referring to styles of music and various other things) in order to attract young people.” Grandma died on February 6, 2007, but her words of warning will never leave my mind.

In some ironic way, my story of working with young people is linked to Grandma’s story of churches that fail to attract new generations of young people. I am not sure why God decided to gift and empower me to be a missionary to this age demographic. Nonetheless, I believe that the gospel of Jesus Christ is possibly only one generation away from extinction at any given point in time. To this end I have devoted my life and the focus of this study: to ensure that churches and other young adult-oriented Christian organizations are informed about and understand how to attract each new generation of young adults.

### **Statement of the Problem and Missional Significance**

Many churches are unable to attract new generations of young people. Although some churches may be effective at attracting children or teenagers, these same youth appear to disappear from churches after their high school graduation. The problem examined in this study is that many church leaders do not yet fully understand why some churches are more effective at reaching multiple generations than others. By studying the selected Vineyard churches, perhaps this research project can unearth fresh insights into the problem and produce some broadly applicable principles for churches seeking to reach new generations.



Those who are studying the decline of mainline Protestant churches refer to this problem as the “graying of the Church.” According to Benton Johnson, Dean R. Hoge, and Donald A. Luidens, America’s mainline churches (Methodists, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Episcopalians, and kindred denominations) have been steadily losing members since the 1960s. By 1990 these denominations had lost between one-fifth and one-third of the membership they reported in 1965. The principle source of the decline was the tendency of many younger adults to drop out of these churches and not return. Hoge stated, “One can sit today in the balcony of a typical United Methodist church and look over a congregation of graying and balding heads. Unless there is a surge of new recruits, rising death rates will diminish the ranks of the mainline denominations even further in the years ahead” (Benton, Hoge, and Luidens:1993:14).

Dr. Shirley Bergman, director of the Lutheran Institute on Aging and Family at Concordia University, suggests that the majority of people in mainline denominations are age 60 and over. She attributes this to an increasing life expectancy and the inability of mainline churches to attract younger generations (2007:27).

This reoccurring observation points to several problems or challenges many churches face. First, while some churches may allow for more contextual expressions of mission to occur in their children and teenage ministries, they may unrealistically expect their young adults to respond to their somewhat non-contextual or modernistic paradigms once adulthood is attained.<sup>3</sup> Second, many churches may fail adequately to address sociocultural dynamics that are occurring in North America’s emerging postmodern context. These issues may currently be at the root of their inability to attract young people. Third, many churches do not understand the unique dynamics of generational or

social group issues. Multiple generations or social groups are often combined together with little regard for their differing worldviews, values, or unique demographics and are often expected to respond to one overarching paradigm.

### **Research Questions**

In addition to the two overarching questions stated in the introduction, the following questions were addressed in this project and informed the development of the survey instruments that were used during field research.

1. What is the Vineyard Association of Churches?
  - a. What is their history, mission, and vision?
  - b. What is their theology and ecclesiology?
  - c. What is their current status in the world?
2. What are the stated mission and vision of the selected Vineyard churches in this study?
3. What are the community demographics in which these Vineyard churches are located?
4. What are the participant demographics of these Vineyard churches?
5. What past, current, or enduring structures are present in these Vineyard churches?
6. What is the attraction or evangelization practices of these Vineyard churches?
  - a. How do church leaders define or view evangelism?
  - b. What priority is evangelism given by the church leadership?
  - c. What formal or informal methods of evangelism exist?
  - d. How are new visitors identified and welcomed?

- e. What methods are used to follow up with new visitors?
  - f. What processes exist that move individuals or groups from non-church participation to assimilation?
  - g. What are their outreach strategies?
7. How do these Vineyard churches communicate the gospel message?
- a. What symbols or forms are used?
  - b. How do they understand where and how “meaning” occurs in communication?
  - c. Are they receptor oriented in their communication?
  - d. What are their styles of communication?
  - e. How do they view conversion?
  - f. How do they practice contextualization?
8. What factors attracted Boomers, Xers, and Millennials to these Vineyard churches?
- a. What were the circumstances (internal or external events/persons) that led to interest in Christianity and/or these Vineyard churches?
  - b. How did the respondents first learn of the particular Vineyard church?
  - c. What factors made respondents come back for a second visit?
  - d. Did the respondents find that the people were friendly?
  - e. What felt needs do these generations experience?
  - f. How are these Vineyard churches able to address or engage the felt needs of these generational groups?
9. How do these Vineyard churches define their receptor audience?

10. What programs or services do these Vineyard churches provide for the community at large?

### **Delimitations**

Executing a study on how the church can effectively attract three generations of people requires certain boundaries in the research. The following delimitations applied to this study:

1. This study focused on how churches are attracting three generational groups: Boomers, Xers, and Millennials. Neither respondents under the age of 18 nor the generation following the Millennials was considered due to minor confidentiality concerns. This study also did not consider groups prior to the Boomer generation.

2. Research was limited to three Vineyard churches in Ohio: Chillicothe, Grove City, and Columbus.

3. This study sought to explore some of the cross-cultural and ethnic dimensions inherent in reaching members of Boomers, Xers, and Millennials; however, the selected Vineyard churches are English speaking with limited ranges of ethnic diversity.<sup>4</sup>

4. This study was conducted using a flexible qualitative case study design format. It was both descriptive and explanatory in nature, with the inclusion of some quantitative elements allowing for multiple units of analysis.

### **Possible Limitations of the Study**

This study had several limitations:

1. Situating people within clear generational boundaries can be a subjective undertaking. This labeling is true for society on a macro level, as well as how a particular church in this study may choose to define a particular generation or age grouping.

2. Valid comparisons between researched churches may be difficult based on the socioeconomic and cultural demographics of both the community and participants of each church studied.

3. Respondents may have varying degrees of difference between how their attraction, evangelization, and discipleship are understood on a macro (church) and micro (individual) level.

4. Although part of a worldwide association, each Vineyard church operates autonomously. This structure could present challenges in gathering national data for comparison, as well as making correlations between the churches studied.

5. Because this research is based on a qualitative case-study approach, generalizing results outside of the Vineyard churches studied based on current social science research guidelines may be difficult; however, reproducible principles will emerge and should be applicable to other contexts.

### **Definition of Key Terms**

Because words are symbols and can be interpreted with multiple meanings, the following definitions provide some of the key terms and how they are used in the context of this study.

#### **Attraction**

Because Christianity and the church are no longer at a “central and influential place” in the emerging post-Christendom cultural context in North America, it cannot be assumed that secular people will be drawn to Christianity or the church (Guder 1998:19-20). Examples of elements that may attract people to a church might be a trusted friend or relationship, an event, an internal or external crisis, or the creative communication style

of a church. For the scope of this study, any activity that attracts people to Christianity and/or a church is viewed as evangelistic in nature.

### **Assimilation**

Assimilation is a relatively new term in church language. George G. Hunter, III (1996) has learned that many pre-Christian secular people belong before they believe. In *Assimilating New Members*, Lyle E. Schaller addresses the challenge of outreach programs that sometimes fail to incorporate pre-Christian people into the active life of the church. Schaller contends that church leaders must identify organizing principles that will lead to assimilation. He identifies four paths to inclusion in the church: (1) those who become part of a face-to-face group before joining the church, (2) those who are made part of such a group after joining, (3) those who take an office in the church, and (4) those who accept a specific task or job. Schaller states that pre-Christian people who take one or more of these paths will likely become active in the church (1978:24).

Therefore, assimilation is the process by which pre-Christian people enter the church, become participants in the life of the church, and grow in their journey toward Christ and other believers in community. In *New Member Assimilation*, Joel D. Heck states, “We assimilate people when we help them to acquire similar knowledge about our Christian beliefs and our congregation, similar attitudes towards Christ and His Church, similar feelings of belonging, and similar patterns of behavior” (Heck 1988:12). This study focused on the assimilation of pre-Christian people, as well as those who may claim to be a Christian but do not currently have active church participation.<sup>5</sup>

## **Boomers, Xers, and Millennials**

Sociologists have given certain labels to define certain generational groups. This study was limited to Boomers, Xers, and Millennials. Boomers refer to the childbirth explosion (known as the Baby Boom) of post-World War II families. Boomers were born approximately between 1945 and 1963. Generation X or Baby Busters were given their name due to the lack of any one defining characteristic, thus the “X” designation. They were born approximately between 1964 and 1981 (McIntosh 1995). Millennials (also known as Generation Y, the Internet Generation, and Echo Boomers) were born after 1982 to the present day and were the first group to graduate high school as the Class of 2000 (Howe and Strauss 2000). The identification of these cohorts as sociological coherent groups, although widely used, is not universally embraced by sociologists and remains controversial. Vineyard churches have been successful at attracting these three consecutive generations, and their success was the focus of this study.

## **Evangelism and Discipleship**

Discipleship involves evangelism and spiritual formation. In the early Church, the term disciple was synonymous with being a follower of Jesus Christ. Disciple making cannot be separated from evangelism, although this practice has sadly been the norm throughout most of the Modern Church era. According to Win and Charles Arn, evangelism has only been fully accomplished when disciples are made (1998:8-35). Arthur McPhee, professor of Evangelism at Asbury Theological Seminary, says that evangelism is “leading a person to the trailhead of discipleship.”<sup>6</sup> Therefore, activity that attracts people to Christianity and/or the church may be viewed as evangelistic in nature

for this study. Discipleship is a process that continues after a decision to be a Christ follower is made and was not the focus of this study.

### **Pre-Christian/Unchurched**

To be a pre-Christian or unchurched person means that someone is not currently substantially living life according to or influenced by a Christian worldview or values. However, being unchurched or pre-Christian does not mean being irreligious or non-spiritual. In today's North American context, a substantial part of that population might say that they are very spiritual, although the object of their spirituality may be broadly defined (Hunter 1996:20).

### **Structures**

Structures can be defined as those recognized and accepted patterns of being the church within a particular context. This context could include such things as places, times, and patterns of meetings, how leadership is exercised and decisions made, doctrinal statements, membership, functions of worship/styles, community, and how witness is carried out.<sup>7</sup>

### **Modernism and Postmodernism**

Modernity refers to coherent culture in Western Civilization that arose around the sixteenth century. This time period, which developed through the twentieth century, is marked by science, rationalism, absolutes, consumerism, analysis, and objectivity, among many other things. The shift from modern to postmodern thinking did not happen overnight. It has been a process that has progressed through the twentieth century. If words such as absolutes and objectivity describe modernity, words like relativity and tolerance mark postmodern philosophies and worldviews. Postmodernism refers to an



emerging philosophy that is more subjective in its worldview than was modernity. According to Brian D. McLaren (1998), postmoderns do not necessarily reject absolute truth, but they doubt their own or anyone else's ability to apprehend, comprehend, remember, and encode truth in language that can be understood in any absolutely accurate way.<sup>8</sup>

### **Theoretical Framework**

Four theories provide a framework for understanding the dynamics of this study.

#### **Communication Theory**

Any form of evangelism involves the communication of a message or messages. Given this fact, rhetorical and communication theory provide a long history of principles for the effective communication of Christianity. Plato and Aristotle were two of the most well-known rhetoricians of the Classical Greek period. Plato's pupil, Aristotle, believed that rhetoric was the art of persuasion. He emphasized that one's communication should appeal to the receptor's reason (*logos*), emotions (*pathos*), and trust in the speaker's character (*ethos*) (Bizzell and Herzberg 1990:23-32).

The famous rhetorician, George Campbell, provides additional insights that are relevant to today's postmodern culture. He suggests, first, that the object of discourse must be understandable. Second, the receptor's imagination must be engaged. Third, through engaging the imagination, receptors will develop vivid ideas that are more easily retained. Fourth, Campbell believes that discourse must excite the passions of the receptor. He states, "To say that it is possible to persuade without speaking to the passions, is but at best a kind of specious nonsense" (Bizzell and Herzberg 1990:925-27).

In *Communication Theory for Christian Witness*, Charles H. Kraft (1991) states that receptors are part of reference groups. Reference groups have unique values and worldviews that must be considered in order for effective communication to occur. Because communication also involves where and how “meaning” exists in the use of symbols or forms, communicators must understand the unique dynamics of receptor-oriented communication.

Many churches are ineffective at communicating their messages to younger generations so that the intended meanings are received. One of their challenges is that they do not understand receptor-oriented communication principles. Part of the research of the Vineyard Church case studies revealed that they utilize receptor-oriented communication. To explain this concept of receptor-oriented communication, Kraft (1991) states that the gap between the source of any message and the receptor of that message must be bridged by the communicator of said message. The communicator of a message, while being firmly connected to both source and receptor, must enter the receptor’s frame of reference so that the intended message is understood by the receptor. Receptor-oriented communication involves using forms, symbols, and styles that connect with the receptor’s context because interpretation of meaning ultimately lies with the receptor. Kraft states that receptors are active during the transactional process of communication. They have needs and realities with which the communicator must deal. Receptors are part of reference groups with unique worldviews and values that must be considered by the communicator.

## **Social Group Theories and Homogeneous Unit Principle Theory**

In 1970, Donald A. McGavran popularized his theory of the homogenous unit principle in his book, *Understanding Church Growth*. McGavran's work was based on years of missional field research in India by J. Waskom Pickett.<sup>9</sup> McGavran's theory maintains that individuals or groups become Christians best when they do not have to cross-cultural, linguistic, or class barriers (McGavran 1990:163).

As developed by Cooley and Mead, social interaction theory is a dynamic, changing sequence of social exchanges between individuals or groups who modify their behavior according to the exchanges with their interaction partner(s). In other words, they are events in which people attach meaning to a situation, interpret what others are meaning, and respond accordingly (Stark 2004:71-77).

As developed by Henry Tajfel and John Turner, social identity theory is a diffuse but interrelated group of social psychological theories concerned with when and why individuals identify with, and behave as part of, social groups and adopt shared attitudes. This theory is also concerned with how encounters between individuals are perceived as encounters between group members. Social identity theory is thus concerned both with the psychological and sociological aspects of group behavior (Tajfel and Turner 1986).

## **Conversion Theory**

Conversion is a complex idea that is not unique to the Christian faith, as many different religions and movements commonly speak of conversion. The term *conversion* is a theological term, not a biblical word (Bloesch 1995:272). The biblical idea of conversion is based on the idea of turning from something or someone, or turning to something or someone (Goetzmann 1980:357-59). In the Old Testament, *turning*

specifically meant to turn around, return (*qal*), bring back, or restore (*hiph*). In the New Testament, *turning* is expressed in the Greek words *epistrepho* and *metanoeo*, as a change of mind and heart. This type of turning refers to a person's turning from sin and turning to God, signaling conversion has taken place (Laubach 1980:353-54).

Nevertheless, viewing conversion exclusively as a “point-in-time” decision is difficult. In *Understanding Religious Conversion*, Lewis R. Rambo (1993) attempts to answer the following questions: (1) What factors cause people to consider conversion to Christianity? (2) How are different kinds of conversion explained? (3) How can the “quality” of these conversions be evaluated? Rambo states that conversion is a process more than an event and that conversion is rarely an overnight wholesale transformation. He does not exclude the possibility that conversion can happen suddenly but does believe that some history of seed planting precedes conversion. He also states that conversion is contextual and influenced by a mosaic of relationships, expectations, and situations. Rambo found a variety of multiple, interactive, and cumulative factors at work in the conversion process. His stage model of conversion is multidimensional, historical, and process oriented.<sup>10</sup>

### **Grounded Theory**

Sociologists Barney G. Glaser and Anselm Strauss have developed the grounded theory perspective on social science research. They argue for the inductive discovery of theory grounded in systematically analyzed data (Glaser and Strauss 1967). Brian D. Haig (1995) also notes that grounded theory research begins by focusing on an area of study and gathers data from a variety of sources, including interviews and field

observations. Haig adds that the general goal of grounded theory research is to construct theories in order to understand various phenomena.

John W. Creswell further describes grounded theory:

The researcher attempts to derive a theory by using multiple stages of data collection and the refinement and interrelationship of categories of information. Two primary characteristics of this design are the constant comparison of data with emerging categories, and theoretical sampling of different groups to maximize the similarities and the differences of information. (Creswell 1994:12)

### **Review of Relevant Literature**

This section contains an examination of pertinent sources related to the stated topic and problem of this study. It includes discussion on such issues as generational boundaries and values, postmodernity, evangelism, effective communication of Christianity, apposite dissertations, existing research on Vineyard Association churches, and theoretical and methodological frameworks pertinent to this study.

Due to sweeping cultural changes occurring in North America, new generational groups may require a more focused and missional approach if they are to be attracted or evangelized by churches into the Kingdom of God. Many churches in North America find themselves having difficulty evangelizing or attracting young adults due to their inability to understand and relate to the rapidly changing culture outside of their four walls. These same churches are often dominated by eighteenth-century forms and bureaucratized layers of social structures that are preventing them from reaching secular people. North Americans are living in an increasingly fragmented culture, and younger generations are embodying values and worldviews that many are calling postmodern. While this study is not particularly about postmodernity, today's younger generations embody features of postmodernity, and herein lies part of the "problem" or challenge. Many churches

continue to do mission out of a very modern paradigm, neglecting the challenges that postmodernity has created.

Many North American church leaders are labeling things and persons as postmodern without fully realizing their error. For example, some churches think that having coffee and doughnuts makes them a “postmodern church.” Postmodernism is a much more complex concept and must be understood if effective contextualization of the gospel of Jesus Christ is to occur among new generations of people today.

Postmodernism is not a religious concept, although it is being used in religious contexts. It is also not the sum total of a culture despite the fact that it influences culture.<sup>11</sup>

As noted in the definition of terms section, postmodernism points to a liminal phase following the Age of Modernity. Postmodernism refers to an emerging philosophy that is more subjective in its worldview than was modernity. The essence of the postmodern condition may be centered on disbelief toward universal worldviews or any metanarrative that attempts to provide an overarching explanation of life (Lyotard 1984). In *Soul Tsunami*, Leonard Sweet states, “Postmoderns are deeply suspicious about any and all meta-narratives that provide all encompassing authority for everyone everywhere” (1999:iv). However, the postmodern worldview is often misunderstood. Although postmodern worldviews are not limited to any certain age level, generational boundaries need to be examined to understand worldview development among different generations.

Setting parameters for generational boundaries or birth ranges is a debatable undertaking; however, sociologists have provided manageable and agreeable dates that can be useful. One of the most well-known generations today is the Baby Boomers. Demographically, 1945 to 1963 witnessed a sharp increase in the birth rate following the

return of World War II soldiers; thus, the term Baby Boomers was given to this generation (Hicks and Hicks 1999:243-53).

According to Gary L. McIntosh, the Boomers are the largest and most educated generation in American history. They consist of a plethora of subgroups as indicated by the many labels given to them such as Yuppies (young urban professionals), Dinks (double income, no kids), and Postwar Babies. Boomers rejoiced in putting the first men on the moon and struggled through the Vietnam War era. Other formative experiences for the Boomer generation included the Cold War (referring to the tension between America and the Soviet Union between 1945 to 1989), unprecedented growth in mass media (the first ones to be raised on television), economic growth and affluence, Rock and Roll, and the Civil Rights movement (1995:73-92).

Beginning in 1961, live births dropped and continued to decline until the late 1970s. The Baby Boomers were too busy with careers and other pursuits to match the birth rate of the Second World War generation. Generation X was also the first generation born after the invention of the birth control pill and legal abortion. Having children (or not) became a viable option to their Boomer parents, making the ability to control family size easier. The effects of these choices were quickly noticed:

Family size in 1957: 3.8 children born per woman;

Family size in 1977: 1.8 children born per woman (Holtz 1995:9).

This generation became known as Generation X or, sometimes, as Baby Busters. The somewhat fluid birth range for Generation X is 1961 to 1981. They are products of Boomer parents who were consumed with materialism, money, and careers. As a result,

they were the products of soaring divorce rates, the original “latch key”<sup>12</sup> kids, and positioned to be saturated with the technology explosion (McAllister 1999:3).

The last generation studied is often referred to as the Millennials (born 1982 and forward) due to the fact they were the first generation to graduate and become adults in the twenty-first century. Millennials are growing up in a very fragmented culture and have a tendency to wait and see what happens before acting. Like Generation X, they are not sure the American dream really exists. They focus on short-term realities and are somewhat fatalistic. Because of the fragmentation of society, they feel very disconnected and isolated. They do not trust the institutions of society such as government, religion, or the educational system (Howe and Strauss 2000). They love technology and are fully utilizing the Internet to obtain the information they need to survive. Unfortunately, technology is leading to further isolation and pseudo-community between Generation X and the Millennials. Perhaps the most defining characteristic of their worldview is that they are passionately tolerant of most everything except absolutes, of which they are most intolerant (Barna 1995).

This new worldview has emerged in response to the long reign of modernity. Those who hold a postmodern worldview may consider themselves spiritual but not religious. The object of their spirituality can be anything. They also believe in knowing things through means other than reason (such as intuition and emotions), so they watch shows such as the *X-Files* or Disney’s *Raven* (where the main character has visions of things to come). The certainty of knowing something comes in the form of experience, which is unarguable among postmoderns (McLaren 2002). In modernity, people made decisions based on values with lines approaching black and white. In postmodernity, all



decisions are colored in gray. Postmoderns do not want to listen to dressed-up politicians or preachers; they only want to know whether or not people are authentic. After all, they grew up with prominent religious and societal leaders saying one thing in regard to morality and integrity but doing. Where moderns think locally, postmoderns think globally. The world has been brought to their home through twenty-four hour media and Internet access.

By comparing and contrasting these generations, one can start to see the changes in worldview development among generations. It seems to have started noticeably with the Baby Boomer generation, progressed further with Generation X, and now appears prevalent among those born after 1982. Rick and Kathy Hicks explore the development of these generational values in decade increments beginning in the 1920s. They concur that wars, historical and political events, the financial climate, popular heroes, and media all combine to influence society in any given period of time. Although people are experiencing these influencers together, those who are in the value-forming stage are most affected by the particular event or circumstance (1999:43).

Generational differences have tremendous implications for Christian mission. Thom S. Rainer reports startling statistics concerning orthodox Christian viewpoints among the last four generations. His study shows that 65 percent of Builders, 37 percent of Baby Boomers, 17 percent of Generation X, and 4 percent of Millennials hold an orthodox perspective of Christianity.<sup>13</sup> Given the dramatic decrease in interest in Christianity among younger generations, churches must make understanding how to reach them a major priority.

Neil Howe and William Strauss, noted authors on generational issues, provide another perspective on viewing generational changes and note they are historically consistent patterns that coincide with larger societal changes. They use the language of “turning” to describe when a society enters a new era, which they state happens in cycles of four. These “turnings” occur approximately every twenty years, encompassing a total of eighty to one hundred years for a complete cycle:

- The First Turning is a High, an upbeat era of strong institutions and weakening individualism, when a new civic order implants and the old values regime decays. The last “first turning” was during the Truman, Eisenhower, and Kennedy presidencies. America became confident and institutionally strong, yet conformist and spiritually complacent.
- The Second Turning is an Awakening, a passionate era of spiritual upheaval, when the civic order comes under attack from a new values regime. This started during the campus revolts of the mid-1960s to the tax revolts of the 1980s.
- The Third Turning is an Unraveling, a downcast era of strengthening individualism and weakening institutions. The old civic order decays and the new values regime implants. This is what was labeled as the “Culture Wars” that began with the Reagan years. This marked an era of national drift and institutional decay.
- The Fourth Turning is a Crisis, a decisive era of secular upheaval, when the values regime propels the replacement of the old civic order with a new one. (Howe and Strauss 1997:4-5)

Strauss and Howe predict the “Fourth Turning” will occur after the new millennium (they wrote this book in 1997) around the year 2005.

They state that a “spark” will catalyze a crisis mood in America and that the remnants of the old social order will fall apart and political and economic trust will implode. By 2025, America will pass through a “gate in history, commensurate with the American Revolution, Civil War, and twin emergencies of the Great Depression and World War II” (1997:6). With all that has occurred in this new millennium regarding the War on Terror and other significant global issues, Howe and Strauss may be correct.

At this point, any analysis of generations will inevitably contain generalizations. Certainly some in each generation defy the labels and worldviews ascribed to them. The attempt here is not to corral these generations chronologically but rather culturally. Defining birth ranges and generational values development will provide some type of context for understanding the emerging postmodern worldview and other factors pertinent to Christian mission today..

### **History of the Association of Vineyard Churches**

Vineyard Association churches appear to have some level of success in attracting successive generations of young adults. They originated during a time period when mainline denominations were beginning to experience decline in the 1960s and a rebellion against “intolerant establishment religion” produced what some called, “Jesus Freaks” or the Jesus Movement (Miller 1997:11). Those involved in the Jesus movement held Bible studies in parks, started churches in homes, created coffee houses in strip malls, rented schools for services and pushed the boundaries of the mainstream ecclesiology. Donald E. Miller states that this movement bore many of the same characteristics of the Reformation, as ordinary people discovered the priesthood of believers and felt no need for seminary or ordained trained clergy to lead them in Bible study (1997:12).

The roots of the Vineyard movement, as well as others such as Calvary Chapel churches can be traced to the Jesus movement; however, these movements were not simply born out of the rebellion of the socially marginalized 1960s. Vineyard churches during the infancy of the movement and today are quite reflective of the middle-class mainstream of America. Because of Vineyard’s commitment to indigenous forms and

styles, participants of many sociocultural backgrounds are welcome to participate without feeling the pressure to conform to any one class.

Chuck Smith, a man who had a passion to reach hippies and surfers who were not attracted to mainline denominational churches, founded the Calvary Chapel Church in 1965. Soon, the influence of the Calvary Chapel movement led to another type of “vineyard” in California. Ken Gulliksen, who grew up Lutheran, had a significant conversion experience at the age of fourteen and a subsequent experience of speaking in tongues at a summer camp three years later. After a term in the United States Air Force, Gulliksen returned to California and became an associate pastor at Calvary Chapel. After his ordination in 1971, Gulliksen went to El Paso, Texas, where he started the “Jesus Chapels,” patterned after Calvary Chapels. Intense Bible studies and Holy Spirit baptizing characterized the ministry. Gulliksen returned to Cosa Mesa, California, and started the first Vineyard church in 1974. Gulliksen’s Vineyard churches maintained an association with Calvary Chapels that would last until 1982 (Miller 1997:46-48).

The baton was passed to Jon Wimber in 1982, and the formal Association of Vineyard churches was established. Wimber was an ambitious person with a compassion for the poor and marginalized. He was also a skilled semi-professional musician who had sold many albums. After experiencing a personal marital crisis, he responded to the gospel and was converted through the influence of a friend from the Evangelical Friends Church. Wimber was greatly influenced by Quaker values and principles and stayed committed to those in his theology and praxis. He became a faithful member and leader in the Friends Church, teaching Bible studies and leading worship (Miller 1997:47-48).

In 1975, Wimber became the director of the Department of Church Growth at Fuller Evangelistic Association (later known as the Charles E. Fuller Institute of Evangelism and Church Growth; Rainer 1993:41). During his time at Fuller, Wimber began to embrace a theology that included the present-day manifestation of signs and wonders. He acknowledged that his new theology emerged in part through the miraculous experiences of Fuller's International students. Wimber became increasingly convinced through additional personal study of Scripture and other readings that effective evangelism would result when proclamation of the gospel was joined by demonstration of God's power. He left Fuller in 1977 to devote himself to what later became known as Vineyard Christian Fellowship in Yorba Linda, California (Wimber and Springer 1992:12). Wimber states, "Regarding power evangelism, I needed to field-test my new-found theology, to go out into the world and see if what I thought Scripture taught in fact worked in Western society" (1992:13).

During his tenure at Fuller, Wimber started "after glows" in his home that soon became too charismatic for his current denominational affiliation. Wimber's group subsequently started a church and had its first formal meeting on the tenth of May 1977, in the Masonic lodge across the street from his Friends church. This church grew rapidly, and Wimber decided to associate it with the Calvary Chapel movement (Miller 1997:48).

In 1982, Chuck Smith (founder of Calvary Chapel) gathered together Gulliksen, Wimber, Greg Laurie, and other prominent leaders of large Calvary churches. Wimber was confronted for the overemphasis of charismatic gifts in his church. Coming to grips with the disagreement over the emphasis of spiritual gifts, Wimber assumed leadership from Gulliksen of the Vineyard churches (that were associated with Calvary Chapel) and

founded a separate Association of Vineyard churches later that year. Not only did the existing eight Vineyard churches merge together, but another thirty Calvary chapels joined the Vineyard Association (Miller 1997:48-50).

Wimber had a busy year in 1982, as he returned to Fuller Theological Seminary to co-teach a course with C. Peter Wagner originally labeled, MC 510: Signs, Wonders, and Church Growth. According to Wagner, this course broke enrollment records at the time and evening healing sessions drew large public as well as student crowds (1983:132). Although this course generated substantial criticism, Wagner and Fuller's School of World Mission served to provide credibility to this emerging power evangelism movement (Rainer 1993:51-60).

### **The Vineyard Genetic Code**

At a Vineyard pastors' conference in September 1992, Wimber taught on ten essential areas of ministry for any Vineyard church. He called these areas the *Vineyard Genetic Code* because they are the common denominators that identify Vineyard churches. A Vineyard church experience typically includes

- Clear and accurate biblical teaching,
- Contemporary worship in the freedom of the Holy Spirit,
- The gifts of the Holy Spirit in operation,
- An active small group ministry,
- Ministry to the poor, widows, orphans and those who are broken,
- Physical healing with emphasis on signs and wonders as seen in the book of

Acts,

- A commitment to church planting and missions at home and abroad,

- Unity within the whole body of Christ and a relationship with other local churches,
- Evangelistic outreach, and
- Equipping the saints in areas such as discipleship, ministry, serving, giving, finances, and family (B. Jackson 1999:100-08).

Donald E. Miller maintains that the Calvary Chapel movement and Wimber's propelling of the Vineyard Association of churches are likely the catalyst for the post-denominational era of today (1997:18-20).

In *Planting Missional Churches*, Ed Stetzer (2006) states that missional churches are biblically faithful, culturally relevant, and planted in a specific area in order to reach a specific group of people. Missional churches seek to contextualize their message using culturally relevant forms and are indigenous in nature. Stetzer also maintains that missional churches are highly incarnational in their approach to people and are apostolic because their stated mission is to reach secular people. Given this understanding of a missional ecclesiology, Vineyard Association churches could be termed as missional in nature.

The Vineyard churches with which I have been involved throughout the years have all shared the above missional characteristics. The fact that Vineyard churches operate autonomously may also increase their ability to be contextual and indigenous in their respective communities. Interestingly, one will experience a tremendous variety of styles and forms utilized between Vineyard churches yet will find the same core values of the Vineyard Association at the center of each of their churches. These values mirror Hunter's definition of apostolic congregations:

- Their stated mission is to reach secular pre-Christian people.
- They use culturally relevant forms.
- Their growth is due to the use of reproducible strategic principles.
- The people are rooted in Scripture and prayer.
- Evangelization is viewed as their main business.
- They have a vision of what people can become.
- They labor to involve everyone in small groups and ministry.
- They engage in multiple “side-door” outreaches such as recovery ministries.
- They allow people to belong before they believe and engage people with

compassion and conversation (Hunter 2003).

As noted in the Theoretical Framework section, four primary theories were utilized as a framework for this study: (1) communication theory, (2) social identity theory, (3) conversion theory, and (4) grounded theory.

Because any form of evangelism inevitably involves the communication of a message or messages, communication theory provides an effective lens for viewing how churches attract each generation. Communicators of Christianity need to understand the values and worldviews of their generational groups and gear their communication in that direction (Kraft 1991). Hunter’s research among secular people recognizes the need for churches to begin where people are versus where they want them to be, in order to engage in meaningful conversation that is dialogical in nature, to use language and forms that are relevant to the receptor, and to respond with understanding instead of judgment (2003).



Given Kraft's understanding of communication, many Christians or churches understandably fail to communicate to young adults in a way that attracts or interests them. Communication of Christianity should be guided from inside the receptor's frame of reference or context. It also needs to be within their range of tolerance. Younger adult generations are in what developmental theorist James W. Fowler calls an "individuated-reflective" faith stage. They are critically reflecting on their own beliefs and values and attempting to understand themselves within a social system (Fowler, Nipkow, and Schweitzer 1991). Young adults are actively reflecting and questioning all that they have been taught regarding religious faith as a child and are more open to other perspectives. They want to ask questions, engage in dialogue, and be a part of the journey. Unfortunately, much of the communication of Christianity, both interpersonally and in the church, is often just the opposite of what young adults need in order to respond best.

Generational groups also comprise what McGavran calls a homogenous unit. McGavran's theory of the homogenous unit principle maintains that individuals or groups become Christians best when they do not have to cross ethnic, linguistic, cultural, or class barriers. (1970). Although McGavran's work was largely based on his research among the castes of India, it is applicable to any ethnic or cultural group. As already noted, generational groups do possess their own language, values, and worldviews that make them unique from other groups; however, many churches attempt to engage them in a way that requires them to cross McGavran's stated barriers. For churches that desire to attract young adult generations, they will have to adjust their methodology to ensure that the barriers keeping young adults at bay are removed.

The academic field of sociology also provides relevant frameworks for this study. Because churches are comprised of groups and these groups are constantly interacting with each other, social interaction theory is especially relevant. According to Cooley, social groups form as individuals interact with each other and form common bonds around similar interests. Social interaction is certainly a dynamic and changing sequence of events between individuals or groups who modify their actions and reactions according to the context (Stark 2004:71-77). Churches that wish to attract young adults or different generations need to be attentive to the group interaction environment and strive to ensure that those interactions are positive and relevant.

Social identity theory is another useful framework for this study. This theory is more concerned with the intrapersonal aspect of group interaction and how individuals identify with and behave as part of social groups and adopt shared attitudes. Whereas social interaction theory focuses on the group interaction episode, social identity theory is more focused on the psychological aspect of individual behavior in the context of the group (Tajfel and Turner 1986).

Conversion theory provides a fourth theoretical framework for this study. This theory is relevant given that attracting or evangelizing individuals or groups is on the front side of any conversion process. In *Understanding Religious Conversion*, Rambo (1993) identifies several factors that cause people to consider conversion to Christianity. Rambo concludes that conversion is a process more than an event and that conversion is rarely an overnight, wholesale transformation. He does not exclude the possibility that conversion can happen suddenly but does believe some history of seed planting precedes

conversion. He also states that conversion is contextual and is, therefore, influenced by a mosaic of relationships, expectations, and situations.

Rambo (1993) finds a variety of multiple, interactive, and cumulative factors at work in the conversion process. His stage model of conversion is multidimensional, historical, and process oriented:

Stage 1. Context: This multifaceted element lies at the center of Rambo's model. It is the total environment where conversion takes place.

Stage 2. Crisis: Some type of crisis inside or outside of a person's life normally precedes the actual conversion.

Stage 3. Quest: A process of seeking meaning and purpose occurs.

Stage 4. Encounter: The interaction between the one "seeking" and the advocate for a particular religion converges.

Stage 5. Interaction: Potential converts now interact with the religious group or their current interaction intensifies.

Stage 6. Commitment: The individual makes a decision to commit to the religion, often demonstrated by some type of public display (e.g., baptism, testimony, witness).

Stage 7. Consequences: These results can be both positive and challenging. The new convert will face some type of individual, sociocultural, and family consequences for their decision.

When examining the issue of attracting certain generational groups, Rambo's stages become extremely helpful for churches desiring to evangelize them. By considering group dynamics at each stage of the process, churches may be able to reach them more effectively.

### **Methodology and Data Collection**

The methodology of this study is the flexible qualitative case study research approach, specifically, a multiple-case study embedded design based on Robert Yin's methodology. Yin says that the case study method is "an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and context are not clearly evident" (2003:13). He further elaborates:

[It] copes with the technically distinctive situation in which there will be many more variables of interest than data points, and as one result relies on multiple sources of evidence with data needing to converge in a triangulating fashion, and as another result benefits from the prior development of theoretical propositions to guide data collection and analysis. (13-14)

A multiple-case study design decreases the potential "vulnerability" of a single-case approach and increases the "analytic and direct replication benefits" (Yin 2003:53).

This project is a multiple-case approach because it involved the study of three successive generations within three different Vineyard churches and contained multiple units of analysis. Respondents were interviewed and provided questionnaire instruments based on non-probability convenience sampling, a technique in which respondents are selected by availability rather than by following random or probability sampling techniques. While this method does not permit control over the representativeness of a sample (because they are not randomly selected), it is justified in the case study design when observation and identification of characteristics is the focus (Babbie 2005:188-89).

### **Data Analysis**

Research data was collected and analyzed through the following methods: (1) qualitative interviews and questionnaires, (2) participant/nonparticipant observation, (3) numerical data, and (4) published reports.

## **Qualitative Interviews**

During the field research phase, I conducted personal interviews of and distributed questionnaires to the following sources of data:

1. Each Vineyard church's lead pastor,
2. Each Vineyard church's primary leader(s) for evangelism and discipleship,
3. Each Vineyard church's youth pastor and college age/young adult pastor or primary leader(s), and
4. Members of the Boomer, Xer, and Millennial generation groups who have been attracted, converted, or assimilated in the Vineyard churches studied.

Local and regional census data was accessed in order to ascertain socioeconomic demographics of the particular area in which each Vineyard church is located.

## **Participant and Nonparticipant Observation**

While conducting field research, I spent extensive time both observing and participating in Vineyard churches' worship services and other functions where potential respondents may be involved for the purpose of observing phenomena that may lead to the basis for further exploration. For example, the interplay between various Vineyard church structures and strategies and the selected respondent individuals and groups can be observed.

## **Numerical Data**

As part of my analysis, I examined any numerical data available through either the local Vineyard church studied or the National Association of Vineyard Churches. I included any pertinent numerical data on the following:

1. Finances—to ascertain what resources are allocated to evangelism as compared to other aspects of Vineyard churches;
2. Church growth—participation in worship services, small groups, baptisms, formal membership and other related activities as delineated by the Vineyard churches studied; and,
3. Social impact—the impact Vineyard churches may be having in the community outside of the local church.

### **Published Reports**

As a part of the research, published reports relating to Vineyard churches and this study were reviewed and are contained in the Literature Review section.

### **Significance of the Study**

This study of the three Vineyard churches' ability to attract successive new generations of young adults will be missiologically significant to the field of Christian mission in the following ways:

1. It will assist those involved in Christian mission to reach an age demographic that is largely missing in most church contexts today.
2. It will yield reproducible principles that can be duplicated in various mission settings in North America that desire to reach young adults.
3. It will assist those involved in Christian mission to understand the dynamics of social group interaction and how groups form and stay together.
4. It may be the first significant study of its kind in the Vineyard Association of Churches and may benefit Vineyard churches across North America.

5. It will be of significance to academic departments and students within Christian colleges, universities, and seminaries devoted to Christian mission to young people.

### **Ethical Consideration**

The following ethical considerations were given highest importance in this study:

1. Voluntary participation of all respondents and participants,
  2. A commitment that this research will not bring any form of harm to the participants,
  3. Anonymity of participants if requested,
  4. Confidentiality of information,
  5. Avoidance of all deception and clear disclosure about the nature of the study,
- and
6. Accurate analyses and reporting.

## CHAPTER 2

### CASE STUDIES

Research was conducted in three Vineyard Association churches in south-central Ohio that appear to have some level of success in attracting and responding to multiple generations. A fourth church case study was conducted that appeared limited in attracting multiple generations for the purpose of comparison and contrast. The following qualitative case studies focus on the history of each church, as well as on, what they know, understand, and do that makes them able to attract and respond to multiple generations.

#### **Vineyard Columbus Case Study**

##### **Demographics of Columbus and Westerville**

Vineyard Columbus is situated inside the I-270 outerbelt on the north side of Columbus, Ohio, although it is officially within the Westerville city limits. Limiting Vineyard Columbus' presence to Westerville would greatly minimize the area of their exposure. Vineyard Columbus is also very close to the Ohio State University campus. According to the 2000 Census, Westerville has a population of 35,318 people and Columbus a population of 711,470. Ethnically, Columbus is twice as diverse as the state of Ohio. The population consists of 24.5 percent black or African-American and 67.9 percent white. The third most represented ethnic groups are Asians at 3.4 percent. Hispanic or Latinos represent 2.5 percent, and 2.6 percent report two or more races.

According to the census, 83.8 percent of Columbus' population are high school graduates, and 29 percent hold a bachelor's degree or higher. In Westerville, 94.6 percent are high school graduates, and 44.6 percent hold a bachelor's degree or higher. The



median household income in Columbus is \$37,897.00 and \$69,135.00 in Westerville. In regard to poverty levels, 14.6 percent of Columbus' population, and 3.5 percent of Westerville's population is living below the country's stated poverty line ("State QuickFacts" 2007).

### **Vineyard Columbus Mission, Vision, Values, and Priorities**

Vineyard Columbus maintains well-articulated mission, vision, values, and priority statements that can be found on the walls of their church foyer and in their printed literature:

- **Mission:** To develop a community of passionate, mature, reproducing disciples; to plant passionate, mature, reproducing churches; and, to transform the world by love and good deeds for the glory of God.
- **Vision:** To be a relevant church that does not exist for itself, but for Christ and for the world.
- **Values:** To be responsive to Jesus, the Holy Spirit, and to the world, to have authenticity, relationships, and community, to be truthful and consistent, and to have open relationships with God, others, and ourselves.
- **Priorities:** To exalt God's presence through a lifestyle of worship, expressing God's love through compassionate outreach, enfolding God's people into community, growing Christians through intentional discipleship strategies, and evangelizing God's world through relationships, church planting, and local and world mission.<sup>1</sup>

### **History of Vineyard Columbus**

Vineyard Columbus emerged from several campus college-age Bible study groups in the early seventies. One of the founding leaders of these Bible studies was Rich

Nathan, who was an assistant law professor at Ohio State University. In 1982, the three Bible study groups, comprised of approximately one hundred people, combined to form the independent Christ Community Church. After several years of meeting in rented buildings, Christ Community purchased a vacant church facility in 1986. The following year, Rich Nathan left his post at Ohio State University to become the church's full-time pastor. Growth continued through the end of the 1980s with attendance reaching seven hundred people and the existing facility busting at the seams. A search for property was initiated until the purchase of 6000 Cooper Road where their current facility still exists.

Vineyard Columbus held its first service at 6000 Cooper Road with approximately one thousand people in attendance (see Figure 2.1). By 1998, consistent growth continued to occur with thirty-five hundred people in weekly worship attendance and created the need to build on to their new facility. At that time, a chapel, classroom wing, and a fully functioning café were constructed. By May 2000, the new three thousand-seat sanctuary was completed and multiple weekend services added. In 2004, a new ministry center was completed to house their current pastoral staff of seventeen ministers, a support staff of approximately seventy people, and their growing Vineyard Leadership Institute, a two-year intensive leadership school.



Figure 2.1.

### Vineyard Church of Columbus.

On 11 May 2007, I was able to visit and interview Stephen Van Dop, Pastor of Evangelism and Outreach at Vineyard Church of Columbus. Our family had worshiped at Vineyard Columbus multiple times during my employment with the Billy Graham Association. This opportunity to meet with one of the pastors of this mega-church was very positive. Van Dop, who is considered the senior pastor's top associate, was a former Reformed Church pastor and a graduate of Western Seminary. He also holds a Doctor of Ministry degree from Asbury Theological Seminary. Shortly after moving to Columbus, Ohio, in order to pastor a small Reformed church and after experiencing a few years of growth, the church "blew-up" as Van Dop stated. Without offering the circumstances of this turn of events, he relayed feeling very "burned out" and stepped out of ministry feeling very "hurt." Pastor Van Dop mentioned that just prior to this incident, his family and several congregants had been "moonlighting" at Vineyard Columbus' Saturday evening service. After leaving the Reformed Church, Van Dop and his family started

attending Vineyard Columbus full-time and began a process of healing. In fact, he stated that Vineyard's emphasis on "healing for all areas of the person" is what drew him. In 2000, Van Dop was asked by Senior Pastor Rich Nathan to join the staff full-time as the Pastor of Evangelism and Outreach, where he continues in that role.

### **View of Evangelism and Outreach**

When asked how Vineyard Columbus defines or views evangelism, Pastor Van Dop emphatically stated, "very broadly." He elaborated that every activity in which Vineyard Columbus engages from "welcoming people, hospitality, and recovery, to family and marriage ministry" is done with an evangelistic mind-set. Van Dop said that evangelism is viewed as a process at Vineyard Columbus versus an event. According to Van Dop, evangelism had recently been "mandated" by Senior Pastor Rich Nathan to be "accomplished" through every department and division of the church. Van Dop concluded his comments to this question by stating, "Evangelism is our ethos; it is our main business. We want all of our people to be a credible witness for Christ during the week wherever they are." Vineyard Columbus' commitment to evangelism is also reflected through their follow-up strategies with visitors. Van Dop stated that every visitor "from a worship service to a person visiting one of the free medical clinics" are contacted personally within seventy-two hours by a member of their visitor follow-up team, and multiple attempts are made to get them plugged into the appropriate process.

### **Groups and Outreach Strategies**

When asked how Vineyard Columbus attempts to attract or respond to the needs of multiple generations, Pastor Van Dop enthusiastically talked about the various programs, departments, and groups that exist for multiple generations. In regards to

Millennials and Gen Xers, Van Dop described a very active ministry called Joshua House (see description in interview with Eric Pickerel). Van Dop also described numerous small group opportunities that are specifically directed toward different age groups needs and demographics.

Pastor Van Dop spoke of Vineyard Columbus as being “missional” in all that they do. Listening to him speak in this language was very similar to reading the language in Darrell L. Guder’s book, entitled, *Missional Church*. Guder states that viewing mission as derived from the very nature of God shifts all the accents in ecclesiology. This shift causes a church to see itself as an instrument of God’s mission and views what they do as participating in God’s mission to the world (1998:5). Because of this missional approach or ecclesiology, Van Dop said that Columbus Vineyard has proliferated dozens of “side-doors” (referring to multiple points for people to enter into church participation) in an effort to attract members of various generations.

Van Dop stated that at the top of their strategy list is their focus on small groups; however, he has found that many newcomers to their Vineyard need a “bridge” environment before they are willing to engage in one of their home groups. Because of this discovery, Vineyard Columbus conducts ongoing classes at the church for those interested in becoming more involved or who are new Christians. Van Dop believes this opportunity allows new people to develop relationships with others that ultimately lead them into more intimate home-group settings.

Vineyard Columbus has many different types of small groups for participant involvement:

- Home Groups: These general groups meet in homes during the week to form community and aid people in becoming disciples of Jesus Christ through worship, Bible study, and prayer.

- New Believer Groups: These groups meet both in homes and at the church. New Christians are encouraged to attend a six-week New Foundations class, followed by a six-week Bible Basics class. They are also funneled into New Believer specific home groups for continued spiritual growth.

- Focus Groups: These groups meet around a particular common interest, such as a men's group or a specific theological topic in homes and church facilities.

- Support and Recovery Groups: These groups meet in homes and at the church around specific needs. Currently, current groups focus on marriage, divorcees, veterans, diabetes, Crohn's and Colitis, grief, suicide, homosexuality, all substance abuse and other forms of addictions, adoption and foster care, and abortion.

Pastor Van Dop also noted a large list of missionally focused opportunities in which participants can be involved.

Their community centers, which are large facilities both in downtown Columbus and on the Cooper Road property, serve as hubs for numerous outreach and service activities. The mission of Vineyard Community Centers is to transform the city of Columbus by love and good deeds for the glory of God. Their slogan is, "Friends with our City—One Life at a Time." According to Van Dop, another "huge" part of their evangelism and attraction strategies is their community centers. Pastor Van Dop took me on a tour one of their centers, which is located on their Cooper Road church property (the second one is located in downtown Columbus).

The following programs operate through the community centers:

- The Early Childhood Center provides full-time child care for children ages six weeks through five years. It also provides part-time, one-half day preschool for children ages three through five.

- The Zone is an after-school and summer program for students grades K-8 who would normally go home to an empty house. The Zone staff provides academic tutoring, dance, character education, sports, and Bible education.

- Just4Us is a program that serves single moms whose kids participate in the Zone.

- The Legal Clinic provides free legal assistance to those who qualify for issues related to immigration, minor criminal matters, domestic, civil, and landlord-tenant disputes, micro-business development, and mediation. The clinic is open once each month and is staffed by attorneys who attend Vineyard Columbus.

- The Health Clinic provides basic health care to patients.

- The men and women prison ministry teams from Vineyard Columbus go into the surrounding correctional facilities to lead monthly worship services and provide mentoring support to inmates.

- Red Cross training is available to all participants.

- Unplanned pregnancy assistance offers support to women through mentoring, friendship, and guidance, as well as providing practical resources such as new baby items.

- The Abortion Trauma Group supports women who are in need of healing after having an abortion.

- Food Pantry assistance is available to those who need it.
- Helping Hands provides home repair assistance for those in need.
- Income tax preparation is available to low-income families.
- Prayer ministry is available for anyone in need of spiritual help.
- Notary Public service is available for those who need it.
- Art and dance classes from first grade through adulthood in their state-of-the-

art studio.

- Fitness services are available to participants.
- Athletic involvement for various organized sporting teams and activities for

all ages is available.

- GED classes and tutoring for adults are available for those who need it.
- Financial educational classes are available for those who need it.
- Job networking systems are in place for those who need it.
- The Alpha program is available for those interested in exploring Christianity.
- Citizenship classes are provided for immigrant populations.
- English as a second language classes are available.
- Adoption support services are provided for those who need it.
- Home ownership education workshops are offered for participants.
- Boy and Girl Scouting programs are offered through the church.

Pastor Van Dop said that the list of what is offered to the community through their Vineyard Church and community centers grows monthly as God raises up people in the congregation who have the ability to respond to various needs in their community and are given opportunity by church leadership to implement new programs.



In addition to this plethora of groups and strategies, Vineyard Columbus has appropriate age-level programs for children and teens. One key outreach to college-age and young adult Millennials is called Joshua House. On 8 June 2007, a personal interview was conducted with Eric Pickerel, pastor of college-age and young adult ministries (referred to as the Joshua House) and regional church-planting coordinator for the Vineyard Association of Churches.

Like other Vineyard leaders interviewed, Pickerel came to the Vineyard from a mainline denominational church. He was serving as a youth pastor in a Columbus Presbyterian church when he was invited to hear Wimber speak at Columbus Vineyard in 1994. Pickerel described Wimber's talk as the first time he had been exposed to teachings on the gifts of the Spirit, in particular, healing prayer for those with various challenges. He noted some "weird happenings" that made him laugh during our interview. During the course of this meeting, Pickerel stated that he had an experience with the "power of the Holy Spirit" for the first time in his Christian journey. After this experience, Eric decided to enroll in the Vineyard Leadership Institute (a two-year leader-intensive program offered at Columbus Vineyard) and was offered an internship upon completion of the program. He was offered and became a part of the college/young adult staff in 1996 and the lead pastor for this area in 1998.

Pickerel noted "two main engines" for college and young adult ministry at Vineyard Columbus—small groups and their Sunday evening Joshua House meeting. Currently, over six hundred young adults participate in their Joshua House service and approximately fifty active small groups meet during the week. Pickerel stated that the median age of participants is around twenty-three.

Small groups are responsible for every facet of their young adult ministries. They organize and lead various outreaches to area college and university campuses, participate in homeless and other benevolent projects in the city of Columbus, and are responsible for the follow-up of all visitors to Joshua House. Twice each month, Joshua House visitors are invited to a free dinner where they are introduced to the various young adult programs, as well as given the opportunity to enter into a small group of their interest.

A new development has surfaced in their young adult ministries that may reflect Millennials' need for interpersonal relationships. Pickerel noted that in the recent year, more young adults are involved in small groups and small group activities than attend the Sunday evening service. He attributes this observation to Xers, and Millennials' desire to be in a relational community setting, that he stated was a primary generational characteristic. However, Pickerel has also observed that the populations involved in small groups are not very represented at the Joshua House service. When asked what he thought was behind this observation, he replied, "Some want a more anonymous setting, while others don't." He believes both types of settings are crucial.

Lastly, Eric was asked to describe the major characteristics of Generation X and Millennials that he has observed in his almost ten years as their pastor at Vineyard Columbus:

- Individualistic, while simultaneously having a strong desire for relationships and community,
- Consumerist,
- Suspicious of any claim to know absolute truth,
- Suspicious of authority,

- Self-focused,
- Hesitant to follow anyone based on a “title,” but will follow those who are willing to share “their journey, story, and relationship,” and
- Experiential.

Part of this list is very similar to Sweet’s description in *Postmodern Pilgrims*. In this book, Sweet provides an acronym of E.P.I.C. to understand today’s Xers and Millennials (2000:26-138).

- Experiential, connecting with what they can experience,
- Participatory, wanting to be a part of the process and journey,
- Image-based, responding to technology, and
- Connecting, desiring to be connected to something beyond themselves.

## **Vineyard Grove City Case Study**

### **Grove City Demographics**

Grove City is a rapidly growing area on the southwest side of Columbus, Ohio. Many locals refer to it as a “bedroom community” for Columbus. Countless observable examples of new residential, commercial, and school growth in this city are accessible via the I-270 outer belt around Columbus. According to the 2000 census, Grove City has a population of 27,075 people, a 38.2 percent increase over the previous ten years. Ethnically, Grove City is predominantly white (96.2 percent), followed by African-American or black persons (1.5 percent), and 1.2 percent are of Hispanic ethnicity. The remaining population consists of American Indian, Asian, and persons reporting more than one race.

In the same report, 88.7 percent of Grove City’s population were high school graduates, and 22 percent held a bachelor’s degree or higher. The median household income was \$52,064, with 4 percent of the population living below the country’s stated poverty line (“State QuickFacts” 2007).

### **Grove City Mission, Vision, and Values**

Vineyard Grove City adopted its mission, vision, and values from Acts 2:42-47:

They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. All believers were together and had everything in common. Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved. (NIV)

From this passage, five principal points have emerged that serve as guiding priorities for Grove City Vineyard. Each of these priorities is equally important with a commitment to achieving each one of them in a practical way:

- **EQUIPPING:** being a place where the Word of God is taught so that believers grow to maturity and are equipped to serve God in dynamic and productive ways (Acts 2:42);
- **COMMUNITY:** being a thriving community where relationships are valued and where sacrificial love for one another and for those outside the church is freely given.
- **PRAYER:** being consistently and powerfully engaged in prayer; (Acts 2:42);
- **WORSHIP:** being a place where anyone who desires may find opportunity for personal expression of worship to God (Acts 2:47);
- **EVANGELISM:** being a place where seekers are welcomed and consistently presented the gospel in such a way that they have opportunity to receive Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord of their lives. We further envision Vineyard to be a place where believers are equipped and released to present the gospel message to those outside the church (Acts 2:47; “Our Vision”)

### **History of Grove City Vineyard**

On 11 May 2007, a personal interview was conducted with Tom Pauquette, the founding and current lead pastor of Vineyard Grove City. Pastor Paquette is a former Church of God church planter and pastor from Indiana, and holds a Doctor of Ministry degree from Asbury Theological Seminary and is currently pursuing a Doctor of Philosophy degree. Paquette went to Columbus in order to plant a church for his denomination, where an interesting turn of events occurred.

After searching for property to construct a building for this denomination, Paquette found an ideal piece of land on Cooper Road. After inquiring about this property, he learned that another pastor, Rich Nathan, had already initiated a process to purchase the land. Paquette set up a meeting with Nathan to discuss how they might do something together with this property. Paquette began building a relationship with Nathan and to experience what he described as a “deeper more contemplative prayer life that included praying in tongues.” Paquette left the Church of God, joined the Vineyard Association, and planted Grove City Vineyard in 1993 (see Figure 2.2). Paquette stated that the church started out in a local school until they were able to move to a rented storefront building in downtown Grove City in 1994. They remained in leased facilities until they were able to purchase property and construct the building in 2001. Paquette described their growth as “slow and steady” and currently rests at 1,500 in weekend worship attendance.



Figure 2.2.

Vineyard Grove City current facility.

### **View of Evangelism and Outreach**

Pastor Paquette was quick to answer the question of how he and their church leadership views evangelism and outreach. He defined them as “moving people from being God-hostile to responsible, and reproducing disciples.” Paquette also stated that he views any activity, verbal or nonverbal, along this path as evangelistic in nature. He often referred to their ethos of “being saved into the body,” which he qualified as being grafted into something bigger than their particular Vineyard church: the Kingdom of God.

Paquette also views evangelism as connected to discipleship versus two separate ideas or strategies. He believes that the ultimate mark of a disciple is being a disciplemaker; therefore, the two ideas are interconnected. Grove City Vineyard has an intentional process for attracting and assimilating new participants. When new persons or families participate in one of Grove City’s worship services, groups, or outreach events, Pastor Tom personally contacts them within that week. The following week, the director of body life contacts new participants to see how Grove City Vineyard may further help meet their needs.

Each month, Grove City Vineyard hosts a reoccurring event entitled, *Vineyard 101*, for new participants. This event includes a free dinner and an informational session hosted by the church's leadership on the various programs offered through the church. Participants are also encouraged to join a small group of their interest at this meeting.

### **Groups and Outreach Strategies**

Pastor Pauquette stated that small groups are the primary context for growth and discipleship at their church. Therefore, they currently have twenty-five to thirty active home groups that meet weekly. Vineyard Grove City also has the following specialized groups in which people can be involved:

- Recovery,
- Divorce care,
- Marriage and family support,
- Grief support,
- Men's group, and
- Women's group.

Pauquette stated that new focus groups are started when an established church participant has the desire to reach out and attempt to meet a certain need that is in line with the mission of the church.

Primarily through small groups, Grove City Vineyard also engages its community with numerous outreach strategies:

- Saturday servant evangelism activities shows God's love in practical ways, which might be as simple as passing out hot coffee on a cool day, washing windows, or passing out groceries;



- Monthly grocery giveaways are held at different low-income housing complexes each month around the community;
- Homeless shelter visits allow participants to engage local homeless people in conversation and relationships;
- Listening ear ministries is a biblical counseling service offered to those in the community; and,
- Various mission projects are ongoing both locally and in the world:

#### Operation Hope

Grove City Vineyard has been helping with Hurricane Katrina clean up from the beginning through a partnership with Operation Hope, in order to repair homes and help rebuild faith.

#### Brazil

Grove City Vineyard partners with Project Amazon (PAZ) to help with labor and minister to the people in the Castanhal Church in Brazil.

#### Arms of Love Children's Homes

In partnership with Arms of Love, Grove City Vineyard supports and travels to Arms of Love Children's Homes each year with homes in Nicaragua, Philippines, Senegal, Mexico, and Brazil.

#### Lakota

Grove City Vineyard is involved with the Lakota Indians on the Pine Ridge Indian reservation in South Dakota.

#### The Shepherds

Groups travel to Wisconsin once or twice a year to serve the mentally handicapped in a Christian group home.

#### India

Grove City Vineyard has a partnership with Indian Pastor, A. Stephen and his wife, Queeny. It is the oldest missions relationship that Grove City Vineyard is engaged in. Many churches are started each year through this ministry.

## **Chillicothe Vineyard Case Study**

### **Ross County Ohio Demographics**

Vineyard Chillicothe is situated in Ross County, Ohio, approximately fifty miles south of Columbus. According to the 2000 Census, Chillicothe has a population of 21,796 people, which is a part of the total county population of 73,345. From growing up and residing in Chillicothe for much of my adult life, I know that many people living in the county have a Chillicothe mailing address; therefore, Ross County's rural population should be taken into account when thinking about Chillicothe's demographics.

Chillicothe is predominantly a blue-collar factory town, with the Mead Paper Mill located within the city limits. Numerous factories are also around the Chillicothe area and extensive farming operations run outside of the city limits.

Ross County has the following ethnic group demographics: white non-Hispanic (88.7 percent), black or African-American (7.5 percent), two or more races (2.0 percent), American Indian (1.3 percent), and Hispanic (0.8 percent).

Also mentioned in the 2000 census, 76.1 percent of Ross County's population are high school graduates and 11.3 percent hold a bachelor's degree or higher. The median household income in Ross County is \$38,939.00 and \$33,991.00 in Chillicothe. In regards to poverty levels, 13.1 percent of Ross County's population and 12.4 percent in Chillicothe are living below the country's stated poverty line ("State QuickFacts" 2007).

### **Vineyard Chillicothe Mission, Vision, and Values**

Although Vineyard churches are asked to adhere to the National Association of Vineyard values and mission, each church is autonomously operated and given the

freedom to contextualize those values in their respective communities. The stated mission, vision, and values of Vineyard Chillicothe are:

To create an atmosphere where people don't have to clean up before they come to a gathering. We will not focus on peoples' habits and addictions, but strive to introduce them to Jesus and life in Him. We will commit to be a people who are free to live life as a gift of grace. Free to live because when we were dead in our sins He made us alive with His Son. Free to live because He delivered us from the pain of trying, but never succeeding to keep all the rules to win His approval. Free to live in faith, in hope and in love. Free to take risks. Free to fail. Free to create. Free to dream. Free to give generously. Free to dance and to leap, to laugh and to cry.

- We value **RESPONSIVENESS**. We believe that Jesus is our Head and the Holy Spirit our Counselor. We seek to be responsive to the leading of the Holy Spirit in every area of the church's life and ministry. As part of our responsiveness, we are committed to "give away our best" whether people or resources in order to expand God's Kingdom.
- We value **REALITY**. We want every expression of ours, whether speech, music, architecture, or manner, to be non-hyped, natural, and reality based.
- We value **RELEVANCE**. We want to use music, terminology, and outreach methods that are in touch with the current culture of our community.
- We value **RELATIONSHIPS**. We don't want just a collection of individuals or a large crowd. God is looking for a people, *a community* who share a corporate value system. Following Jesus happens in the context of relationships, not in isolation.
- We value **RIGHTEOUSNESS**. We seek completely truthful, consistent and open relationships with God, with others and with ourselves.<sup>2</sup>

### **History of Vineyard Chillicothe**

On 19 July 2007, a personal interview was conducted with Mark Francis, founding and senior pastor of Vineyard Chillicothe. Also present was H. R. Grimm, director of community involvement. My involvement with this particular Vineyard is significant, as I helped co-plant this church in my hometown of Chillicothe and have continued to preach one Sunday per month since its inception. Mark Francis and I are

former youth and college pastor colleagues from Chillicothe and have worked together on numerous outreaches to this population group.

Pastor Francis is a lifelong resident of Chillicothe and was the youth/young adult and associate pastor of the Wesleyan Church of Chillicothe prior to 1998. Mark and I worked together in student ministry for five years in Ross County. Eventually, Mark became my replacement when I left as the student pastor at Open Door Christian Church in 1998. Mark served for four years at Open Door before being led to plant a Vineyard Association church in Chillicothe where one has never before existed. Mark had previously been connected with the Vineyard in Columbus through personal relationships with Eric Pickerel and their student ministry staff. Through these relationships, his passion for the Vineyard grew.

In 2003, Mark began a yearlong church-planting process at the Columbus Vineyard, which oversees most of the Vineyard Church planting for the Ohio region. At the end of 2003, Mark and his wife began a small group at their home, comprised mainly of young adults who had previously been in his youth group, as well as close friends in the community. In 2004, the small group had grown and divided in two with about thirty to forty people attending. Their first public gathering took place in a rented facility later that year. Throughout 2004, the group met in three different facilities, struggling to establish a consistent identity and place of meeting. Chillicothe is a small town with limited available rental facilities conducive to church planting. The church maintained a very informal structure in 2004, meeting for one Sunday service each week and continuing small groups in homes. It had no programs except for the children's Sunday school classes on Sunday morning.

In 2005, a more permanent rental facility became available that had the warehouse atmosphere of what the leaders of Vineyard Chillicothe were looking for (see Figure 2.3). Mark expressed their desire to find a facility that secular people would feel comfortable attending. Vineyard Chillicothe signed a two-year lease, and within a month, attendance doubled from approximately thirty to seventy-five. According to Mark, attendance and community seemed to build each week as participants began to embrace the emerging identity of the Vineyard. Not surprising to many of us involved, the facility became maxed out in January 2007 and continued standing room only through that spring. Because the lease terminated in May 2007, the church began looking for a bigger facility.



Figure 2.3.

Vineyard Church of Chillicothe (former facility).

A closed down theater in one of Chillicothe's premier location strip malls became available after a few months of searching but was considered untouchable due to the high cost of leasing it. Through the dealing of a commercial real estate developer who was on Vineyard Chillicothe's board, a deal was made and the theater was secured. The church had its first service in June 2007 and the theater has been full all summer. Plans are underway to expand the meeting area into another theater by knocking out the wall that separates the four theater rooms. This facility (see Figure 2.4) should provide growth to approximately six hundred people. A large café is being constructed in the theater lobby, as well as children's classrooms upstairs. This new location is expected to provide room for growth over the next five to ten years.



Figure 2.4.

Vineyard Church of Chillicothe (current facility).

Currently, Mark is the only paid pastor or staff person. Volunteer leaders direct various programs such as children, youth, young adult, prayer team, outreach, small groups, worship, and facilities. Increasing role delegation is occurring, and plans are underway to add paid staff in 2008. Mark stated that he is struggling to juggle multiple responsibilities and emphasized that his strengths are in shepherding people, not administrating and organizing.

### **Evangelism and Outreach**

When asked about their view of evangelism and outreach, both Mark and Mr. Grimm provided insightful answers. Mark mentioned that attracting people to the Vineyard and evangelization are strictly viewed as relational in nature and facilitated through community. H. R. stated, “We catch people in the web of relationships.” He gave noted author of evangelism, Win Arn, credit for shaping his philosophy on evangelism. H. R. further stated, “ We practice authentic living, encourage people where they are in their journey, and do not over-program evangelism or outreach strategies. Evangelism as a lifestyle is highly pushed in our gatherings, and we have no formal method. We teach the importance of being an inviting people and church.”

Mark continued to state that they (both the Vineyard movement and their church) embrace diversity in all areas, allowing people to belong starting from their current point in life: “We allow people to move at their pace, we provide the opportunities, but we do not push people into them. The people that come here are at all different kinds of places and levels, so it doesn’t make sense to herd them all into the same path.” Mark’s articulations of these values are strikingly similar to the other Vineyard pastors that were interviewed.

Later in the conversation, Mark restated his definition of evangelism and outreach as, “Diverse ways of advancing the Kingdom.” H. R. came back into the conversation and stated, “We are not structured for production. We do not pigeon hole people or attack them when they walk in. That is the uniqueness of the Vineyard—non-pressure.”

### **Groups and Strategies**

As can be heard in their quotes above, both Mark and H. R. maintain a very relational ethos in regard to outreach. They were both hesitant to discuss anything they do as formulaic in regard to strategies. When asked what they do to attract members of multiple generations, H. R. responded, “We are a judgment-free congregation. The more grace we give, the more it draws people into the body. We allow people to grow at their own pace, period.”

Mark followed H. R.’s statement by saying:

I can be real, identify with people, our realness is contagious and draws people to want to enter deeper into community with us. I like the beach analogy. We start by standing at the edge looking out. Then we test the water by wading into our ankles. We watch those out playing in the waves and long to get there, but no one can force you. You have to want to be out there. You have to trust and want to get out there. Most churches in our area seem to push people or expect people to dive right in before they are ready, ignoring their questions and expecting them to quickly become conformed to their image of what they think a Christian is supposed to be.

The following is a list of organized and intentional evangelism and outreach efforts at Vineyard Chillicothe.

- Community Days: Pastor Francis stated, “We do have a few more organized efforts, such as our community day that provides free food, cookout style, to anyone dropping by, games for kids etc. Basically, our methods center around relationships and



community. We do not get locked into one method, except that any method we have flows out of relationships.”

- **Kinship Groups:** These are small home groups that are focus and age-level specific. Mark stated that most of their home groups are very informal and revolve around eating and sharing together in community. Some groups choose to have worship or Bible study, but that decision is left up to the leader and group. Vineyard Chillicothe currently has ten kinship groups that meet.

- **Celebrate Recovery:** Vineyard Chillicothe has adopted this national faith-based recovery program. It is a Christ-centered twelve-step ministry that focuses on people who desire to recover from addictions and hurts in their lives. This group meets weekly for a time of worship, teaching, and small breakout groups based on needs.

- **Mothers in Action:** This support group attempts to meet the needs of both single and married mothers through encouragement and mentoring.

- **Reality:** A group for college-age and young adults that meets weekly in an informal group setting. This group meets both at the church and in homes.

- **Children’s ministries:** Various age-level groups for kindergarten through fifth grade meet on Sunday mornings.

- **Student ministries:** Middle and high school groups meet both in a large group on Wednesday evenings and in smaller home groups.

- **Saturday night worship and the arts:** This Saturday evening group meets to express their lives through the fine arts. Their original artwork is then displayed around the sanctuary and foyer of the church facility.

- Christian motorcycle association: A local chapter of this national organization operates out of Vineyard Chillicothe. They engage in various outreach efforts to local, regional, and national bikers.
- Intercessory prayer group: This group meets for prayer and holds healing prayer services that are open to anyone.
- The Café: A functioning café is available at the church as a place to engage people in casual conversation during the week.

When visitors participate in a weekend worship service or any of the above groups, they are followed up with a letter or phone call from Mark, one of Vineyard's leaders, or the person closest to the visitors at their time of contact. Pastor Mark stated that newcomers are encouraged to become involved in a kinship group where they can experience community and growth. He expressed the desire and need to have a more intentional assimilation process in the future.

When asked how Vineyard Chillicothe intentionally attempts to connect with member of Boomers, Xers, and Millennials, Mark restated their commitment to simplicity and relationships. Mr. Grimm noted that outreach to boomers seems to happen best through their "Boomer-age" small groups. Outreach to Xers and Millennials is funneled through the Reality group and its leaders. When asked how Mark and H. R. viewed conversion, Mark stated:

Faith or belief in Christ is the center, but it is still a process of allowing God to deal with a person, not a checklist. For me growing up in the Wesleyan church, it was, "do not smoke, drink, cut your hair, and come to church every Sunday and Wednesday." I see conversion this way, just believe and let God show a person the way.

H. R. seemed especially passionate about his view of conversion by asking me a question, “When was Peter saved?” He relayed the painful memory of his dad (a member of the Nazarene Church) struggling with being assured he was saved because he simply could not keep the checklist. Mark and H. R. concluded by agreeing that faith is the starting point but that conversion is process oriented.

Vineyard Chillicothe currently does not have a membership process. Mark is not sure that if they will in the future, given that many of their participants seem uninterested in formal membership. Mark reiterated that community is emphasized through being in meaningful relationships with others in the church body and that kinship groups are the context for that to happen best.

When asked how they seek to communicate to their participants, both stated that they intentionally seek to be relevant to who and where their people are in life. They utilize a more contemporary style of music in worship services, which is a trademark of Vineyard churches as a pioneer of the praise and worship genre of music. Mark mentioned that many of their visitors make positive comments about their music and that they came back again because they enjoyed it. As one of the teaching pastors, I can say that our style of speaking at worship services is more teaching than preaching. We seek to engage participants with diverse tools such as media, the arts, music, and other creative elements that help to connect the word of God to their needs.

Vineyard Chillicothe’s Director of Student Ministries was also interviewed for this study on 5 August 2007. Micah Shanks is an early Millennial himself and understands the unique dynamics of working with students born after 1982. Micah attended Bible College at Master’s Commission in California. He became exposed to the

Vineyard movement through a joint outreach his church (Assembly of God) did with the Anaheim Vineyard. Besides being the student pastor at Chillicothe Vineyard, Micah also works at a local wireless communications company.

When asked what type of students Vineyard Chillicothe attracts, Micah replied, “Skaters, hippies, middle-class, athletes, and kids with artistic and musical talent, a pretty good mix.” Micah said that they attempt to create an atmosphere where everyone is welcome, which is a primary value of the Vineyard. His approach to Millennials attempts to target their generation’s values. Instead of giving them sermons during meeting times, Micah stated that he has “talk-it-outs” around round tables with the students. In this environment, Micah presents a topic, and then they “talk it out” in small groups. He wraps it up by providing a biblical perspective on the issue. Micah justified this approach by saying, “It is ridiculous to force an opinion on someone without first building trust, a relationship, or meeting a need. It all starts with a cup of water.” Micah further stated that relationships are built in the context of small groups and fun activities at some point each week.

In regard to his view of evangelism and conversion, Micah quickly stated, “Belong, believe, and behave.” He views evangelism and conversion as a process that starts before anyone ever “bows their head and closes their eyes” (referring to the traditional church method with which he grew up). Micah said that the right behavior would follow with his approach, which is the opposite of what he was formerly taught.

I asked Micah to share what he sees as generational characteristics of the Millennials with whom he works. He provided the following list:

- Tolerance as a key value,

- Acceptance and less “clickish,”
- Relational,
- Technologically savvy,
- More informed and intelligent due to technology, and
- Adaptable to change.

When asked what he thought were Millennials’ three greatest needs, Micah stated,

- Someone to listen to,
- Someone to help them discover their purpose in life, and
- Deep, meaningful relationships.

### **Tyler United Methodist Church Case Study**

For comparison’s sake, a fourth case study was conducted in the same geographical area on a church that reflects more limited success in attracting multiple generational groups. On 19 August 2007, a personal interview was conducted with Rev. James Groves, senior pastor of Tyler United Methodist Church in Chillicothe, Ohio. I have been associated with Rev. Groves and this church on several levels in the past, most significantly in the collaboration of youth ministry outreaches with one of Tyler’s former youth pastors.

### **Ross County Ohio Demographics**

Tyler United Methodist Church is situated within Ross County, Ohio, and more specifically within the city limits of Chillicothe. The demographics information for Ross County and Chillicothe have already been stated in the Vineyard Chillicothe case study section.

## **Tyler United Methodist Mission, Vision, and Values**

Rev. Groves stated that Tyler's mission and vision is "making disciples with love to God and others." When asked about their values, Groves said that their church financially supports several mission projects. He also mentioned that Tyler participants consider themselves to be a friendly church that value having a family atmosphere.

## **History of Tyler United Methodist Church**

Tyler Church was first founded in 1907 as a United Brethren in Christ church. It became a United Methodist Church in 1968 and has occupied the same location and building since 1915. Rev. Groves became the senior pastor of Tyler on 1 July 1995 by appointment of his bishop. He has been a United Methodist pastor since 1978, leading several different churches in the state of Ohio since that time. Groves further stated that in an attempt to attract and reach younger generations, the congregation recently voted on relocating the church and finding or building a more contemporary facility. With disappointment in his voice, Groves said that the congregation voted down the relocation proposal that he and the study and planning committee supported.

In regard to participant demographics, Groves stated that the average age of church membership is over fifty years old; however, the majority of those attending are retired. He noted that most participants include teachers, factory workers, or other forms of blue-collar vocations.

## **Evangelism and Outreach**

When asked about their view of evangelism, Groves stated that both he and the church are evangelical in theology. He more specifically described evangelism: "All we say and do is to be a witness in order to draw others to Jesus Christ." Groves further

stated that although Tyler's congregants consider themselves evangelical, they lack in "practicality." Rev. Groves did say that their church has an evangelism committee that attempts to lead programs and ministries to reach others. The following is a list of those strategies:

- Passing out United States flags with flyers about their church at Chillicothe's fourth of July fireworks each summer,
- Making direct mailings about their church,
- Providing evangelistic cards in hotels,
- Distributing evangelistic tracts to the congregation to pass on to others, and
- Maintaining a church Web site and developing other advertisements about their church for the local newspaper and local television information cable channel.

### **Groups and Strategies**

According to Rev. Groves, Tyler church engages in the following groups or ministries:

- Children's Sunday school, junior church, and summer vacation Bible school are offered. Groves stated that very few children are in attendance at Sunday school, and he described it as "weak."

- Youth group for teenagers (United Methodist Youth Fellowship) meets weekly and only averages four to eight teens in attendance and is struggling. Groves stated that they only have a few families with teenagers and that they just lost their youth director who took a position at another church.

- United Methodist Men meets once per month with an average of eight to fifteen in attendance. Groves stated that this group has been unable to attract younger

men. The purpose of this group is to cook and serve a free meal before they conduct their business meeting.

- United Methodist Women meets monthly and has ninety-two members.

Groves stated that this group is broken into three sub-groups. The youngest age group consists of women in their fifties. This group focuses on raising money to support their missionaries.

- Participants may engage in a worship service choir or a bell choir.
- The prayer chain is primarily a ministry of the United Methodist women's

group.

- Wednesday night prayer meeting exists with four to six older adults in

attendance.

- Most Valuable Prayer Ministry (MVP) is a prayer partner program that enlists congregants to pray for the pastor and church leadership, including a monthly prayer newsletter sent out by the pastor.

- Clothing donations are given to the local Goodwill store.

- Prayer shawl ministry includes women in the church who knit prayer shawls for persons needing prayer. These shawls are used during services when praying for people.

- Friendship First is a thirteen-week program that runs once a year and focuses on developing friendships with others and growing in friendship with Jesus. Groves stated that the purpose is to reach out beyond the church walls in friendship, but "few results have been seen."



Aside from these groups and strategies, Rev. Groves was asked if they engage in home or church-based small groups around specific needs or focuses. He stated that they do not have small groups that meet regularly other than what is listed above. Groves further stated, “We have tried small groups in the past and they did not last much past a few months.”

Regarding attracting different generational groups, Groves said that they had tried to have a contemporary service (meaning using contemporary praise music/band versus hymns and the organ), but that it has been discontinued due to several factors: older members’ resistance and the former youth director leaving, who had led it. Tyler has also had the youth group lead a worship service during months with a fifth Sunday; however, Groves said that attendance for it has declined because the youth started doing contemporary music. They also have annual mother-daughter and father-son banquets in an attempt to attract younger generations.

Regarding generational group characteristics, Groves said the Builder generation (those born prior to 1942 and the majority of Tyler’s current participants) do not keep up well with technology and cultural changes. He stated that the church has become a place of comfort for them because it is stable and familiar and less likely to change. Groves further stated that he has observed that Boomers are more open to changes, while Xers are tech savvy and concerned about raising their family. Lastly, he said that Millennials are willing to change quickly.

Groves was also asked to describe what he thought was each generation’s primary needs. His responses included the following:

- Builders: stability, which Tyler offers along with tradition;

- Boomers: what the church can do for them;
- Xers: how to get through life's struggles; and,
- Millennials: values on which to build their lives.

Tyler Church attempts to communicate to these generations by using the following:

- Worship bulletin,
- Monthly newsletter,
- Worship services (music and preaching),
- Web site, and
- Other advertisements.

When asked how Rev. Groves views conversion, he stated that conversion occurs “when a person comes to believe in Jesus Christ as his or her personal Savior.” For those interested in becoming a church member, Groves explained that participants complete a two to three hour class that consists of United Methodist history, Tyler Church history, the church's organization, the meaning of being a Christian, and what is expected of church members. Participants are also given a gifts inventory during this class, and an attempt is made to assimilate them into areas of the church where they would best serve.

Visitors to the church are identified easily because they are likely the ones not wearing their church-provided nametags. If identified, visitors are introduced in the service and then handed information about the church (along with a Hershey Kiss chocolate candy). Pastor Groves also writes visitors a letter of welcome and visits them if they attend church services a second time.

Worship services are traditional according to Groves. As noted, contemporary music was not well received by the majority of older members (who are also the majority

of participants). At one time, the church attempted to “blend” traditional and contemporary music, which did not work according to Groves. A second contemporary service was attempted but has currently been discontinued.

Groves was asked how his church attempts to be culturally relevant and do outreach within their community. He stated that the United Methodist men’s group often secures their program speakers from the community. They also provide financial help to several community benevolent organizations. In addition to these attempts, the church has the youth hand out treats and gospel tracts on Halloween and has had two movie nights so far this year in Groves words, “to reach the community.” Rev. Groves was very sincere in his desire to see his church grow and learn how to attract and respond to multiple generations throughout the interview process. Many different contrasting elements emerged among Tyler Church and the Vineyard churches of this study and are addressed in the following chapter. The three Vineyard Association churches have much in common in regard to structures, values, vision, and mission; however, the fourth church appears to be very different. An analysis of these three Vineyard churches and Tyler United Methodist Church is included in the following chapter, as well as a data analysis of the three generational groups that were studied.

## CHAPTER 3

### DATA ANALYSIS OF CHURCH CASE STUDIES AND GENERATIONAL GROUPS

In this chapter, an analysis of the three Vineyard churches and one United Methodist Church is examined, as well as an analysis of the generational group study that was conducted. In the first section, the four churches are compared and contrasted to ascertain what they know and what they do that makes them successful (or not) at attracting multiple generations. The second section examines the data drawn from the sample of Boomer, Xer, and Millennial respondents from the three Vineyard churches.

#### **Data Analysis of Vineyard Church Case Studies**

Based on the provided pictures of the Chillicothe, Grove City, and Columbus Vineyard churches, these appear to be three very different kinds of churches. Chillicothe Vineyard initially met in a formerly abandoned warehouse and now meets in a formerly abandoned movie theater. Grove City Vineyard meets in a metal building surrounded by cornfields and new residential development. Columbus Vineyard's facilities more resemble a college campus or a corporate office park than a church. Nevertheless, all three churches are strikingly similar in their mission, values, vision, and structures, which, all together, may be why they are so effective at attracting multiple generational participants.

As noted earlier, the Vineyard movement is an association of churches and not a denomination. Each church is operated autonomously and is given liberty to take on different forms and styles. This flexibility may be another reason why Vineyard churches are effective at attracting multiple generations. Vineyard's flexible structure reflects

Wimber's intentionality in organizing the Vineyard in light of *social sets* (R. Jackson 1999:244-45). Wimber used Paul G. Hiebert's understanding of social sets to explain why he chose to create an association of Vineyard churches instead of a denominational structure. Hiebert's *sets* seek to explain how different individuals relate to each other in three basic kinds of groups.

- **Fuzzy sets** describe groups whose boundaries are "fuzzy." Fuzzy sets also have no clear core values at the center of the group that define their existence.
- **Centered sets** describe groups that have joined around or relate to a common center with articulated core values; however, the group is not defined by its boundaries, but by its center of reference.
- **Bounded sets** describe groups that have a clear and common center but also have clearly defined boundaries about beliefs and practices. Bounded sets are defined both by their center and their boundaries (Hiebert 1994:107-36).

Wimber structured the Vineyard Association to function like a centered set. The reference point or center for the Vineyard would be Jesus Christ and the core values as articulated below. However, the movement would not be defined by its boundaries, thus allowing latitude for disagreement over non-core issues (such as the mode of baptism and gifts of the Holy Spirit) and flexibility in the forms and styles used by Vineyard churches. Wimber believed that denominations more resembled bounded sets, which made penetrating those boundaries by different kinds of people more difficult because they are more defined and rigid. He believed the opposite was true of the centered set approach that keeps the group centered on the core values, allowing for different expressions around the boundaries (R. Jackson 1999:244-45).

## Mission, Vision, and Values

All three Vineyard churches have similar language and elements in their mission and vision statements that include the following ideas:

- Developing and maintaining community,
- Developing and equipping reproducing disciples of Jesus,
- Transforming people locally and around the globe holistically through grace-filled acceptance, scriptural principles, and good deeds, and
- Planting passionate, mature, and reproducing churches.

These Vineyard churches also share similar values:

- Having authenticity and open relationships, coming as you are but leaving differently;
- Being responsive to movement of the Holy Spirit;
- Providing intercessory prayer and healing of the whole person (spiritual, physical, mental, and emotional);
- Believing that life and discipleship happens best in community, which happens best in the context of small groups;
- Believing in worship as a lifestyle;
- Viewing evangelism and discipleship as a process; and,
- Being culturally relevant and biblically faithful.

Interestingly, these three Vineyard churches also share similar histories:

- All three were planted by pastors from another more traditional Protestant faith tradition.

- All three pastors indicated some type of experience with the Holy Spirit that was not normative in their faith context prior to involvement with the Vineyard movement.

- All three pastors were involved in student ministry prior to planting or pastoring a Vineyard.

- Most of the pastoral staff have Bible college and/or seminary master's degrees, while a few of them have doctoral degrees.

- All three churches emerged out of small groups.

- All three churches utilize facilities that do not resemble traditional church buildings.

- Lastly, all three planting pastors are still the lead pastors.

## **Structures**

All three Vineyard churches have similar structures and strategies that flow out of their mission, vision, and values. Some degree of difference exists in the level of activity within each structure of each church, but that is likely due to the dissimilarity in size and resources of each church. Nonetheless, they all still have the following structures:

- Small groups: Each church intentionally engages its participants to be in some type of home group or small group that meets at the church. Each church has groups that are focused on different ages and needs.

- Support and recovery groups: Each church has an active Celebrate Recovery program, as well as numerous other support groups.

- Educational classes: Each church has designed various classes from Bible studies to personal and family finances; however, educational classes are offered at

different times during the week versus during a traditional Sunday school format for adults.

- Proliferation of “side-door” outreach strategies: Each church offers many different programs and outreach events aimed at connecting with and helping people in their communities. For example, Vineyard Columbus operates a free medical and dental clinic, a dance studio, and an unplanned pregnancy center. Vineyard Grove City has a biker club, homeless, and prison ministries, while Vineyard Chillicothe has Community Days, where they feed and build relationships with those in their neighborhood.

- Teaching: Each Vineyard church intentionally engages participants during worship services with relevant messages and the use of multimedia that are within the receptors’ frame of reference.

- Prayer: Each church has trained prayer teams that are available to pray for or with any participant.

- Worship: All three churches utilize contemporary styles of music and the arts during services.

- Evangelism: Each church views evangelism as its main business and creates environments where secular people can connect.

- Assimilation: Each church has intentional mechanisms to move people from being visitors to being a part of the church community and mature disciples of Jesus Christ.

- Mission: Each church actively engages its community, region, and world in various mission activities.



- Multiple services: Each church offers multiple weekend and weekday meeting times.
- Youth and young adult ministries: Each church has an intentional program and staff designed to develop and maintain community for teenagers, college-age, and young adults.

The data analysis of the generational groups indicates these three Vineyard churches; mission, vision, values, and structures are highly correlated with the generational findings.

There were a few areas of concern noted during the research of these three Vineyard churches, as well as the national Vineyard Association of Churches. It appears that the tracking of vital statistics is limited both on a national level and in the three churches studied. Failure to keep pertinent statistics on such areas as community and participant demographics, membership, or attendance could prove detrimental to the Vineyard's ability to respond to various shifts that occur over the course of time. The Vineyard churches of this study also seemed to lack an effective strategy for evaluating the effectiveness of their current structures and strategies.

#### **Data Analysis of Tyler United Methodist Church**

Tyler United Methodist Church appears to be limited in attracting and responding to multiple generations. As Rev. Groves stated, the majority of their participants are Builders (those born prior to 1942) and older Boomers (those born 1942-1964). The purpose of this comparative case study is not to cast judgment on Tyler United Methodist church or its leadership for not attracting younger generations. Tyler Church is responding well to the older generational members they do attract; however, Rev. Groves

expressed a desire to read the results of this study to understand better how to attract and respond to younger generations through his church. In the following paragraphs, an attempt is made to compare and contrast Tyler Church with the same categories of the Vineyard churches listed above.

### **Mission and Vision**

Tyler's combined mission and vision to "make disciples with love to God and others" may be more limited in scope than the mission and vision of the Vineyard churches studied. In addition to a focus on making disciples, the Vineyard churches also include elements of developing and maintaining community, being evangelistically oriented, being involved in issues related to social justice and world transformation, developing reproducing disciples, and church planting. The Vineyard churches also view their vision as distinct from their mission.

In regard to values, Tyler appeared to be limited as well. Rev. Groves did articulate a value of supporting missions financially and of being a family friendly church. However, Vineyard values seem to respond better to the needs of multiple generations. Vineyard values such as cultural relevance and flexible structures, forms, and styles, authenticity, relationships, community, responsiveness to the Holy Spirit, worship, intercessory prayer, and process-oriented evangelism may make them better situated to attract members of multiple generations.

### **Structures**

Again, Tyler Church appeared to be more limited in structures as compared to the Vineyard churches:

- Small groups: Aside from the United Methodist men's and women's groups at Tyler, they do not engage in any other type of strategic small groups that focus on different needs. Vineyard churches proliferate dozens of strategic small groups that address multiple individual and generational needs.

- Recovery groups: Tyler church does not engage in recovery or support group ministry, whereas all three Vineyard churches actively engage this need.

- Educational classes: Vineyard churches appear to proliferate multiple educational opportunities for both church and outside community participation, which are offered at multiple days and times throughout the week on a variety of topics. Tyler's educational component mostly revolves around their traditional Sunday school structure.

- Evangelism and outreach strategies: According to Rev. Groves, Tyler's participants view themselves as evangelicals but are lacking in practicality in regard to evangelism. He articulated a few of Tyler's evangelistic strategies to be passing out flags and flyers during fourth of July fireworks, clothing distribution to local clothing banks, direct mailings and other advertisements about their church, and the distribution of evangelistic tracts and cards in various places. In contrast, the Vineyard churches seem to view evangelism as their central priority and appear to proliferate and engage in more relational and need-based strategies.

- Worship services: Tyler's worship service is very traditional, following United Methodist liturgy and traditional styles of church music. The Vineyard churches utilize a more contemporary style of music, the arts, multimedia, and more receptor-oriented forms of communication. Vineyard churches also offer multiple services times and opportunities for worship.

- Mission: Whereas Tyler Church seems to limit itself to supporting missions financially, the Vineyard churches appear to engage and offer participants multiple opportunities to be involved in both local and worldwide mission.

- Youth and young adult ministries: According to Groves, Tyler's youth program is weak and in decline. Also, Tyler does not have resources or structures devoted to the college-age and young adult demographic. The Vineyard churches all have intentional strategies and leadership devoted to developing and maintaining programs and community for youth and young adults.

In conclusion, Tyler United Methodist Church's mission, vision, values, and structures have limitations that may account for its inability to attract and respond to members of multiple generations, especially younger Boomers, Xers, and Millennials.

### **Data Analysis of Boomers, Xers, and Millennials**

Three current successive generations (Boomers, Xers, and Millennials) were selected as subjects for this study. This convenience sample was pulled from three different Vineyard Association churches in south-central Ohio, which were situated in the cities of Columbus, Grove City, and Chillicothe. During the months of May through August 2007, data was gathered through conducting surveys with church leadership and participants of three generational groups (Boomers, Xers, and Millennials) that participated in each Vineyard church. Two different questionnaire instruments were developed for this study, one for church leadership personnel and the other instrument for members of the three generational groups. The following data analysis applies specifically to members of the three generational groups studied.

## Sample

A total of 280 generational member respondents (Boomers, Xers, and Millennials) were surveyed utilizing a forty-question instrument containing both quantitative and qualitative elements (see Appendix B for generational member survey instrument).

Figure 3.1 shows that 40.6 percent of the respondents were Boomers, 46.3 percent were from Generation X, and 12 percent were Millennials. Respondents under the age of 18 were not included in the sample due to minor confidentiality concerns and may account for the lower percentage of Millennials. In regard to gender and ethnicity, 62.5 percent were female and 37.5 percent were male (see Figure 3.2). Ethnically, 221 were white or Caucasian respondents and 59 were non-white or non-Caucasian respondents.

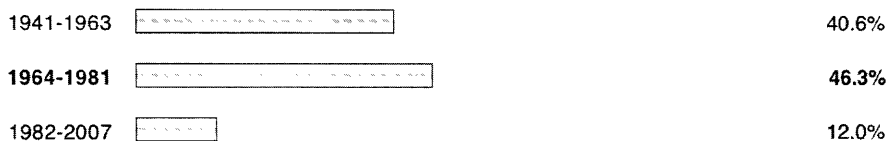


Figure 3.1.

Percentage of generational respondents.

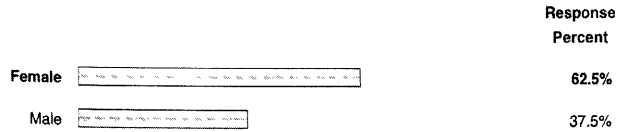


Figure 3.2.  
Gender.

**Factors of Influence or Attraction**

Research Question 1 was related to factors that influenced or attracted generational group members to participate in their Vineyard church. Figure 3.3 is a combined analysis of all three generational groups, which shows that a plurality of respondents had been participating in their respective Vineyard churches for one to three years.



Figure 3.3.

Combined generational members’ length of participation in their Vineyard churches.

Respondents were asked to choose any factor that influenced them to start attending or participating at some level in their Vineyard churches. As Figure 3.4 shows,

30.1 percent of all respondents indicated that a friend was responsible for influencing them to begin participating in their Vineyard churches. The next closest factor was the distance of the Vineyard church from their current residence (29.1 percent), followed by a personal search for meaning or purpose in life (22.7 percent). Other significant factors were the pastor or staff member (19.9 percent), familiarity with the Vineyard (17 percent), and a personal crisis or challenge (14.9 percent). Out of the respondents, 32.6 percent of them provided feedback in the open-ended option.

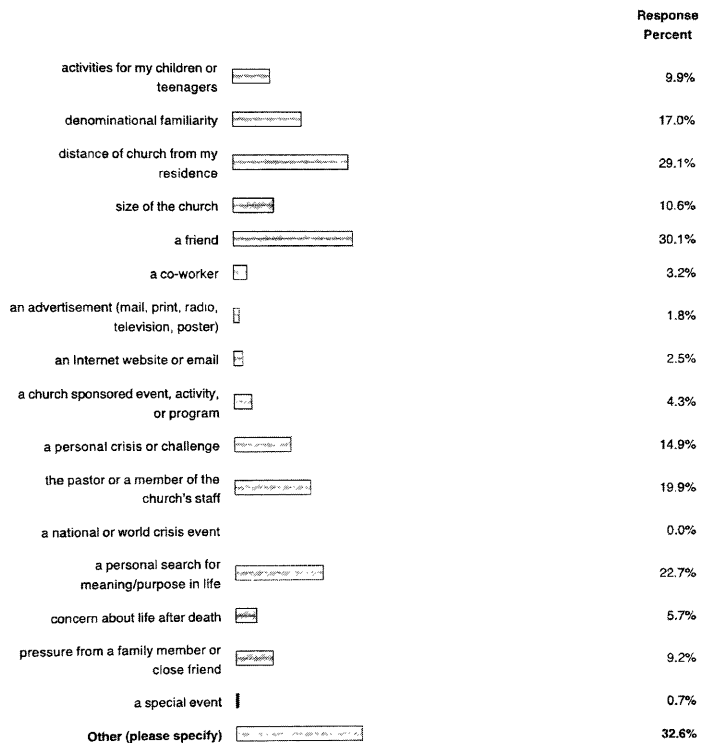


Figure 3.4.

Factors that influenced or attracted all respondents to a Vineyard church.

Figure 3.5 shows data for Boomer-specific responses to the question of what influenced or attracted them to their Vineyard church.

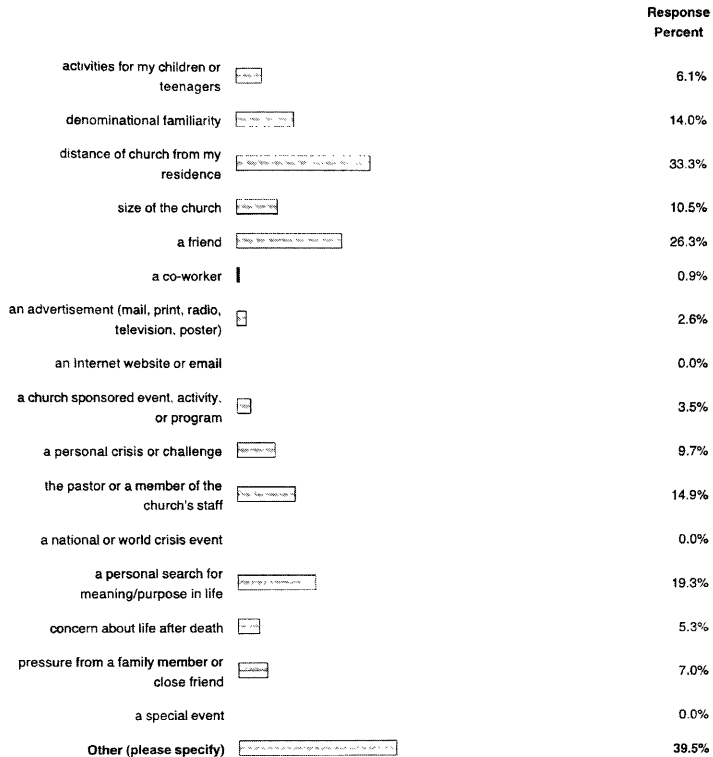


Figure 3.5.

Factors that influenced Boomers to attend the Vineyard.

The distance of the Vineyard church from the Boomers' residence was a significant factor (33.3 percent). This finding could indicate that convenience is a factor for Boomers in deciding to attend a church, although numerous other churches are within the same distance from their residences. While the factor of a family member or friend



was important for 26.3 percent of Boomers, many of the open-ended responses also indicated that a friend or family member influenced them to attend. A personal search for meaning or purpose in life (19.3 percent) was also a significant factor for Boomers. The majority of Boomer respondents (39.5 percent) chose to elaborate on these choices or provide additional factors in an open-ended format.

Based on the Boomers open-ended comments, a friend or family member was the primary factor in their being influenced to attend the Vineyard. Interestingly, one or more of their children influenced many of the Boomers to attend:

“Two of our sons were attending there and they invited us to visit. We loved it!”

“My children seem to get more out of the sermon.”

“Our daughter wanted to try the church and asked me to go.”

A number of Boomers also seemed to be drawn by the voice of God:

“The Lord said [to] go there.”

“Inspired by God.”

“The Holy Spirit said this is where you belong.”

“I felt God’s leading” (See Appendix C for a complete list).

Given the intentional prayer focus and healing ministry that these three Vineyard churches have, God may very well be speaking to people and drawing them to the Vineyard as a result of prayer.

Generation Xers (see Figure 3.6) also chose a friend as the top factor that influenced them to attend the Vineyard (31.3 percent), followed by the distance of the church from home (27.5 percent), a search for meaning in life (25.2 percent), the pastor or staff member (23.7 percent), and activities for their children (16 percent).

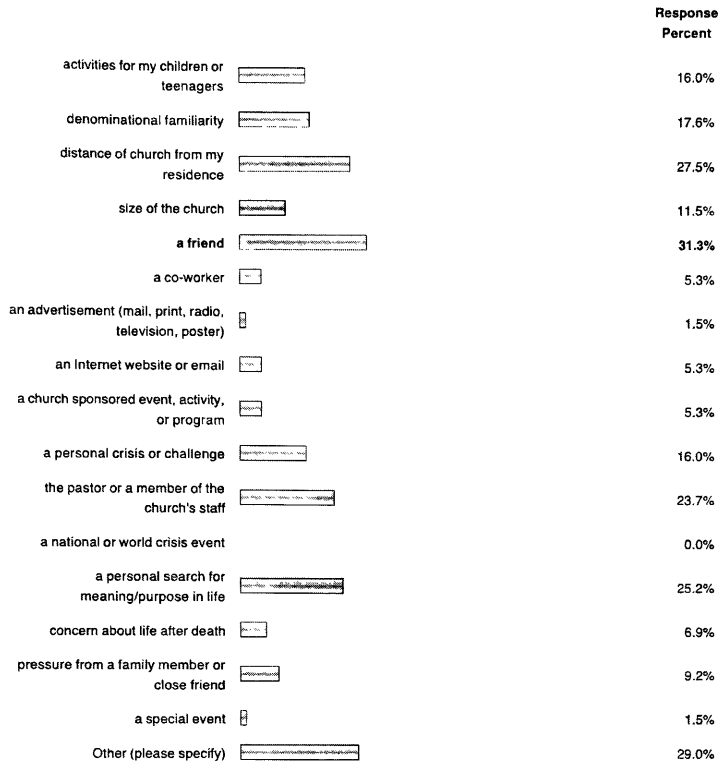


Figure 3.6.

### Factors that influenced Xers to attend the Vineyard.

Like the Boomers, a large percentage of Xers (29 percent) chose to provide other comments that yielded significant insights into what attracted them to the Vineyard:

Joshua House sermons were available online and so I listened to 30+ sermons on my iPod before I began attending JH. I really liked Eric's messages and style; he was the main reason I began attending JH.

There were many other young adults attending the church. Moreover, the church had given them a space in which to have their own service with worship music and teaching that directly spoke to where I was at.

A still, small voice, an invitation to have a deeper relationship with a God I knew (somewhat) while I was driving one night.

Knowing it was safe to be real there and that there were home groups.

I had three people tell me to go to the Vineyard during my personal family crisis.

This church, unlike our previous church, offered many opportunities to get involved and reach out to the community.

Looking for a place to be accepted for who I am, a place where everyone is real. (see Appendix C for a complete list of responses)

The Millennials (see Figure 3.7) also chose a friend (41.2 percent) as the top factor that influenced them to attend the Vineyard, followed by a personal crisis or challenge (29.4 percent), a search for meaning (26.5 percent), and the pastor or staff member (23.5 percent). Two of the open-ended responses seemed to capture Millennial's desire for relationships and community:

“I often look to see what a church offers to its young adult community. I look to see how active the church is in reaching this age group.”

“People my own age (at the time, 21-22).”

	Response Percent
activities for my children or teenagers	0.0%
denominational familiarity	23.5%
distance of church from my residence	23.5%
size of the church	8.8%
a friend	41.2%
a co-worker	2.9%
an advertisement (mail, print, radio, television, poster)	0.0%
an Internet website or email	0.0%
a church sponsored event, activity, or program	2.9%
a personal crisis or challenge	29.4%
the pastor or a member of the church's staff	23.5%
a national or world crisis event	0.0%
a personal search for meaning/purpose in life	26.5%
concern about life after death	2.9%
pressure from a family member or close friend	14.7%
a special event	0.0%
Other (please specify)	23.5%

Figure 3.7.

Factors that influenced Millennials to attend the Vineyard.

### Generational Members' First Experience with the Vineyard

Research Question 2 determined in what setting or context respondents had their first experience with the Vineyard church in which they participate. Figure 3.8 shows the results of all three generational group respondents.

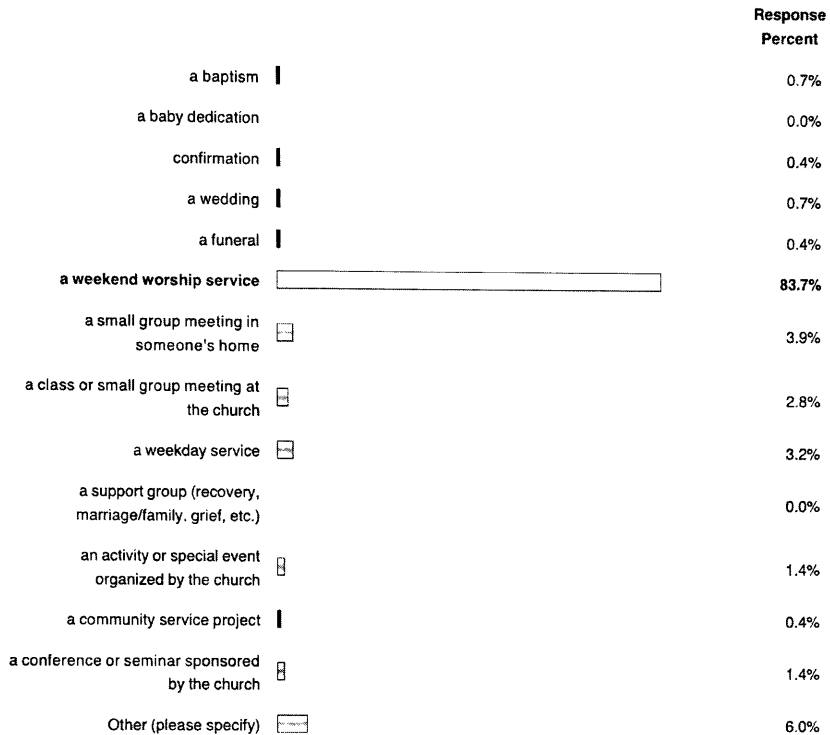


Figure 3.8.

Context of all respondents' first experience with the Vineyard.

By far, the majority of respondents (83.7 percent) had their first experience with the Vineyard during a weekend worship service. The next closest percentage of respondents had their first experience either in a home-based small group (3.9 percent) or some type of class or small group meeting at the church (2.8 percent). The following additional settings were listed in the open-ended option:

- A get to know about our church small informational gathering at clubhouse

- They were passing out cookies thanking us for welcoming them to the neighborhood.

- We were part of the beginning of a church plant.

As noted in Figures 3.8-3.11, Boomer and Xer responses were consistent with each other, both reporting over 80 percent had their first Vineyard experience during a weekend worship service. However, the Millennials showed a slight disparity with 79.4 percent having their first Vineyard experience at a weekend worship service, while 18 percent had theirs in a small group meeting at a home or the church. In addition, 6 percent of Millennials had their first experience during a weekday service. Millennials may have a stronger pull toward the smaller, more intimate group setting as noted in the Columbus Vineyard case study interview with Eric Pickerel. All three Vineyard churches of this study proliferate and encourage small group involvement.

The fact that such a high percentage of respondents had their first contact with the Vineyard through a weekend worship service may add credibility to those who advocate for a “seeker” approach during worship services. A seeker approach attempts to create an informal and inviting atmosphere where visitors can easily understand what is occurring through communication and presentation. All three Vineyard churches in this study appear to design their worship services to communicate in a culturally relevant way.

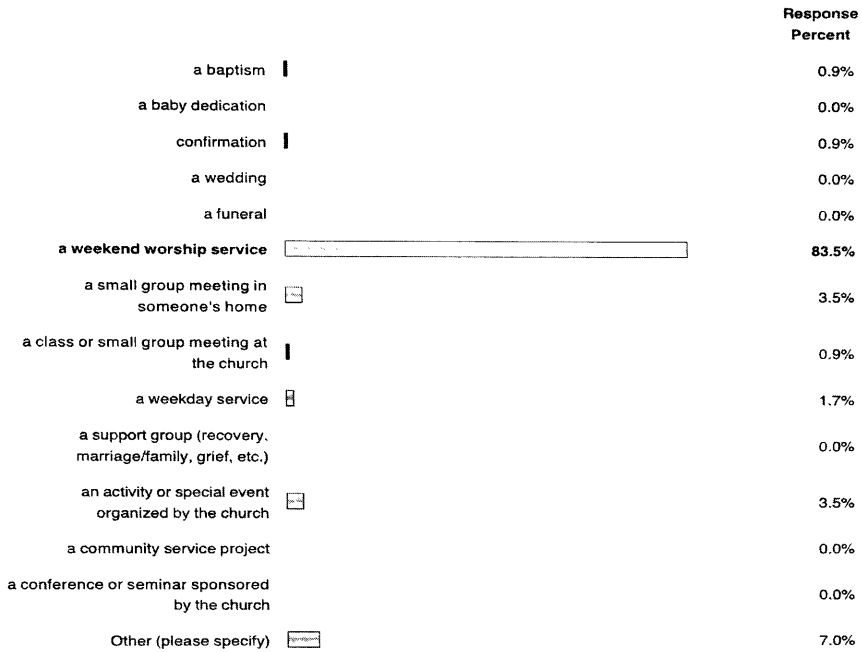


Figure 3.9.

Context of Boomers' first experience with the Vineyard.

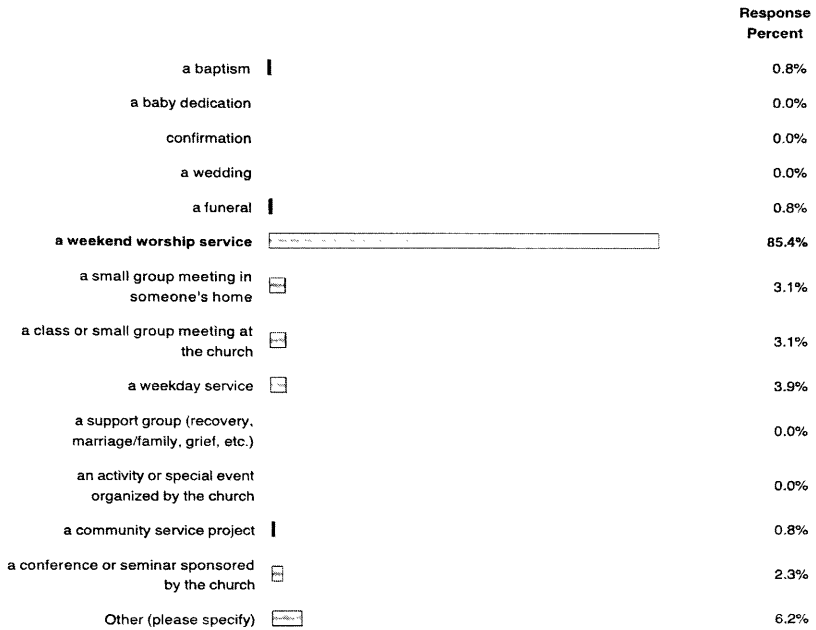


Figure 3.10

Context of Xers' first experience with the Vineyard.



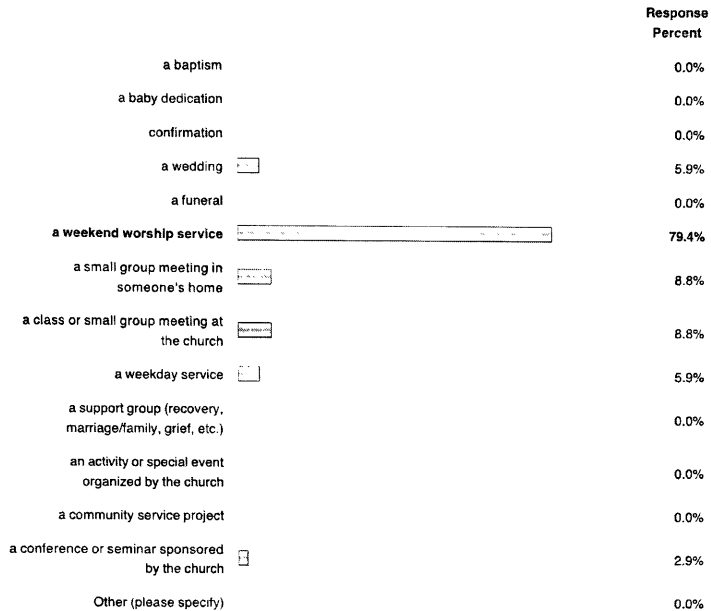


Figure 3.11.

### Context of Millennials' first experience with the Vineyard.

In order to ascertain how respondents reacted to their initial visit(s) to the Vineyard, Research Question 2A was asked to understand the respondents' impressions, feeling, thoughts, and observations regarding their first experiences with the Vineyard. While Appendix D lists the respondents' complete responses by generational groups, some of the more frequent comments are condensed into the following categories:

- Comfortable,
- Casual,
- Exciting music,
- Simple yet impacting teaching/preaching,

- Joyful,
- A feeling of being home,
- Friendly,
- Balanced,
- Presence of God or the Holy Spirit felt,
- Different,
- Welcoming,
- Accepting,
- Diversity in ethnicity and socioeconomic class,
- Nonthreatening, and
- Not boring like previous church experience.

A final question (Research Question 2B) in this category asked respondents to rate how friendly the people were upon respondents' first initial visit to the Vineyard. On average, 83.5 percent (see Figure 3.12) of all respondents stated that the people of the Vineyard were friendly or very friendly.

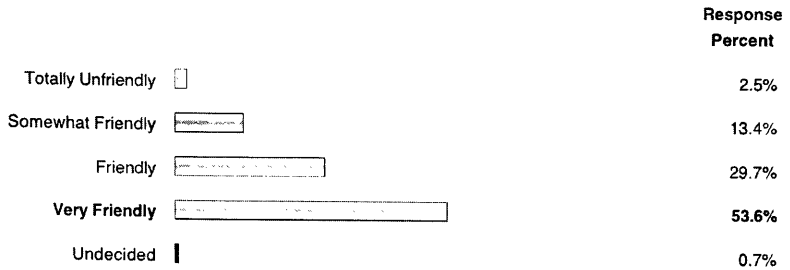


Figure 3.12.

Respondents' rating of the friendliness of the Vineyard upon their initial visit.

### **Generational Members' Perception of Christianity**

Research Question 3 was asked to determine if the respondents' view of the Christianity changed after their participation in Vineyard churches, believing that respondents' exposure to a Vineyard church would positively impact their perception of Christianity.

As noted in Figure 3.13, 54.4 percent of all respondents stated that their perception of Christianity had positively changed since participation in the Vineyard church. From the personal interviews that were conducted, many respondents noted the "realness" and "authenticity" of the people at the Vineyard did positively raise their perception of Christianity and the church in general. Each generation was consistent in their percentages: Millennials 60.6 percent, Xers 53.9 percent, and Boomers 54.6 percent.

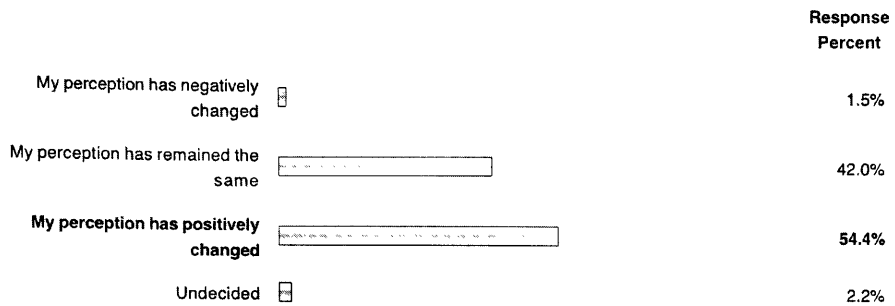


Figure 3.13.

Combined percentage of all respondents' perception of Christianity after Vineyard participation.

A follow-up question (Research Question 3A) was asked to give respondents an opportunity to share how their perception had changed toward Christianity. The following is a categorical summary of their responses (see Appendix E for their complete responses by generational group):

- Have become more outward focused on the needs of the community and world;
- Have become more tolerant and accepting of people and able to offer them support;
- Have become more focused on building and maintaining relationships; and,
- Have learned that my faith can be relevant to my culture.

### Personal Felt Needs

Research Question 4 of this study attempts to ascertain the felt needs of each generation so that churches might better understand and meet those needs. By

understanding generational felt needs, those engaging in mission to them can develop more effective strategies to reach them.

Figures 3.14-3.16 shows the responses for each generation. Each group showed a high degree of spiritual need. This finding may point to the fact that they are indeed interested in spiritual matters but unsure of what the object of that search is. Boomers as a group showed a slightly smaller need for relationships (35.2 percent), while Xers and Millennials slightly higher (43.8 percent and 44.1 percent respectively). A disparity exists between the Xers and the other two groups in regard to emotional needs. Boomers and Millennials cite only a 20-30 percent need in this area, while Xers cite a 43.8 percent a need in this area. This finding may be due in part to the Xers being the first generation to be latch key kids and experience high divorce rates.

Relationship needs may point to the most “disconnected-connected” period in history. In a day when people are connected more than ever before with cell phones, instant messaging, and other high-tech devices, one might think that relationship needs would be lower; however, the ability to stay connected through technological mediums may actually increase an individual’s needs for relationships with others, as technology slowly eliminates or reduces the need for face-to-face contact with other people where trusting and intimate relationships can be developed.

As one who has worked with teenagers, young adults, and families for most of my adult life, I am not surprised by the high percentage who noted emotional needs. Due to decades of high divorce rates, latchkey kids, and all forms of abuse, many individuals are dealing with various emotional needs in their lives.

Although these needs are challenging, churches have the ability to respond to these needs in a significant way. The church should certainly be able to offer spiritual help to people but also be in position to facilitate healing for those hurting from damaged emotions, as well as create opportunity to bring people together in meaningful community.

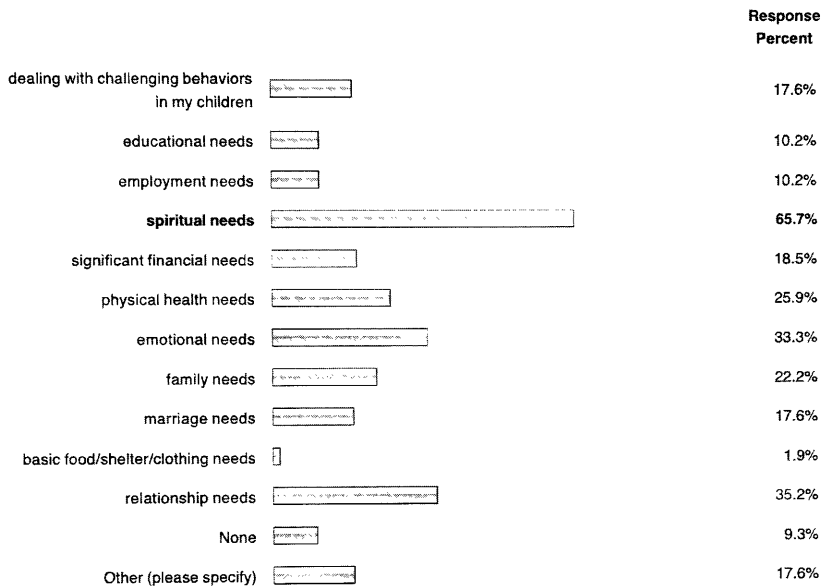


Figure 3.14.

Boomer personal needs.

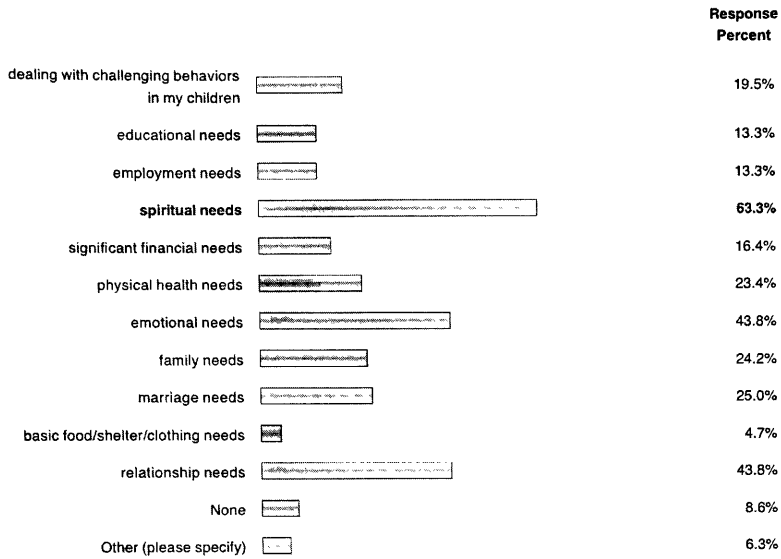


Figure 3.15.

Xer personal needs.

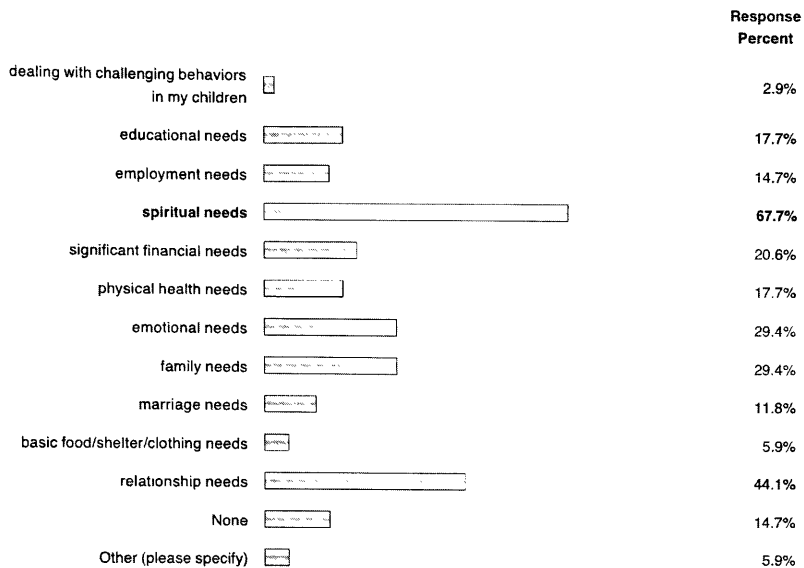


Figure 3.16.

### Millennial personal needs.

Some respondents did provide other comments to this question, but they were elaborations on the provided list (see Appendix F for these responses).

### Generational Needs

In an effort to probe the needs of generational respondents further, Research Question 5 (an open-ended question) was asked. Their responses had some overlap with the personal felt needs question; however, the responses did reflect insights that deepen an understanding of each generation's needs. The following list represents the major categories of each generation (see Appendix G for the complete responses for each group).



## **Boomer Generational Needs**

The Boomer generation's responses fell into the following categories:

- Usefulness versus feeling too old to contribute. Many Boomers responded with a desire to mentor younger people;

- Inner healing from various individual and family challenges;
- Healthcare;
- Loneliness;
- To be less materialistic;
- To know the truth about the God and Christianity;
- Meaningful relationships;
- Purpose;
- Post-divorce support and care;
- Retirement planning; and,
- Faith, hope and love.

## **Xer Generational Needs**

The Xer generation's responses fell into the following categories:

- Parenting assistance;
- Purpose and direction;
- Mentoring by those who have been where we are going;
- Better leadership and role models;
- Community and meaningful relationships;
- Less religion and more spiritual fulfillment;
- Opportunities to “do big works, to serve big, dream big, and act big”;

- Acceptance without being judged;
- A place to belong;
- To know that God is real and that truth is not relative;
- To feel needed;
- To feel worthy;
- To be less self-centered;
- Financial mentoring;
- Education;
- Help with damaged emotions; and,
- For the church to journey with them through their tough questions.

### **Millennial Generational Needs**

The Millennial generation responses fell into the following categories:

- All the needs listed under the Xer category;
- To engage issues of social justice; and,
- For Christians and church leaders to be real and authentic.

### **Sticking Around**

Research Question 6 of this study sought to find out what caused respondents to “stick around” the Vineyard after being attracted to or influenced to participate. Participants were asked to select any factor that caused them to further their participation at the Vineyard. Figures 3.17-3.19 display the results for each generation. As can be seen, several significant factors present themselves for exploration.

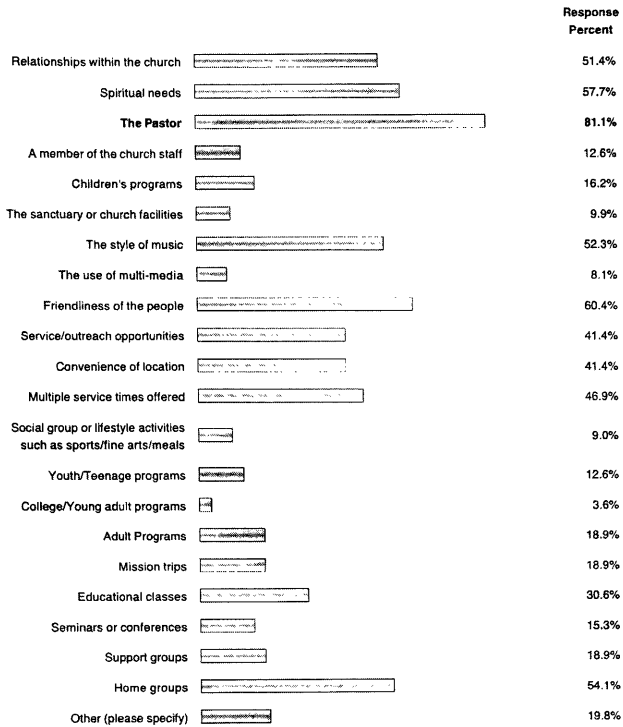


Figure 3.17.

Factors that caused Boomers to stick around the Vineyard.

	<b>Response Percent</b>
Relationships within the church	62.6%
Spiritual needs	48.9%
The Pastor	77.9%
A member of the church staff	26.0%
Children's programs	27.5%
The sanctuary or church facilities	13.7%
The style of music	58.0%
The use of multi-media	10.7%
Friendliness of the people	64.9%
Service/outreach opportunities	34.4%
Convenience of location	39.7%
Multiple service times offered	35.9%
Social group or lifestyle activities such as sports/fine arts/meals	9.2%
Youth/Teenage programs	14.5%
College/Young adult programs	16.8%
Adult Programs	16.8%
Mission trips	22.1%
Educational classes	22.9%
Seminars or conferences	11.5%
Support groups	9.2%
Home groups	49.6%
Other (please specify)	13.7%

Figure 3.18.

Factors that caused Xers to stick around the Vineyard.

	Response Percent
Relationships within the church	78.8%
Spiritual needs	51.5%
The Pastor	66.7%
A member of the church staff	27.3%
Children's programs	3.0%
The sanctuary or church facilities	27.3%
The style of music	51.5%
The use of multi-media	18.2%
Friendliness of the people	72.7%
Service/outreach opportunities	39.4%
Convenience of location	42.4%
Multiple service times offered	33.3%
Social group or lifestyle activities such as sports/fine arts/meals	18.2%
Youth/Teenage programs	12.1%
College/Young adult programs	42.4%
Adult Programs	6.1%
Mission trips	30.3%
Educational classes	18.2%
Seminars or conferences	18.2%
Support groups	15.2%
Home groups	51.5%
Other (please specify)	15.2%

Figure 3.19.

Factors that caused Millennials to stick around the Vineyard.

Overall for the three generational groups, many significant factors caused respondents to further their participation in Vineyard churches after their initial experiences:

- The Pastor: For Boomers, the pastor was the leading factor that caused them to stick around their Vineyard church (81 percent). Xers also chose the pastor as the top factor (78 percent), but the margin between the pastor and relationships (63 percent) was small. Millennials broke the trend by choosing relationships within the church (79 percent) and the friendliness of the people (73 percent) over the pastor (67 percent).

- Friendliness of the people: This factor was significant for all three groups.
- Relationships within the church: Again, this factor rose in importance through each generational group with Millennials choosing it as the top factor of influence for staying around. This data lends credibility to the research contained in the literature review that cites Xers' and Millennials' desire for meaningful relationships.

- The style of music: The Vineyard has been a pioneer in the contemporary praise and worship genre of music. All three Vineyard churches in this study utilize contemporary musical styles relevant to their target cultures. Over 50 percent of all groups chose the style of music as a significant factor for staying around the Vineyard (Boomers 52 percent, Xers 58 percent, and Millennials 52 percent).

- Home groups: Approximately 50 percent of all three groups noted home groups as a factor that caused them to further their participation at the Vineyard. Small groups are extremely important and promoted at multiple levels.

- Spiritual needs: Millennials (52 percent) and Xers (49 percent) chose this factor slightly less than Boomers (58 percent). This factor may be due to Millennials' and Xers' interest in exploring spiritual matters in the context of meaningful relationships.

- Convenience of location: Approximately 40 percent of all three groups were similar in choosing this factor and may add credibility to churches engaging in planting churches in strategic locations, as well as the use of satellite church-planting models.

- Multiple service times offered: Again, all three groups chose this factor in a significant way. This factor points to current culture's need for flexibility given busy lives and work schedules. All three Vineyard churches in this study offer multiple

weekend worship services. The results were Boomers 47 percent, Xers 36 percent, and Millennials 33 percent.

- Outreach opportunities: Approximately 40 percent of all three groups chose this factor. All three Vineyard churches engage in multiple outreach opportunities in their communities, North America, and overseas.

- College/Young adult programs: A large percentage of Millennials (42.4 percent) chose this factor, which may point to the importance of vital programs to this generational group as one key to increasing this age demographic in a church.

Respondents were also given the opportunity to list other factors that influenced them to stick around the Vineyard church. These responses can be found in Appendix H.

As a final question in this category (Research Question 6A), respondents were asked to rate how effective the Vineyard was in helping them move from being a visitor to a part of their church community. As Figure 3.20 shows, 72.5 percent of all respondents noted that the Vineyard church was either effective or very effective at this task.



Figure 3.20.

Combined effectiveness rating of all respondents.

## Communicating

Research Question 7 was asked to ascertain how effective Vineyard churches are at communicating to members of different generations through several key areas: preaching/teaching, worship music styles, use of technology and multimedia, and use of the arts.

Several significant findings appear in this set of data. First, Vineyard churches in this study are extremely effective at communicating their message through preaching and teaching during services. As noted in the open-ended responses, Vineyard communicators utilize an informal style and appear to be receptor oriented in their communication. In addition, over 90 percent of all three generations stated that the Vineyard was somewhat effective or effective at communicating their message through their worship music styles and selections. Use of technology and multimedia also rated high among all three generations. Using the arts to communicate their messages could be improved in Vineyard churches and will be shared with each church's pastor. Figures 3.21-3.23 show the results for each generation:

	Not used at all	Ineffective	Somewhat effective	Effective	Undecided
Preaching/Teaching during a service	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	1.8% (2)	98.2% (107)	0.0% (0)
Worship Music styles and selections	0.0% (0)	5.5% (6)	17.4% (19)	75.2% (82)	1.8% (2)
Use of technology based systems (email/websites)	0.0% (0)	2.8% (3)	18.3% (20)	77.1% (84)	1.8% (2)
Use of multi-media (video/film clips)	0.9% (1)	1.9% (2)	28.7% (31)	64.8% (70)	3.7% (4)
Use of the Arts (dance, painting, sculpting etc.)	35.2% (37)	14.3% (15)	27.6% (29)	8.6% (9)	14.3% (15)

Figure 3.21.

Boomer rating of Vineyard communication.



	Not used at all	Ineffective	Somewhat effective	Effective	Undecided
Preaching/Teaching during a service	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	7.0% (9)	<b>92.2% (119)</b>	0.8% (1)
Worship Music styles and selections	0.0% (0)	3.1% (4)	21.7% (28)	<b>75.2% (97)</b>	0.0% (0)
Use of technology based systems (email/websites)	1.6% (2)	5.4% (7)	30.2% (39)	<b>62.0% (80)</b>	0.8% (1)
Use of multi-media (video/film clips)	2.3% (3)	3.1% (4)	34.1% (44)	<b>58.9% (76)</b>	1.6% (2)
Use of the Arts (dance, painting, sculpting etc.)	23.8% (30)	19.0% (24)	<b>27.0% (34)</b>	14.3% (18)	15.9% (20)

Figure 3.22.

Xer rating of Vineyard communication.

	Not used at all	Ineffective	Somewhat effective	Effective	Undecided
Preaching/Teaching during a service	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	14.7% (5)	<b>85.3% (29)</b>	0.0% (0)
Worship Music styles and selections	0.0% (0)	2.9% (1)	32.4% (11)	<b>64.7% (22)</b>	0.0% (0)
Use of technology based systems (email/websites)	0.0% (0)	11.8% (4)	26.5% (9)	<b>61.8% (21)</b>	0.0% (0)
Use of multi-media (video/film clips)	2.9% (1)	5.9% (2)	26.5% (9)	<b>58.8% (20)</b>	5.9% (2)
Use of the Arts (dance, painting, sculpting etc.)	21.2% (7)	18.2% (6)	<b>39.4% (13)</b>	15.2% (5)	6.1% (2)

Figure 3.23.

Millennial rating of Vineyard communication.

### Social Issues Important to Each Generation

Research Question 8 asked respondents to choose which social issues were important to them. The purpose of this question is to help churches better understand how to respond to generational issues of social justice and address them accordingly. Figures 3.24-3.26 show the results for each generation. Respondents other comments were either directly or indirectly related to the provide choices.



Figure 3.24.

Social issues important to Boomers.

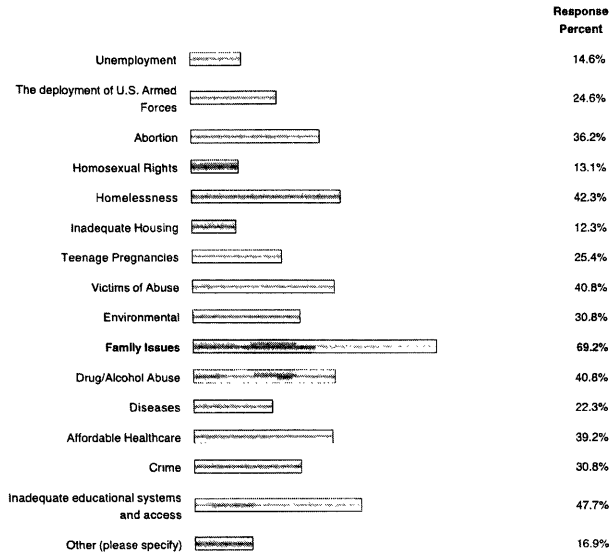


Figure 3.25.

Social issues important to Xers.

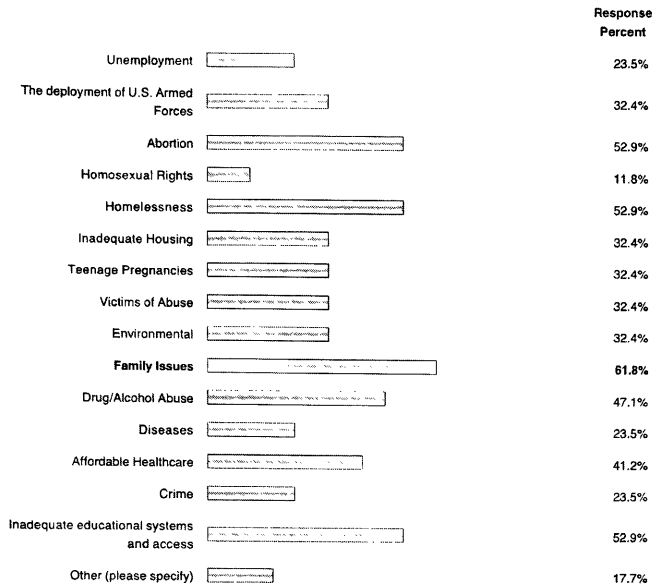


Figure 3.26.

Social issues important to Millennials.

### Satisfaction with Leadership

Research Question 9 focused on Vineyard leadership. In an era when the media reports regularly on some failure in religious or church leadership, I had an interest in ascertaining generational satisfaction of Vineyard church leadership in this study. Because all three generations had percentages that fell within a few points of each other, Figure 3.27 displays the combined satisfaction levels of all three generations. As noted, 90 percent of generational members were either satisfied or very satisfied with their Vineyard church leadership.

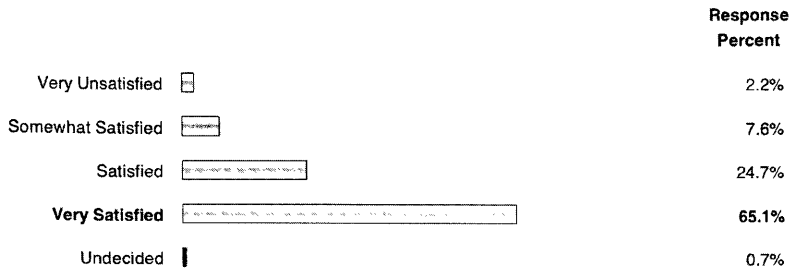


Figure 3.27.

Combined generational satisfaction with Vineyard church leadership.

## CHAPTER 4

### SUMMARY OF MAJOR FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES

This study was designed to identify and analyze strategic reproducible principles gained from conducting research in three Vineyard Association churches in south-central Ohio, which appear to be effective at attracting or reaching the Boomer, Xer, and Millennial generational groups. Statistical data was collected and reviewed from conducting interviews with Vineyard church pastors and leaders, gathering printed materials, making observations during on-site visits to the three churches, and by the completion of a questionnaire by members of the Boomer, Xer, and Millennial generational groups.

#### Church Case Studies

Vineyard Chillicothe, Grove City, and Columbus all possess missions, visions, values, and structures that position them to respond effectively to members of multiple generations. These three Vineyard churches maintain a mission of reaching into their communities and beyond with love and good deeds in the name of Jesus Christ. They value cultural relevance, authentic relationships, and community building and are willing to engage people in their spiritual journeys. They have a vision for what people can become and accept them where they are. They allow people to belong before they believe. These values likely flow from Vineyard churches viewing conversion as a process (as noted in the conversion theory section in chapter one), which may account for their ability to allow people to belong and feel accepted. They proliferate intentional small groups based both on age group and need dynamics. This strategy stems from their

understanding of social group theories as explained in the theoretical section of this study. They utilize receptor-oriented forms of communication as explained in the communication theory section of this study. Finally, strategic principles are proliferated and intentionally implemented throughout various levels in all three Vineyard churches.

In contrast, Tyler United Methodist Church appears to have very limited structures and a more narrow mission and vision and may not possess the values that could make them more effective in attracting Boomers, Xers, and Millennials. Tyler Church does not proliferate the use of small groups and may not use communication forms and styles that connect with members of younger generations.

#### **Generational Factors of Attraction or Influence**

A plurality of Boomers, Xers, and Millennials were attracted to attend the Vineyard through the positive influence of a friend or family member. The next three most common factors were a search for meaning or purpose, a personal crisis or challenge, and the distance of the church from respondents' residence.

Interestingly, the three least chosen factors of attraction or influence for Boomers, Xers, and Millennials were an advertisement (mail, print, radio), an Internet Web site or e-mail, and a special event.

#### **Context of Generational Members' Initial Experience of the Vineyard**

Approximately 83 percent of all three generational respondents reported their first exposure to the Vineyard occurred during a weekend worship service. The next two most common contexts for Boomers were a home-based small group or activity/special event. For Xers, the second most common context was a weekday service or church-based small

group. For Millennials, a home or church-based small group was the second most common context for their first experience to the Vineyard.

All three Vineyard churches conduct their worship services with secular people in mind. Their services are informal and inviting to those who may not be comfortable in a church setting. All three Vineyard churches also proliferate small groups both at the church and in homes. This structure situates the Vineyard effectively to connect with multiple generations who chose to have their first contact to occur either in a worship service or small group.

### **Initial Visit Impressions, Observations, Feelings of Generational Members**

A solid correlation can be seen between respondents' first impressions of the Vineyard and the stated Vineyard mission, vision, and values listed in the case studies. The most common open-ended responses (impressions, observations, feelings) by category were comfortable, casual, exciting music, clear and effective teaching/preaching, joyful, friendly, balanced, presence of God or Holy Spirit, welcoming, accepting, diversity in ethnicity and socioeconomic class, and nonthreatening (see Appendix D for complete list).

A follow-up question asks respondents to rate the friendliness of the Vineyard church upon their initial visit. Most generational members (84 percent) stated that the people at the Vineyard were friendly or very friendly.

### **Factors That Caused Generational Members to Stick Around the Vineyard**

Generational members were asked to choose which factors caused them to further their participation at their Vineyard church. For the majority of Boomers (81.1 percent) and Xers (77.9 percent), the pastor was the top factor chosen. Millennials deviated by



choosing relationships (78.8 percent) as the primary factor that caused them to stick around. Friendliness of the people at the Vineyard was the second choice for each group, Boomers 60.4 percent, Xers 64.9 percent, and Millennials 72.7 percent. Each generation chose different third and fourth factors: Boomers chose home groups (54.1 percent), Xers chose relationships in the church (62.6 percent), and Millennials chose the pastor (66.7 percent). Xers and Millennials also had significant numbers choose home groups (Xers 49.6 percent and Millennials 51.5 percent), and Millennials further selected college/young adult programs (42.4 percent) as factors that caused them to stick around. Another significant factor for all three groups was the style of music: Boomers 52.3 percent, Xers 58 percent, and Millennials 51.5 percent. Open-ended comments appeared to elaborate on the above choices.

### **Generational Members' Perception of Christianity**

A majority of respondents, Boomers 55 percent, Xers 54 percent, and Millennials 61 percent stated that their perception of Christianity had changed as a result of their participation in Vineyard churches. The four most common changes were that (1) respondents became more outward focused on the needs of the community and world; (2) respondents became more tolerant and accepting of people in general; (3) respondents became more focused on relationships and community; and, (4) respondents learned that their faith could be relevant to their cultural context.

### **Individual Felt Needs of Generational Members**

The three most common individual needs of generational members were Boomers—spiritual (65.7 percent), relationships (35.2 percent), and emotional (33.3 percent); Xers—spiritual (63.3 percent), emotional (43.8 percent), and relationships (43.8

percent); and, Millennials—spiritual (67.7 percent), relationships (44.1 percent), family (29.4 percent), and emotional (29.4 percent).

All three generational groups are aware of and concerned about spiritual needs. As stated in the Vineyard church case studies, they address needs of participants through a comprehensive and small group paradigm, which puts them in position to respond to the various felt needs of participants effectively.

### **Corporate Generational Needs**

This follow-up question was asked to probe the needs of each generation (Boomers, Xers, and Millennials) as a group. Respondents were asked to list what they believed were the three greatest needs of their respective generations.

The most common responses for Boomers included the need to feel useful, to receive inner healing from various individual and family challenges, to have adequate health care, relationships, retirement planning, and post-divorce support, and to be less materialistic.

The most common responses for Xers included having purpose and direction, the desire for mentors, parenting and family support, better leadership and role models, community and relationships, and opportunities to engage in service, knowing that God is real, being less self-centered and materialistic, having education, support for damaged emotions, and less religion, and having the need for belonging and acceptance without judgment and for Christians and church leaders to be real and authentic.

Millennials had the same categories of common responses as the Xers.

### **Communication to Multiple Generations**

Generational respondents were asked to rate how effective Vineyard churches were at communicating in the areas of preaching and teaching, worship music styles and selections, use of technology-based communication, use of multimedia, and use of the arts. Over 90 percent of Boomers and Xers and 85 percent of Millennials rated the Vineyard effective in preaching/teaching. Approximately 90 percent of all three generations rated the Vineyard effective at communicating through worship music styles and selection. The majority of all three generations (60-70 percent) rated the Vineyard effective on the use of technology-based communication systems (e-mail and Web site). Approximately 60 percent of all three generations rated the Vineyard as effective in their use of multimedia (video/film clips). Lastly, only 8.6 percent of Boomers, 14.3 percent of Xers, and 15.2 percent of Millennials reported that Vineyard was effective at using the arts.

A correlation seems to exist between the reported effectiveness of Vineyard teaching/preaching and the pastor being the primary factor that caused respondents to stick around. The Vineyard pastors intentionally communicate using culturally relevant forms and symbols.

### **Social Issues**

Generational respondents were asked to choose any social issues that were important to them. All three churches place some level of emphasis on social justice in their ethos and strategies.

The top five social issues for Boomers were family issues (68.9 percent), affordable healthcare (55.7 percent), abortion (50.9 percent), drug/alcohol use (50

percent), and crime (50 percent). The top five social issues for Xers were family issues (69.2 percent), inadequate educational systems and access (47.7 percent), homelessness (42.3 percent), drugs/alcohol abuse (40.8 percent), and victims of abuse (40.8 percent). The top five social issues for Millennials were family issues (61.9 percent), homelessness (52.9 percent), abortion (52.9 percent), drug/alcohol abuse (47.1 percent), inadequate housing/teen pregnancies, victims of abuse, and environmental (32.4 percent), and deployment of armed forces (32.4 percent).

Based on the data from generational respondents and the Vineyard churches, these Vineyard churches are attempting to address many of the social issues that are important to multiple generations in their communities and world through various groups and outreach strategies.

### **Generational Satisfaction of Vineyard Leadership**

Respondents were asked to rate how satisfied they were with their respective Vineyard church leadership. Approximately 90 percent of all three generations were either satisfied or very satisfied with their current leadership. Vineyard leader satisfaction is a significant finding in an era when religious and church leadership failure is broadcast weekly on some news media outlet. This particular data has a high correlation value with other data reported in this study.

### **Recommendations for Further Research**

Several further studies that might prove helpful in comparing or contrasting to what has been gained by this study.

### **National Study**

First, would any significant different findings be found if this study were conducted in other Vineyard churches in different areas of the United States? Conducting the same study in several other areas of the country would provide a broader base of research from which to compare the results of this study.

### **Multi-Church Tradition Study**

Second, the same type of study could be carried out in churches of other Protestant or Catholic faith traditions or movements. This multi-faith study would yield a broader base of research from which to compare the results of this study.

### **Longitudinal Study**

Third, a follow-up study could be conducted in the future of these three Vineyard churches to determine if they have been successful in reaching the next post-Millennial generations.

### **Nontraditional Church Structures**

Fourth, what reproducible principles for attraction and outreach to multiple generations do parachurch or other unique alternative faith groups use? How would the findings of this study compare to other nontraditional type churches?

### **Conclusion**

There are many factors that prove to be significant in explaining why these three south-central Ohio Vineyard churches have had uncommon success in attracting Boomers, Xers, and Millennials. Vineyard Chillicothe, Vineyard Columbus, and Vineyard Grove City all maintain core values that situate them to respond effectively to the values of multiple generations. They possess flexible structures that allow them to

create diverse strategies that connect with different types of groups. They proliferate a wide variety of small groups aimed at building community among participants and meeting various personal and generational needs. They communicate their messages using culturally relevant forms and styles and appear to respond to social issues that are important to different generations. It is believed that the reproducible principles identified and analyzed in this study will aid churches who are seeking to respond to new generations.

**APPENDIX A****LEADER INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE**

1. What is the history of your church?
2. What is the story/length of your personal involvement with this church/ministry?
3. What is the scope/responsibilities of your position?
4. What do you personally enjoy the most about your position? What books/people/events/etc., have most shaped your ministry?
5. What are the stated mission, values, and vision of your church?
6. What are the community demographics in which your churches are located?
7. What are the participant demographics of your church?
8. What past, current or enduring structures are present in your church?
9. What are the attraction or evangelization practices of your church?
  - a. How do church leaders define or view evangelism?
  - b. What priority is evangelism given by the church leadership?
  - c. What formal or informal methods of evangelism exist that are aimed at evangelizing Boomers, Xers, and Millennials?
  - d. How are new visitors identified and welcomed?
  - e. What methods are used to follow up with new visitors?
  - f. What processes exist that move individuals or groups from non-church participation to assimilation?
  - g. What are the outreach ministries you engage in with these generations?
  - h. How do you view conversion?
  - i. What process/expectations exist for membership?

10. How does your church communicate the gospel message?
  - a. What symbols or forms are used?
  - b. How do you understand where and how “meaning” occurs in communication?
  - c. Are you receptor oriented in your communication?
  - d. What are your styles of communication?
  - e. How do you view conversion?
  - f. How do you practice contextualization or cultural relevance?
11. What characteristics of Boomers, Xers, and Millennials have you observed either in your church or other experience?
  - a. What are their primary needs?
  - b. How does your church seek to evangelize or attract these groups?
  - c. What are the most meaningful moments, events, experiences in your church for these groups unchurched people? For believers?
12. What is your image among the unchurched in your community?
13. What is your model or view of leadership? How does it relate to reaching these 3 generations?
14. What role do small groups play in your church? What is their purpose and how is it achieved?
15. How do you involve people in social action/justice opportunities?
16. How do you view the relationship between “word and deed”? Describe your worship services. How do they intentionally target unchurched boomers/Xers/millennials?
17. What else would you like to tell me that would be of significance to this study?



## APPENDIX B

### BOOMER, XER, AND MILLENIAL ONLINE SURVEY

#### 1. Introduction

Thank you for taking a couple of minutes of your time to complete this survey. Your responses will greatly assist me in the writing of my doctoral dissertation, which is focused on how churches can better understand and connect with members of your generation.

You will notice that this survey does not ask for your name or any other personal contact information. Therefore, you can be assured that your responses will remain anonymous and that you will not receive any solicitation as a result of taking this survey.

If you are unable to answer a particular question, or one that does not apply, you may be able to provide helpful comments in the "other" box option if offered. If not, please skip the question and move to the next one.

If you would like to dialogue with me further about your journey or this project, please email me at: michael.cuckler@asbury.edu.

Thank you...

Michael Cuckler  
Doctoral Student, Asbury Theological Seminary  
Adjunct Faculty, Asbury College

#### 1. Please select the year range in which you were born.

- Prior to 1940
- 1941-1963
- 1964-1981
- 1982-2007

#### 2. What is your gender?

- Female
- Male

#### 3. What racial or ethnic group do you most identify with?

#### 4. What is your primary occupation?

#### 5. Which best describes your educational background

- Some high school completed

- High school diploma or GED earned
- Some college coursework completed
- College degree earned
- Some graduate coursework completed
- Graduate degree earned

**6. What is the City/State you currently reside in?**

**7. Do you consider yourself to be a Christian?**

- yes
- no
- unsure
- I affirm or practice a belief system other than Christianity

**8. If you answered yes to being a Christian, how long have you currently been a practicing Christian?**

- 0-1 year
- 1-3 years
- 3-5 years
- 5-10 years
- More than 10 years
- Other (please specify)

**9. What circumstances or life events caused you to consider either becoming a Christian or resume being a practicing Christian?**

**10. What was your immediate family's attitude toward Christianity when you were growing up?**

- Intolerant     Somewhat intolerant     Tolerant     Somewhat tolerant     Very tolerant     Unsure

**11. If you are currently participating in a church, what is the name of that church?**

**12. How long have you been attending the church that you are currently participating in?**

- I do not currently attend a church  
 0-1 year  
 1-3 years  
 3-5 years  
 5-10 years  
 Over 10 years  
Other (please specify)

**13. Please select any factor that influenced you to start attending your current church. If you do not currently participate in a church, what factor(s) influenced you to at least consider attending a church either in the past or present?**

- a personal crisis or challenge  
 pressure from a family member or close friend  
 activities for my children or teenagers  
 an Internet website or email

- 
- concern about life after death
  - a national or world crisis event
  - a special event
  - a co-worker
  - a personal search for meaning/purpose in life
  - a church sponsored event, activity, or program
  - distance of church from my residence
  - the pastor or a member of the church's staff
  - a friend
  - denominational familiarity
  - size of the church
  - an advertisement (mail, print, radio, television, poster)
  - Other (please specify)

**14. In what setting did you have your first experience with the church you currently participate in? If you do not currently participate in a church, what was the setting of your last contact with a church?**

- a weekday service
- a weekend worship service
- a small group meeting in someone's home
- a community service project
- a support group (recovery, marriage/family, grief, etc.)
- a wedding
- an activity or special event organized by the church
- a funeral
- a baptism
- a class or small group meeting at the church
- a conference or seminar sponsored by the church
- a baby dedication
- confirmation
- Other (please specify)

**15. Please describe what your first visit to the church you currently participate in was like. Include your feelings, impressions, thoughts, and observations regarding your experience. If you do not currently participate in a church, answer this question for the last church function you did attend.**

**16. In general, how did you view Christians prior to participation in your current church?**

- negatively       somewhat negative       neutral       somewhat positive       positively

Other (please specify)

**17. How has your perception or image of Christianity changed since participation in your current church?**

- My perception has negatively changed       My perception has remained the same       My perception has positively changed       Undecided

Other (please specify)

**18. What are the current needs in your life? Please check all that apply.**

- marriage needs  
 family needs  
 employment needs  
 basic food/shelter/clothing needs  
 physical health needs  
 None  
 significant financial needs

- spiritual needs
- emotional needs
- dealing with challenging behaviors in my children
- relationship needs
- educational needs
- Other (please specify)

**19. What factors have caused you to "stick around" in your current church, or want to come back? Please check all that apply.**

- The sanctuary or church facilities
- A member of the church staff
- Seminars or conferences
- Relationships within the church
- Youth/Teenage programs
- Mission trips
- Adult Programs
- Service/outreach opportunities
- Home groups
- Support groups
- The use of multi-media
- Friendliness of the people
- Multiple service times offered
- Social group or lifestyle activities such as sports/fine arts/meals
- Educational classes
- Spiritual needs
- Children's programs
- The style of music
- The Pastor
- College/Young adult programs
- Convenience of location
- Other (please specify)

**20. Does your current church have a process for becoming a member?**

- yes
- no
- unsure

**21. If your church has membership, are you a member?**

- yes
- no
- unsure
- Other (please specify)

**22. If you answered yes to being a formal member of your church, for how long?**

- 0-1 year
- 1-3 years
- 3-5 years
- 5-10 years
- Over 10 years

**23. If you chose not to become a formal member, please explain your reason.**

**24. I currently attend a church sponsored service, program, or activity...(please check the box that best describes your current level of participation)**

- Once per week
- Once every 2 weeks
- Once per month
- Once every 2-3 months
- Once every 4-6 months
- Once every 7 months -1 year
- I have no consistent participation pattern
- Other (please specify)

**25. What is the greatest strength of the church you currently participate in?**

**26. If you could change anything about the church you currently participate in, what would it be?**

**27. If you do not currently participate in a church, what would you change about the church in general?**

**28. Please check the box that best describes your earliest exposure to Christianity .**

- Attendance during a special holiday church service or event
- Childhood attendance in summer Vacation Bible School
- Childhood attendance in any other church sponsored program/event
- The reading of any church or religious literature (print or Internet)
- Adult attendance in a regular church worship service
- Conversations with parents or family members
- A visit from a church clergy member or church member
- Childhood attendance in Sunday School
- Involvement in a support or recovery group
- Teenage attendance in any church sponsored program/event
- Viewing a religious movie or television program
- Involvement in a small group
- I have no prior memory of being exposed to Christianity
- Other (please specify)



**29. What do you believe are the 3 greatest needs of your generation?**

**30. How is your current church attempting to address or meet your generation's needs?**

**31. How effective has your current church been in helping you to feel like you have moved from being a visitor to being a part of the church community?**

Very Ineffective     Somewhat Effective     Effective     Very Effective     Undecided

Other (please specify)

**32. Please explain what the church has done or not done to help you move from being a visitor to feeling like you are a part of the church community.**

**33. Please rate the effectiveness of the church you currently participate in (or the last church you participated in if you do not currently participate in a church) at communicating to your generation through the following:**

	Not used at all	Ineffective	Somewhat effective	Effective	Undecided
Preaching/Teaching during a service	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Worship Music styles and selections	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Use of technology based systems (email/websites)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Use of multi-media (video/film clips)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Use of the Arts (dance, painting, sculpting etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other (please specify)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**34. What was your impression of the church building(s) upon your first visit to the church you currently participate in (or the last church you participated in if you do not currently participate in a church)? Please check all that apply.**

- Too cold in regard to temperature
- Too hot in regard to temperature
- Old
- Modern
- Adequate Signage in regard to parking, entrances, church facilities
- Dilapidated
- Accessible to those with physical challenges
- Ancient
- Exciting
- High Tech
- Low Tech
- Formal
- Poor Signage in regard to parking, entrances, church facilities
- Disrepair
- Welcoming
- New

- Dark  
 Other (please specify)

**35. In general, how friendly were the people of the church you currently participate in (or the last church you participated in if you do not currently participate in a church) upon your first few initial visits?**

- Totally Unfriendly     Somewhat Friendly     Friendly     Very Friendly     Undecided

Other (please specify)

**36. What are the most important social issues that you are concerned about?  
Please check all that apply.**

- Abortion  
 Unemployment  
 Homosexual Rights  
 Inadequate Housing  
 Affordable Healthcare  
 Teenage Pregnancies  
 Inadequate educational systems and access  
 Environmental  
 Family Issues  
 Victims of Abuse  
 Drug/Alcohol Abuse  
 Homelessness  
 Crime  
 Diseases  
 The deployment of U.S. Armed Forces

Other (please specify)

**37. Why are the social issues you selected important to you? Check any that apply.**

- Personal experience
- Media influence
- A challenge in my community or region
- Unsure
- Other (please specify)

**38. Please rate the effectiveness of your current church in meeting your needs (or the last church you participated in if you do not currently participate in a church):**

	Not addressed at all	Ineffective	Somewhat effective	Effective	Unsure
Physical Needs (food/shelter/clothing/health)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Spiritual Needs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Emotional Needs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Social Needs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Intellectual Needs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other (please specify)					

**39. What is your general opinion of the leadership of the church you currently participate in?**

- Very Unsatisfied   
  Somewhat Satisfied   
  Satisfied   
  Very Satisfied   
  Undecided

**40. Is there anything else you would like to tell me that you think would be helpful to know regarding connecting with members of your generation?**

## **2. Thanks!**

Please click "done" and wait for the prompt that you are finished so that your results will be recorded.

If you have friends or family members that you think would enjoy taking this survey and would provide helpful information for this project, please forward the email link on to them.

Don't forget to email me if you would like to dialogue further about this study at:  
michael.cuckler@asbury.edu.

Thank you,

J. Michael Cuckler

## APPENDIX C

## OPEN-ENDED RESPONSES TO RESEARCH QUESTION 1

**What factors influenced you to attend the vineyard church?****Boomer Responses**

I was not really looking for a different church from the one I had attended for 13 years. I was familiar with Vineyard because my former church was loosely affiliated with it. My son and daughter-in-law had shown some interest in attending Vineyard. I started going to a Thursday night Bible Study that broke up into small groups after the teaching. The small group atmosphere, prayer, and caring kept me coming back. Then God Himself transplanted me.

Started bible study before attending weekend services

I was not attending church but had spent 1.5 years in an independent Bible Study (BSF) and when we studied Acts and Paul's letters I realized that we were to be part of a local church. I really didn't want to go to church, but I felt if I were going to live by the Bible I would have to live by all of it, not just part of it. So I began looking and found VCC. Had no idea how much I had been missing out on!

The Lord told me to come to the Vineyard and rest for a season

I was searching for a church with doctrinally sound message

The Lord said go there.

My family and I relocated to the area, and we were looking for a church to attend. I had wanted to visit a Vineyard for about 7 years, and when we drove by it, we decided to visit the next week.

My children seem to get more out of the sermon.

Daughter wanted to try the church and asked me to go

Frustration with the deadness of other churches.

One, my brother went to vineyard in Cincinnati, and two it was small about 200, now 2000

Two of our sons were attending there and they invited us to visit. We loved it!

We just moved here in November and wanted a church with balance in teaching, prayer, worship, ministry outreach and inreach and all other biblical practices

Moved to Columbus Ohio, attended Columbus Vineyard, and every Sunday the pastors there told me I should attend Tom's church.

Worship

Birth of my daughter

Inspired by God.

In my first visit to the church (which I was checking out because I had heard good things about the Vineyard churches), I was astounded by the pastor's teaching and style and depth. He was teaching the application and relevance of a passage of Scripture in such a practical, do-able fashion. It was very engaging, powerful and life changing. I knew immediately that I had found the church family I had been looking for all my Christian Life. That was over 5 years ago and I still feel that way. Our pastor also encourages us to "be the church" i.e. to use our gifts and talents to build each other up. And we have a strong ministry reaching out to the community to meet very practical, common needs. All of this factored into my decision to be a part of this fellowship.

The Holy Spirit said this where you belong.

I had attended another church for a year and was not satisfied. A friend invited me here and I have been coming ever since.

I needed more from my faith and didn't think my church was helping me find my way. I believe God called my family there

I was a Christian for most of my young life. I walked away from God for about ten years...made a lot of mistakes. Finding this church was a huge blessing  
The welcome we received from the congregation.

A lot of activities

We had been helping with a church plant on the East side of town, but when we realized that the plant was not going to be a viable option, we started looking for a new church. The comfortable atmosphere of the congregation, being non-denominational, and the personality of the Lead Pastor.

Type of service the have, dissatisfaction with previous church

I felt God's leading.

My brother

We were new Christians at the Vineyard Columbus and followed Pastor Tom Pauquette in the planting of this church almost 14 years ago

The upcoming birth of my daughter

Looking for a place where the Bible is the basis for Christian life and where Christian maturity is encouraged and fostered.

God told me and my wife we were to attend this church

Pastor's message and way he conducts services as well as opportunities for fellowship and service

The Vineyard is a good mix for my wife and I. She was raised Church of God and I am a Southern Baptist by doctrinal belief.

We just weren't being fed at our old church and were searching for a new church  
The sense of a pastor responding to the leading of the Holy Spirit - someone who inspires, who relates, who does not condemn or judge

Because our son, his wife, and their newly adopted son were attending there and because we heard the truth being preached.

Re-location

Size of the building, I heard someone talk about it in passing. I believe The Lord directed me there

They had a Saturday Night Service

Husband did not like the church I was attending, so he moved us.

We were members of Vineyard Columbus for 24 yrs. We recently moved, and we felt it was the Lord's will for us to stay within the Vineyard community.

Proximity to home

### **Xer Responses**

A feeling something important was missing from my life

Joshua House sermons were available online and so I listened to 30+ sermons on my iPod before I began attending JH. I really liked Eric's messages and style; he was the main reason I began attending JH.

My parents and I went to this church when I was young, but I left and came back after I found out some of my friends went to this church.



There were many other young adults attending the church. Moreover, the church had given them a space in which to have their own service with worship music and teaching that directly spoke to where I was at.

Knowing it was safe to be real there and that there were home groups

A still, small voice- an invitation to have a deeper relationship with a God I knew (somewhat) while I was driving one night.

I randomly heard it was a cool church, and that it had a ministry geared toward 20-30 year olds called Joshua House. As I was looking for a new church, I decided to drop in and give it a try.

Invitation to a small group

I came for education (the VLI program) and also was drawn to the church due to the worship style.

The church sign was somewhat influential as I drove by the church a few months before attending.

Looking for a church for more than 15 years and just didn't like other churches. I work on Sunday and perfect time to go.

Presentation of materials during service. We got a very warm, cozy, comfortable and "not lectured at" feeling.

God lead us to go to the Vineyard

Then girlfriend now wife

I connected with the church's mission, vision, and beliefs.

Went past the church and felt led or inspired that I needed to visit.

I had three people tell me to go to the Vineyard during my personal family crisis

Former church changed pastors. There were some other "messy" issues.

Needed a new church home after leaving a church we had attended for 10 years

The Lord put it on my heart to be involved in a loving church. He let me know that it was no longer OK for me to not attend a church and a friend referred me to the Vineyard.

We were going to the Vineyard on Cooper Road and became involved in doing a church plant of our current church; we wanted to help start a church in our community.

I realized that my children needed to know Jesus personally, and they did not. I also realized I needed to demonstrate to my children how to develop a true and healthy relationship with Jesus.

Prophetic message from my stepdaughter. She told my wife and I that we would be attending church at a specific site when it was just a corn field

Was actively looking for a church

My sister, who attends, but I did not feel pressured

7 year old daughter lost her father - began asking to go to church. Then a church member came and handed out an invite to the church so we went.

Initially, another denomination of which I was affiliated started a church plant. Our current pastor was tapped for the job; he changed denominations and we followed him.

It felt like God wanted me here and that God was helping me grow/talking directly to me thru the teachings.

This church, unlike our previous church, offered many opportunities to get involved and reach out to the community

Led by God.

Family members attended there as well

Wife

Good preaching, Good worship, Move of the Holy Spirit

The complete uniqueness of this church in comparison to many others out there that feel fake or put-on.

Our family was in search of a new church to call "home." After visiting several churches, and many hours in prayer asking God to lead us to the place where He wanted us to be, we felt more and more like The Vineyard was that special place we had been looking for, and that that is where we were meant to be.

Looking for a place to be accepted for who I am, a place where everyone is real

A co-worker told me they heard of a Vineyard opening in Chillicothe. Since we went to a Vineyard for some time prior to moving to Ohio we gave it a try and fell in love the first Sunday.

Denominational familiarity

## **Millennial Responses**

I like to be able to walk into a church and feel the love and presence of God in the church, not some sort of airs

People my own age (at the time, 21-22).

Praise and worship is important to me

More people my age--also they have a doctrine I agree with (e.g. spiritual gifts).

My parents went there when I was a teenager

The church we were in prior to this one left the Vineyard movement and my husband and I felt God calling us to remain in the Vineyard. So, we started looking - my family attended here and I'd always liked the services so we checked this church out. Long and short, God called us to this church so we moved across 3 states to obey!

We attended a church on the east side that my grandpa was the pastor at and when he retired we looked for a different church. My grandma went to the Vineyard so we started going with her there and have been there ever since. Plus it was close to home.

I often look to see what a church offers to its young adult community. I look to see how active the church is in reaching this age group.

## APPENDIX D

### OPEN-ENDED RESPONSES TO RESEARCH QUESTION 2A

**Please describe what your first visit to the church you currently participate in was like. Include your feelings, impressions, thoughts, and observations regarding your experience. If you do not currently participate in a church, answer this question for the last church function you did attend.**

#### **Boomer Responses**

The first visit to worship and preaching of the Word made me feel very comfortable.

Though Vineyard is not as physically expressive during worship as my former church, I did not feel uncomfortable continuing my own style of worship, and the atmosphere of music and anointing was conducive to offering praise and adoration to God. Though the sanctuary was large, I didn't feel out of place. The pastor's style was casual but strictly Biblical. He was genuine and clear. My first visit to the Thursday Bible Study and Small Group was a breath of fresh air, compared to the small group I had been involved in at my previous church. The leader of the small group was actually interested in each person's thoughts and concerns. Time was taken to listen to God and to see how He wanted to apply the lessons from the teaching to each of our lives. Prayer was not stiff or flowery. Members of the group as well as the leader actually prayed powerfully for each concern. It was addictive.

It was great. The worship music was really good and quickly got me pumped. The teaching was interesting and touched on my situation.

It was a weekly bible study which was casual, people were friendly and welcoming. The biggest thing I think impacted me is that no one told me what I should be or shouldn't be doing. They spoke according to God's Word and the Holy Spirit did the rest. That is still true one year later.

The music and the teaching were both very powerful and joyful. God was present and we were definitely ministered to.

I sat in the back, almost like I didn't want to be seen. The biggest attraction was the sermon.... I liked Rich Nathan's words. That prompted me to return. At first I didn't like the music,... but I read in a piece of literature that the music was to praise and worship God. So I focused on the words.... Now I absolutely love the music--it's 99% what I listen to! When I take guests with me they all comment on how large the church is. For some reason that never overwhelmed me---perhaps that is because I am used to large

events and I am comfortable in new places. I consistently picked up all the literature they have in the lobby ...and read it.

I was struck by the joy I saw on peoples' faces. I wanted to feel that.

The Lord sent me there and confirmed out of the Pastor's mouth what He had been saying to me. Several times the Lord would tell me to go to that church and I would receive confirmation. I work with a lot of churches in prayer ministry. I am most interested in how in tune with the Holy Spirit and the Word a church is. This church has a great heart.

different, a little anxious, yet felt the powerful presence of the Holy Spirit

Worship seemed genuine. Message was doctrinally sound. I like availability of sermon notes. Good directions provided concerning registering children. Music CD given to visitors is a great idea to get them engaging in worship & thinking about God outside of church! I appreciate those involved in prayer ministry being available during the "decision/opportunity" portion of the service. They have many small groups which generate more intimacy/connections within the larger church. People reach out and make connections in smaller settings, but not in the larger worship services. With the exception of the "designated greeters" and the associate pastor and his wife, the fellowship lacks friendliness. No one makes eye contact or connects. I have to initiate interactions every time. Although a visitor does not want to be swarmed/overwhelmed, no introductions or connections suggests a lack of interest/concern.

The very first time we visited the vineyard, I thought to myself..."I've stepped into a family gathering; can I be a part of this family?"

I felt moved by the message the Pastor was passing to the congregation. The feeling that overcomes me whenever I enter the church, I feel as though I'm surrounded by something bigger than me. I felt a loving, safe feeling that touches the core of my being. As though, I'm being completely surrounded by love with huge arms. Comforting thoughts surround me and I feel good about the person I am.

i am terrible at putting my thoughts into words, but ... it was fun and i loved the music and singing. the pastor held my attention with his sermon in that it was not just "preaching," but teaching.

the people were very nice .one lady talked to me for a long time after service. i later joined her home group. the pastor said, someone here has been abused by a church, u r crushed, GOD wants u to no he loves u just the way u r. thank u jesus ,i needed that. The regular pastor was away that weekend and the guest speaker was a missionary from Turkey. He held up a Turkish flag and said "I hope you all have one of these hanging in your living room by the end of the year." And I thought "What has my friend got me into? Some kind of cult? LOL He said "you have to come back to see the regular pastor, you'll love him." I'm very thankful that I did. I was saved about 3 months later.

After the service we attended, we knew that this was the church for us, and we haven't gone anywhere since.

Biker rodeo. We had a lot of fun, both me and my children.

Pulled in the parking lot, and you could hear the rocking music from outside. We were a small church then, and I really liked that it was casual, yet totally Biblical, and the people seemed genuine.

pastor gave me a word of knowledge

I WAS IMPRESSED WITH THE FUN WAY THE PASTOR PRESENTED HIS SERMON. IN LAYMAN'S TERMS MAKING IT MUCH BETTER TO UNDERSTAND AND GRASP MEANING OF THE BIBLE

We liked the acceptance of different cultures, the laid back atmosphere and the humor of the Pastor

It was a confirmation from God that we should begin attending this church. The Sr. Pastor received a word from the Lord and we really felt it was regarding our situation.

Friendly, family oriented, biblical teaching

I knew this was the church home I'd been seeking.

I liked the ease of it very much

Great preaching, great worship music, a feeling that we'd found "home." I was very touched by the sermon. We wanted more and finally broke from the Catholic church, which we had attended all our lives but were not satisfied with.

Welcome home.

We recently left another church when we first visited the church we currently attend. There were LOTS of reasons that we left, so those were at the forefront of our minds when we started looking for a new church. The pastor was starting a series teaching - which had been a problem before because the weekly installment was always a repeat of week one. However, it was a good teaching - solid and adhered to Biblical truths. We risked coming a second time and it, too, was fresh. The other observation that I made the first week was the large number of people that I already knew in this church from another organization that I am a part of. It felt like 'home' from the beginning. One couple was very helpful to us by showing us where the classrooms were for our 3, 4, and 11 year olds. We never felt pressured to put them there and we also felt free to keep our baby with us.

Vineyard was a little different and much smaller 10 years ago and I remember feeling very calm and peaceful as I listened to the sermon.

Our first visit to the church left us with the desire to return. We felt the Lord's presence but at the same time wondered how many of the other people felt it (so many seemed unmoved-and not because they did not raise their hands). The worship was inspiring and made it easier to focus on The Lord. Opportunities for prayer were readily available. It seemed to have the balance we were looking for. There was some concern about so many people wearing jeans but that was a minor concern since the clothes do not determine someone's stand with God. It was refreshing to be in a church where it was not the norm for people to bring in their coffee and donuts for praise and worship. The teaching was interesting, relevant and seemed biblically accurate.

I could feel the presence of the Holy Spirit and the pastor seemed very real and not detached from the people.

I felt a very warm and welcome feeling at GC Vineyard

i enjoyed the praise and worship

I really enjoyed the pastor in how he taught the bible. The music was what I listened to at the church I attended. The people were very warm and friendly. But the main thing was during the service the Holy Spirit said this is where you belong.

I felt the presence of the Holy Spirit during worship

my wife and i both enjoyed the service, good teaching with a humble teacher. my wife and i have different backgrounds and we both really enjoyed the non religious format of the church.

it was interesting as it was totally different from any other church that I have ever attended. I especially liked the music.

i felt very at home, the people seemed very real

When I first went to VCF, I felt very welcomed and I could truly feel the Lord's presence in the church!!

Scared, but glad to be back in a church. Impressed with the number of children's activities. Alone and a little lonely. Happy that this church was spirit filled.

Our first visit was "bittersweet...." We were in a transitional place in our lives concerning our previous Church home and a break from our denominational affiliation. We were completely depending on the Holy Spirit to give us direction and confirmation of where He was leading us. In our first visit with VCF we felt like we were finally "home." We felt like the "chains" of traditional Church Worship and "Religion" were finally broken. We loved the freedom of expression in Praise and Worship. We loved the music. We loved how Pastor Tom brought the message in a natural, down to Earth tone,... not "preachy."

I basically answered this in question 12. I just sat in that first time service and “soaked it up”! I can still tell you the passage of Scripture and the basic message given that day! I KNEW immediately that this was the place I wanted to be. I also like the style of singing and music. I felt like I had found “HOME”! It was really “a God thing.” I was an active member of another church but had a certain level of discontentment, but was involved in ministry and had obligations. I was feeling spiritually hungry although I spend daily time in reading Scripture, devotions and prayer. I didn’t realize how much I wasn’t being fed until I came to the Vineyard that first time. I was like a starving woman who stumbled upon a banquet and I couldn’t get enough.

very exciting, fulfilling, enjoyed the music and felt like I got a lot out of the message. felt like a good place to be able to learn and help the community

It was awesome! Tom really preached the Word and the worship was great. We found freedom from years of legalism.

when I first attended this Church it was the welcoming family type feeling and the teaching of the Pastor that drew me in. I really needed that feeling of closeness that the Members and Pastor gave me. Like I was instantly a part of the family. however with the growth of the church and other things I feel we have lost this aspect of this church. The teaching is still wonderful, I have learned more listening to Pastor Tom than any other Church I have attended in my life. I feel this Church has grown to big to have the closeness and family feeling I so desperately desire. Through Illness and marital problems I have pretty much quit coming and nobody has really even cared to question why or to see if everything was okay. that was not the church I started going to 5 years ago. Before someone would have been in contact with me. I believe this is why so many of the original members who were there when I started coming have moved on.

it was cool good feeling veryfriendly

Services were being held in a school at the time which seemed very strange to me. However when I got there everyone was helpful, very friendly and made me feel very welcome. I was really comfortable right from the start. I really liked the pastor, Tom Pauquette. His sermon had a lot to say and I liked the way he said it. I felt right at home and like I belonged there (even in a school auditorium).

I ENJOYED THE SERMON AND WENT AWAY THINKING ABOUT THE SERMON ALL WEEK. I WAS LEFT ALONE TO WORSHIP AND NOT ASKED TO DO ANYTHING BUT WORSHIP GOD. THE PEOPLE WERE HELPFUL AND KIND THE SERVICE WAS EASY TO FOLLOW I DIDN’T FEEL LOST OR OUT OF PLACE. I COULD DRESS ANY WAY I WANTED AND STILL FEEL AT HOME IN THE CHURCH. WHEN WE STARTED GOING TO OUR CHURCH WE FELT LIKE WE WERE HOME, WHERE WE WERE SUPPOSED TO BE. WE FELT THAT THE PASTOR WAS AND IS A GREAT TEACHER.



It was a pleasant loving atmosphere, great music good fellowship. However unpleasant for me as well in some aspects because The Lord was wanting me to leave the current church I was at but I didn't want to leave the people I loved (my family had went their for 6 years) they were my family as well, however once I accepted what The Lord was doing in my life (a year later) I said YES LORD and changed churches. The other church I attended closed down 3 months later and half the congregation transfer here including the Senior Pastor. Praise God HE is good.

I thought it was small, but that the worship quality was high for the size of the church. I also saw familiar faces from other involvements and it was good to see those people. I was terrified. I grew up in a very small conservative Methodist church. This church was large and I didn't know anyone. I lived to sing in the choir in my old church.... I didn't even know the music for this one. But I went anyway. The people at the door were friendly, but I sat alone. The worship team started playing and the music was easy to learn. Then to my shock they switched to a hymn. I felt like God was leading me there and giving me have a little comfort. I had chosen this church for my husband, not for myself. So He showed me that I would become comfortable there as well.

I really liked the praise & worship service along w/the message!!!!!! The friendly parishners.... also, come as you are!!!! It's a wonderful church!!!!!! Grandchild loved it too!!!

My first visit was relaxing, comfortable, non-threatening, edifying, "a breath of fresh air."

Warmth, Gods presence, Pastor Tom does not preach at you, he teaches out of the Bible. I feel God has lead me there to help me understand God's word. This has always been my prayer.

My son and I decided to try the new Vineyard around the corner from our house. When arriving we went to the info desk and found out that we were in between services for the morning. (We went the time we also go to our church) Anyway, I said that we would go home and come back. The lady said okay, but you could tell that she did not think we would be back. When we came back 30 minutes later, she was very surprised and we proved her wrong. It was a great experience and my son loved the Sunday school class. It was much smaller than he was used too.

I loved it. I loved the energy of the worship, and the heart-felt expression the worship leader had in his singing. The sermon was deep and yet practical to my life. I felt inspired as I listened to it. The size of the church was the only negative - its pretty large and I didn't know very many people there at the beginning.

I felt comfortable and at home

I found the service to be informal, yet genuine. The pastor was very friendly, knowledgeable and used humor. During the service the pastor stopped at the sound of a

siren from outside and asked for a very specific prayer for someone claiming he had an impression or feeling that we should. I found this disturbing at the time but talked with the pastor and did some reading to understand where he was coming from.

I most enjoyed and related to the message that the Pastor shared, was able to relate, and touched my heart in the areas that was actually going on in my life during that time and now. The teaching, not preaching or lecturing.

very pleasant

i like everything but the music

Casual, friendly, accepting, not too long, warm

I thought the place was crowded; seating was hard to get. I enjoyed the music (contemporary Christian), and I thought the message was very down-to-earth.

A bit apprehensive at first, but the church grew on me quickly with the music ministry and the sense of humor of the pastor.

The service felt a passion for worship, the pastor was very engaging and made the message very personal.

The various church representatives as I entered the doors into the church's main sanctuary smiled and greeted me with welcoming warmth. After the services, as I was exiting the main area the pastor greeted me and extended a friendly hug and took a few minutes out to listen to my concerns. Considering the struggles I was facing at that time; some of the church members and pastor on that initial visit were just the spiritual medicine I needed.

active, alive, sold out to God Not as openly friendly as I'd like. That one took a bit of time.

The place was standing-room-only. As it turned out, this was to be the last service in that space because of the enormous growth. The people were very friendly and several offered me their seat.

enjoyed the informal atmosphere & acceptance of everyone, including friendliness

People were friendly and inviting. The sense that God was involved.

AWESOME GLORIOUS people are very friendly Pastor Tom was/is amazing i love my church

pastor is personal from the pulpit and in person

It was awesome. I liked the pastor's delivery and his passion for bringing the Holy Spirit. I knew it was the place for me even though I didn't want to leave my new friends from the other Vineyard church. At that first service, we asked Pastor Tom to marry us. Scared, but happy to be attending church again. Enjoyed Vineyard b/c of the outward expression of joy and faith and the many opportunities for my daughter to get involved. Felt the presence of the Holy Spirit and the peace that comes from walking in the Lord's will.

It was great, it was the first time that I had attended a church, since I was young. I had accepted Christ into my life, 3 months prior to finding a church that I liked, and it was more about the worship service, and the message than anything else. Our church, when there is someone new that attends they go out of their way, tripping over themselves to say hello and talk to you. Thankfully, the 1st time that I attended, that didn't happen, because I wasn't really there to make friends that day, I just wanted to worship God. All the other stuff came later.

It was different from the church we had attended their dress code the way they sang their music and the way the pastor preached.

I was impressed by the speaking abilities of the pastor and his relevant delivery. Like the pastor's sense of humor.

I initially liked the Pastor's message and his attitude, I thought the church was too casual but many people really liked their church so we got involved more to test it and end up loving the church.

It was a reunion weekend, so we got some flavor for the origin of the church. The pastor had a good sense of humor and the worship was good. There was no sermon, per se, since it was a reunion weekend for the church.

I remember not being too sure about the casualness of everything, from the service style to the dress of the congregation. I was also a little leary of all the contemporary music. After 3 years, I totally love the music, the style of dress and lack of respect for the "sanctuary" still bothers me, but I try to leave that in God's hands and let Him worry about it. The preaching/teaching was awesome from the start!

Christmas Day very friendly, not a normal seating arrangement, different people reading from the Bible, a few Christmas songs, short service, very homie atmosphere.

I walked in and felt I was home. We "shopped" for a church and God led us to the Vineyard. Pastor Tom is an incredible leader. See #12-"other" A church that was small, friendly, and a pastor that seemed down to earth and not "preachy".

At our age, the music seemed a little loud and the size was a little intimidating, but the people seemed friendly and caring and not overly pushy about our commitment to be members, as we found in many other churches.

we were meeting in a school, very personal, had been looking for a new church after relocating, felt the presence of the lord

Although I had previously attended a sister church, I was suprized that the service was very different. I believe the teachings are much the same and the church's focus is also the same though.

I thought they were the "Holy Rollers" I had always heard about. I just snickered the first time I visited thought the folks were alittle strange and decided that this place was not for me. I now know that I can be counted as one of the strange ones!

The attitude and atmosphere was very open to worship. You could feel the presence of the Holy Spirit there.

The worship was awesome, great music, great message. People were friendly. Great experience

Friendly greeting, made me feel at home, smaller congregation, loving feeling from all attending. Was disapointed that the service was only 1 hr long. I came from a 2+hr church service. I'm ok with it now, most of the time it is over an hour.

We had come out of a very bad situation with our first church so we ran to the largerst, denominational church that we were familiar with. We loved it because the staff acted and believed similarly to how we did. It was the prfect church, until I got there!!! Actually, it was perfect for that honeymoon period, about two years.

I thought the music was a bit much, at first, now I love it. I liked the message and the friendly people.

They were really small then,... just about 50 people. Very personable. Reminded me of what my youth group had been like when I was growing up. The youth group had been the only reason I had stayed at the church my family attended. A few minutes into the service and I knew I was home.

During my first visit I was struck by the outward expressions of the people in their love for Jesus, their genuine concern for me and my walk with Christ and their acceptance of me as I am. They weren't concerned with pushing me into an experience with God but more in sharing in that walk with me. I felt I was genuinely welcome in the church as a community.

Loud, lousy and unfamiliar music, but great communication and preaching. I don't remember how we were received by the congregation. We were a Christian family when we started.

Disappointment. I did not want to leave my church, as I was involved in ministry. But, I believe in being obedient to my husband. This church has very different practices of worship, fellowship, and education. There is room for improvement.

down to earth, friendly, good teaching, relaxed

My initial visit was a very positive experience. Another church member made me feel so welcome and helped my toddler feel very comfortable in the children's ministry.

The Word was preached, the people were kind and it was inclusive of all people.

Warm, friendly and spirit filled

Excited! It felt very much like the Vineyard Columbus in the early years.

I enjoyed it very much, the atmosphere was casual, the message relevant and for the most part people were friendly towards strangers.

It was a "new church plant...." we enjoyed the pastor, the worship, and the diverse body.

VERY OPEN, CORPORATE WORSHIP WAS UPLIFTING AND INSPIRATIONAL.  
WELCOMED, ARRIVED WITH EXPECTATION OF SOMETHING MORE THAN  
PREVIOUSLY EXPERIENCED IN A CHURCH

Very warm and open. Most impressive was the fact that there are people in this world who realize nobody is perfect and the Vineyard people accept us,... flaws and all!!! I have many flaws. I do not believe we will be perfect till we make it to Heaven. We are still human beings until then.

seemed friendly. Was the right denomination. Good for families/kids too.

### **Xer Responses**

I asked a co-worker if she knew of any deaf/hearing impaired church services. She mentioned Vineyard Church of Columbus. So, the first Saturday of January 2006 I decide to drive out of the blue and go find this church, not knowing where the heck I was driving. When I got there, I was about 15 minutes late, I fit right in with the deaf because we always show after the music. Anyway, when I first stepped into the church I got an overpowering feeling that God was present. And to this day I still feel this way. Given the fact that I'm experiencing "sick feelings" due to the spiritual warfare. God is still in control.

It was a little uncomfortable. It was very large (I wasn't used to the screens) and I didn't know anyone there. I was unsure what to do and I felt out of place since everyone was dressed differently. (The churches I had went to as a child people dressed up for church.)

I was actually overwhelmed,... very large and alot of people, at first it did not seem so intimate however it became very intimate very quickly for me! Small groups and activities help this alot. However I also liked the size because of the many oppourtunities there were.

I had heard alot about The Vineyard and was really looking forward to going to service. That Sunday I took my 15 year old daughter too. I was looking for a new church as I attended a espiscopalion church for 10 years and was not happy. The devil did not want me there. It was everyting I hope it would be but the devil was telling me to leave. I started to think of excuses on why we should leave even though I wanted to be there. The sermon was speaking to me. The music was great. The building was amazing. I loved all it had to offer. the devil did not win. I stayed and my daughter loved it.

I had just moved to Columbus and a few months later after getting settled into the area, I started looking for a church. Checked out a few other churches but new inside they were not for me. The minute I walked into the Vineyard Church of Columbus it felt like home. No one had even said hello or welcome yet, but I knew that the Vineyard was for me, where God wanted me to be to grow. After the first service, I definately new it was home. I loved the size of it, all of the information to get connected, the band and worship music and the sermon. I now have an extended family within the community of the church! The size of the church was intimidating but after coming inside and seeing hundreds of people around my age I quickly began to feel comfortable. My brother soon joined me and we've been attending JH ever since.

I felt close to God during worship and was surprised by how relevant the teaching was. I was shy so it was overwhelming to be "new" in a large crowd, but I was with a friend who had invited me. My friend had told me that this service (Joshua House) was the "best part" of her week. I thought it was definitely worth looking into, and it didn't take long before I decidede to keep going even on my own.

I liked it, it has been a while so I can't say for sure.

I was really drawn in by the worship music and the openness with which the people worshipped.

It was large and the people looked cool. The music was really good.

I first attended VCC when John Wimber was visiting from the Anaheim Vineyard. He gave his testimony and I was deeply impacted by it. I realized what it actually means to surrender your life to Jesus. The open atmosphere and casual dress was also plus.

At the Be it was the welcoming of the people. It was a small church that met in an old building downtown. The Vineyard was completely the opposite in size, but just as welcoming. I call the Vineyard a bigger Be. Both have the same feelings about them despite the vast difference in size.

I thought that the people that were attending this church lived their faith. They were close to Jesus. They were different than myself.

I sensed a powerful presence in the worship music

The church was informal which I really liked. You weren't scoffed at for not wearing a dress. Everyone was really friendly and seemed excited that we were there (like Christians should be). The music was fabulous and they had a great children's program for my daughter.

Very first impressions were that I didn't love it, but I didn't have any reason why. I think it was just different from what I was used to. It didn't take long before I loved it and it became home. I think a lot of the feel has to do with not knowing anyone. Once I knew people, I felt much better about the church.

I thought it was very large, but had a lot of energy. The preaching was very relevant and the worship was great.

People were friendly and positive. The service was excellent, great worship, great teaching, and there was space for prayer ministry at the end of the service. God's Spirit was really there.

I could sense that God's spirit was very present. Even though they were practicing some spiritual gifts that I had never encountered before, I sensed that it was alright. I didn't particularly like the worship or style, and I was not greeted by any of the people; however, the sermon was excellent, and I decided to come back again the following week. Though the church members did not do a particularly good job welcoming me, it was still a place where I could go to hear a good sermon on a Sunday night where I had no other leadership responsibilities (at the time, I was running a large, off-campus student Christian fellowship, and I felt like I needed to find a place apart from that group to just relax, experience God and receive teaching that I did not have to write or deliver). Eventually the church began to grow on me a little more, and, when I graduated and needed to move on from leading the student fellowship, I decided to start getting invested and connected with the Vineyard.

I felt like I was being "sold" the church..

At the time I wasn't impressed by the teacher, but was drawn into the (musical) worship environment. It was similar to my old church-genuine and passionate. It was satisfying and portrayed a sense of belonging but that all changed when the numbers increased turning into clichés

I enjoyed the people I met. The sermons did not make much sense at first. I really liked the strength of the community.

relevant, good teaching, good worship, a lot of people

I remember thinking that it reminded me a lot of the casual environment that I was used to in my parachurch group from HS. I liked that they spoke everyday language and talked about things that I could relate to. I liked that people wore jeans and that the worship was like what I heard on the radio.

Growing up in small Methodist churches, my first thought was “whoa, this is huge! and a little scary”. But then I was delighted to find young adults there that I hadn’t found in the churches I grew up in.

I had prayed before I attended this church & wanted the church I attended to be friendly. Several people came up & welcomed me/introduced themselves to me & I think that had the most impact of all.

It was welcoming and not pushy. An information pamphlet was given out and it explained the church. I felt welcomed and was a true welcome and not that false welcome most churches do when a stranger comes in.

My husband and I were searching for a Church together after we got married. After trying about 3 other Churches we ended with the Vineyard. It was different and the first sermon was about finding a home Church. We thought that was strange so we came back and the next 2 sermons was like he was expecting us and directly related to what was happening in our life so we kept going. We like it a lot!!

loved it - the message was meaningful and applicable and not over my head.

i was freaked out wondering why everyone was so nice and wanted to meet me. it was nothing like i had imagined church would be, very relaxed and welcoming.

I thought I had stepped into an episode of the Brady Bunch. (Marsha, Marsha, Marsha!)

Nervous, didn’t know anyone. But because it doesn’t mater what we wear and we could bring our coffee to church it was great. My sister has a church in Indiana that is a sister church to ours. They serve coffee there too.

We walked in to warm, welcoming people. The pastor made us laugh during the service. We didn’t feel “preached to”...it was a very straight forward, “This is how to apply God’s word to your life” approach, and my husband and I loved that.

It was nice. I loved the music

Standard Vineyard worship... songs, announcements, teaching, prayer/worship. I had an infant that keep me from the service but my husband like the service.

I was greeted as if I’ve been a regular member of the church. The pastor did not look or see himself as the church head, but when he talked it was amazing and inspiring. Pastor



Tom is indeed a vessel God is using.

Had been to many churches and really identified with Pastor Tom

friendly and loving

The worship and message felt comfortable and relevant, the people were very friendly a little to friendly from where I was at in my life.

The first thing I noticed about the GC Vineyard was how as people greeted me, they seemed genuinely glad to see me. I enjoyed the relaxed atmosphere of casual clothes. I loved the diversity of the church, it showed me that anyone was welcome. The music was upbeat and uplifting. The sermon was easy to understand and connect with. You could understand and apply the message even if you had never picked up a Bible before. Finally, I love(!) all the ways to stay connected to the church. Within 1 week of attending this church for the first time I received a phone call from a member, an email from the church, a welcome letter, I had checked out their website (more churches NEED this). After 1 visit I was as well informed of the opportunities for me to get involved and participate as a lifetime member. I also loved all the classes they offer. Education is important to me and I liked to see that the church took responsibility for helping me grow as a Christian.

I felt unsure due to the size of the church. I grew up in a much smaller church and community. I felt somewhat overwhelmed. The services I grew up with were much more subdued.

I was a little hesitant, nervous but since we were welcomed by so many, we felt at home!

The people were very friendly and I felt welcome even as a first time visitor/outsider.

My first visit was on a Sunday morning. Tom was preaching about his vision for the Vineyard Christian Fellowship Church. I remember being bored and couldn't get anything from the message. So, my first impression wasn't that good. But, it was just bad timing. We came in on the 3rd of 5 messages about his vision for this specific Church and as a visitor I couldn't get anything out of it. So, we gave it another chance later on and really enjoyed it.

There seemed to be a lot of people there. They seemed to actively be involved in the worship. I felt like I could semi-blend into the crowd, until someone greeted me personally. I found the sermon really enjoyable to listen too. The preacher was funny and very easy to relate to. And the church was not a very far drive from my home. I kept thinking "this is not church like I thought church was". I listened to the sermon and actually understood it and received new insights. When the invitation for prayer came, I didn't even know what it was, but felt compelled to follow those going up to the front. The woman who prayed for me listened to me and immediately understood the condemnation that was being put on me. When she prayed it away, I physically felt a

huge burden lift off of my heart. That was my first lesson in hearing Truth and actually experiencing the power of the Living God.

My first impression was that of a large group of people passionate about worshipping God through their singing, praying, preaching. This was evident in the worship service. Then I realized this group of believers was a very giving church of the time, talent, and finances. They were also missions oriented; around the world. I left with the impression that this is a place where I would like to belong to learn how to become a more dedicated follower of Christ.

I'd been burned by other churches before so although I was trying to be open minded, I was also very much on the defense. What eventually hooked me - and is something I respect to this day - is that pretty much every Sunday, while the pastors would be preaching from the Bible, they would look hard at the context, take you back in time to the culture of that day and bring in the original Hebrew and Greek. I've had many moments of being spiritually fed from other churches but The Vineyard fed me in ways that actually satisfied cravings that I only thought could be filled on a college campus.

The preaching was fantastic, and the worship was pure "Vineyard", although we didn't really like the singing. The congregation was the usual "Vineyard-casual-open-and-friendly."

Upon my first visit, I really liked the message, the setting and I felt the presence of God. I knew that I was in a judge-free zone, and I loved the atmosphere & the people, as well as the message.

We met as a small group initially in someone's living room. We liked our pastor (now also our current pastor) and the people with whom we were meeting.

It was prior to becoming a Christian and I was a little taken back by the style of worship. I had gone mainly to Catholic and Methodist services in the past, so to see people raising their hands, a band with drums and an electric guitar was confusing to my senses. The pastor spoke in a way that was down to earth and felt like he wasn't "preaching" to me, but more teaching me.

I felt at home. Everyone is very friendly, and was truly interested in me as a person (not as a number).

the members were very friendly and we could feel the spirit of the Lord in the service.

I was a little apprehensive but I went with a friend who had been there. I liked the style of worship and the Pastor was relevant.

I felt like I could get lost in the large congregation, which was good at the time since I just wanted to observe. I loved the music and the minister really taught instead of just preached. I enjoyed it.

Full of Joy. The worship was finally something I could relate to. From the second that I walked in the door I felt comfortable. Not being forced to accept something that I was not ready to accept.

It was small, people were friendly and not put-offish, the pastor was engaging and I found what he had to say helpful.

It was friendly and open, felt welcomed

warm, welcomed, acceptance

Wow, it's been so long ago. Having gone to a Free Methodist church during my junior high/high school years, the Vineyard was a breath of fresh air. I liked the casual dress (I dress up all week for work), but what really captured me was that it was a church where I was accepted for all my sin and pain. I don't feel the need to put on heels to act happy all the time, nor do I feel scrutinized by the "click" of elders experienced at the Free Methodist church. This church feels like home and its attendees, my family. quality teaching from the Word, not flashy and all socio-economic classes were present,... all positives for us

small, intimate, they are kind, but i dont like being the center od attention. i like to blend into the background

friendly, not aggresive, large enough to blend in, casual, the service/music was modern, the pastor's message was excellent

i was nervous to go. but felt perfectly comfortable once we walked in the door. there was no pressure. the pastor was wearing the EXACT outfit my husband was wearing so it was very funny to see them look like twins. it seemed open, nonthreatening, comfortable. i liked it.

Unsure, but confident this was where we were supposed to be.

wonderful it felt like home and family

By the time this church was formed, I had already been in the Vineyard "Organization" for awhile and was looking for a smaller more "cozy" version.

Felt like home. Felt close to the pastor.. he was very "down to earth." I understood ... he delivered the message in a way that was clear to me and used his own life stories to relay the message.... music was upbeat. my kind of church. :) Oh, and other members there were very friendly.

I was hesitant because I assumed the church would feel too big to me (our previous church was about 200 people and this one is about 1000). But when we walked through the doors, people greeted us, the atmosphere was casual, and there were people of all

different ages/ethnicities/types all worshipping together. My first thought was: “people actually seem like they LIKE being here!” I saw young people covered in tattoos sitting next to an Asian couple who were clearly over 80 years old. It was a beautiful thing. My husband and I knew right then that we would stay.

My next door neighbors had attended the church a few times and commented about how much they liked it and how Spirit filled it seemed to be. I wasn't actively searching for a church, but didn't feel like I belonged at the one I was attending. People were very friendly and made me feel very welcome. I liked the music and felt like it was a very “down to earth” place and understood what was being said. I was pregnant with my first child and always had believed in God, but had only just discovered that it didn't necessarily mean that I was a Christian.... I needed to explore and learn a LOT more. I was a young teen visiting with my parents and I must have really enjoyed the service because I said to them “I don't know what church you are going to but this is where I will be going from now on.”

Coming from a Catholic background,... my experience was very surprising. The casual attire was not the main issue nor was the “hand-in-the-air” worship but the way the scripture was presented in a clear and applicable way along with the encouragement to seek a personal relationship with God

A comfortable feeling. I grew up non denominational and wanted to find a place where the pastor was real and taught the Word. I found it-

A warm but strangely odd experience. I came from a very straight laced formal church background and coming to the Vineyard was a definite culture shock.

Very upbeat, nontraditional, fun and kept my attention throughout the service. it seemed friendly inviting and while attending the service felt a true presence of God. people there seemed “real” not so much of a “church going” type

The first thoughts that came to mind was that this is a friendly and out going church that wanted to spread Jesus's message

Incredibly friendly. Genuine, authentic connection with people besides the pastor/staff. The experience was real, non-threatening, and very focused on connecting with God. The emphasis on the community was also very strong and had a big impact.

It was smaller than the previous church I'd attended.

I was asked to attend by my girlfriend and was a bit anxious and nervous. It is very difficult to attend a strange church. I had an awesome experience.... it was just what I had been looking for, though I didn't really know I was looking.

Very friendly, and inviting. Everyone was very polite and nice, and smiles.

Different. The speaker used humor and an easy going demeanor to communicate his message.

We were very welcomed and we felt at ease and the teaching was wonderful and had us hooked.

Friendly, open

Casual yet intelligent. Heartfelt. Intentional about what they were doing and willing to express the reasons why they did things the way they did. Welcoming to guests without being obnoxious.

It was a bit scary at first because it wasn't like a boring Methodist sermon with hymns and no emotion. It was fun and interactive with songs that actually had a beat, and a band that was pretty cool. I'm 30, not dead. So I appreciated the band, the smiling faces, and the sermon that was poignant but not a total sleep-fest. I think a first time at any event or activity can be a bit intimidating but everyone at the Vineyard was welcoming and friendly.

Loved it loved it loved it

The first 2 times we visited the pastor didn't preach which bothered us. (They just had prayer/worship etc.) We didn't go back for a long time (went to another church) but eventually went back. We liked hearing the pastor speak.

I liked the preacher and the worship.

It was baptism weekend and Jason Coker did the sermon. I think 14 people responded to the message to get saved.

we found out about the vineyard through a lady pumping gas at a station. we had just had another bad church experience at a baptist church and were bemoaning the fact that there didnt seem to be any churches worth going to anymore. this woman overheard our conversation, apologized for eavesdropping, and invited us to teh vineyard. she seemed so genuinely happy and kind that we had to go check it out. i guess it is rather hard to put this into cut-and-dry details, but as soon as we walked in, we felt at home. it was this little whitewashed building in a rather dodgy part of columbus, but the people inside were truly joyful to be there, not just your typical "wife dragged me here today" kind of attitudes. pastor tom and denny were kind and welcoming, actually had time to talk to us (gone are those days!) and everything just felt real, humble, and home. i was expecting my first baby at the time, and we were facing financial hurdles, health issues, etc. when silvia was born, pastor called us and said we had some stuff at the church. we didnt know what he meant, thinking that we had left a coat or a bible... when we arrived, there was a huge gift basket full of baby clothes, diapers, etc. it was completely anonymous, and we will never forget whatever kind soul(s) did that for us. it felt like a shaft of sunlight in a dark and greedy world- two struggling Christians young people out on their own, being

blessed by some nameless benefactor(s) anyhow.... since we've been back (now in the big church, with many, many more people) it has lost a tad of its homey personal feeling, but it is still there more so than even smaller churches we have recently experienced. we love that there are things to do- family things, men's outings, etc, all casual and low-key. we love that there are missions trips and youth group and all of that... but what we love the most is the HEART for others in this church. pastor stephen and his well drilling in india, cleanup in the forgotten wastelands of the south, food and supplies to the poor in appalachia.... it is what Christ intended His church to be, and we can all be a part of it thru and with vineyard.

I remember I was very nervous since my last visit to a church was when I turned away from God. I remember really being touched by God & feeling comforted by Him that He still loved me & that nothing I had done had changed that. I think I cried a lot the first dozen times I was there.

I Thought it was a fun place to be It was not like your A typical church. Its the vineyard you would have to go to see what I mean

My first experience was nice. I had attended another Vineyard church prior to this and had expected acceptance and love. I felt exactly that.

IT WAS AMAZING. I HAD NEVER FELT CLOSER TO JESUS THAN I HAD UNTIL THAT DAY. I REALLY ENJOYED THE SERVICE AND THE PASTOR AND THE WHOLE ATMOSPHERE OF THE CHURCH

The sermon was real. No special effects. And the pastor was approachable.

The style of worship was much freer than the conservative church setting I grew up in. It was uncomfortable at first, but as time passed, I felt released of the embarrassment to participate in the clapping and self-expression. I like the personal interaction between the pastor and the congregation. The atmosphere was/is very non-judgemental, another church aspect that was unlike my childhood church. That's been a freeing feeling as well. A little uneasy at first, because we didn't know anyone. But we really enjoyed the style of worship and how everyone made us feel welcome.

Amazing! Lots of young families. A great mix of ages, but mainly young adults. Casual, inviting, friendly. Out-of-the-ordinary.

i liked that the members were not too intrusive or pressuring. they were friendly and welcoming, but didn't come over to my house afterwards, like some do. i like to be an observer at church and not really a participator. everyone was nice, but not too nice. also, love the more modern music, and don't care for hymns per se. they have words that i can relate to and understand. they play guitars, etc.

I haven't found a church as of yet that I can relate with it's members and have a great leader. It's hard to find a church that isn't either way out in right or left field in practice.

The church I last attended was just a little too liberal for my liking. The minister typically spoke in circles overkilling his point and therefore I really didn't enjoy or listen to his sermons.

Prior to Vineyard we attended our family's church. We never felt at "home" like it was our church. The first service at Vineyard we both knew beyond any doubt that this was our church. We knew God had lead us there and we were "sold."

I attended first back in 2001 but left after the first visit. Why? Because the worship service was irrelevant in the selection and style of music. Also, the teacher for my child was kind of rude.

excitement, unsure of what to do

It was charismatic but not pentecostal.

I felt very comfortable with the setting and felt like the church embraced a similar vision to my own.

exciting, new, alone in a big crowd, unsure of what to do

exciting, nervous, unsure of what to do, where to go

nice, welcoming, good preaching, contemporary worship style, genuine people

### **Millennial Responses**

I really enjoyed the music, and the sermon. They were aimed towards a younger audience, but the adults also seemed to enjoy it.

I thought that it was very warm and loving. I felt comfortable at that church. It was the first time in years that i felt comfortable in a church. It was a very simple, country church that was very family oriented.

relaxed, different

Jeff Anderson lead worship. The second week i was there I had him pray for me, and I'll never forget what he told me. I had a few other friends there, but none really that were very close. I was attending a Methodist church at the time as well helping to lead worship. I remember saying that I was a missionary in a methodist church, but my real family was at Joshua house.

i don't remember exactly. I used to go by myself to the service and would usually find someone i knew.

I felt true joy and freedom and felt really welcomed and cared for by the people there. I loved that people could worship however they wanted to and the message was very relevant and impactful.

I was surprised by the large size of the church but I related because it was similar to my old home church. I remember enjoying the worship a lot and the pastor delivered a great message

The church was kind of monotonous (spelling?), the worship was not too exciting and I felt the sermon was just so-so. Perhaps I came on a “bad” day, or maybe I needed more coffee in my system. I found myself missing a more intense service.

When I first came to the Vineyard, I felt overwhelmed. This was the biggest church I had seen in person, and I was afraid that I would just get lost in the crowd. The worship experience was amazing. I experienced the Holy Spirit for the first time, and the feeling was indescribable.

A little intimidating - their beliefs and practices were generally the same as the evangelical church I had grown up in, but there was a lot more emphasis on the holy spirit, which was a weird experience for me.

I went to a young adult service, it was amazing to be in a room with hundreds of people that were my age that meet weekly to worship and study God.

The worship was contemporary, and there were faces that I haven't seen in a while. I felt somewhat out of place because of feeling new there.

The church was small and people were friendly. I really enjoyed the laid back atmosphere of the round tables and chairs that were set up vs. in a row. Also, the worship through music was great and the message was relevant.

I was taken by how down to earth the pastor was and how well he related to the congregation. The praise and worship was on it too which was a major plus for me. Finally! I had been to several churches and never felt welcomed. When I walked into the Vineyard, I felt at home. There was a diverse group of people and everyone seemed comfortable. Most importantly, I was met by the Holy Spirit in a powerful way. There was no doubt I was where I needed to be!

It felt new, but like home.

I grew up in a very structured and conservative 3CU church. VCF is very modern and relaxed. I was a little uncomfortable with the contemporary style of worship, but quickly grew to love it.

I thought the pastor was funny and the music ok... the ppl seemed somewhat genuine very laid back.



I thought that it was large but not too large, and the pastor seemed nice. It was a very relaxed and laid back atmosphere. The people seemed very welcoming and glad to see us.

I was very pleased. I felt welcome by all and was thrilled with the service. The music was great and the message was very clear.

welcoming and interesting.... strong presence of god.... unlike what i grew up with  
The Sunday morning message was more than three points and a prayer. The teaching, almost on an academic level, impacted me most.

I felt that it was small and people were friendly

My first visit to this church was incredible! The worship was awesome and the presence of God was just heavy in the room - I was in tears. The message was so down to earth and so applicable to my life. I'd never been so grabbed by a service in my entire life. After moving to a new area of Columbus, we drove around to see what churches were in our community (feeling strongly about the importance of living and worshipping in the same community). We had heard good things from friends who attended Vineyard churches and this was the first of the churches we saw that we visited. We visited in a Sun. morning service and were impressed by the comparative diversity of the community (not all white, but there also seemed to be a wide range of socioeconomic and educational levels--something that is important to us). We were looking for a church with an emphasis on small groups and on servant evangelism, two things that were mentioned in the announcement portion. The pastor's message did a great job avoiding "Christian-ese" or the kind of insider rhetoric you find in a lot of churches that essentially excludes people who didn't grow up in the church. Also, he did an amazing job combining a kind of intellectual thoughtfulness with an ability to communicate in simple, clear, and effective terms. These were all things we were looking for specifically after coming from a church that didn't do them or didn't do them well.

Coming to the Vineyard after attending a Presbyterian church for years, I really didn't like the Vineyard at all. It was completely opposite of what I came from. I started attending the high school youth group and over time I fell in love with it and now can't ever see myself leaving.

The Vineyard is a fun church that connects to people unlike any other church I have been to.

The setting of the service was very informal, and the people seemed to really care about being there. The people were also very real/authentic.

Comfortable, accepting, come as you are, relevant.

felt at home

## APPENDIX E

### OPEN-ENDED RESPONSES TO RESEARCH QUESTION 3A

#### **How has your perception or image of Christianity changed since participation in your current church?**

##### **Boomer Responses**

My perception of what God wants to do through my life and through His Body, the Church, has sharpened immensely. My focus has become more outward, and I have seen that a church can actually have an impact on the community which it serves.

Having a Christian community is so integral to living a Christian life. A good Bible based church with teaching and instruction has been incredible for me in my new life in Christ. I've always felt spiritual and connected to my God. This dates back to the days as a child I would attend church, Sunday school, and catechism on Saturday afternoons.

I guess I thought my family would embrace Christianity more as opposed to how they really behave which is to act like I have sprouted a 4th head or something.

As I get older, I see more people that call themselves Christian who aren't, but I also know that the label isn't as important as truth that lives in our hearts and lives. Actually, I have become more tolerant of people who 'mess up' in their Christian walk and I am more able to offer support to them.

I have a much broader view of the Christian faith than I had previously. I come from a Plymouth Brethren background and the Vineyard was quite a different experience for me. My grandmother was a Pentecostal so it wasn't a totally new experience

I have only started attending the Vineyard – my children and I have had some bad experience with our old church. Both my children have problems with being judged for their choices. Both girls are very afraid of getting involved in church again – my husband says that he might go to church at the Vineyard some day just don't push him. So I am taking my steps to getting into church very slow. We were very active at our last church.

If I was judgmental toward other Christians before attending this church, I am more concentrated on my own walk with God now, rather than looking at others with a critical eye.

I'm much less focused on theology, and more focused on the relationship aspects of Christianity.

I felt that Christians were supposed to be perfect, I knew that I wasn't, but everyone else was suppose to be a better Christian than myself. I was a little disappointed when I realized there is only one perfect Christian.

I feel like our current church is more accepting and less judgmental

I'm on fire again for God

I see the world and other people all as God's. This is partially due to my attending the Vineyard as well. Although I had lost a lot of faulty thinking at the Assemblies Church. I see the church as one big church that includes all denominations of Christian thought. If Christ is your Savior and you have asked for forgiveness of your sins and you are continually trying to walk the walk, then you are my brother /sister!!!!

As I have attended the attitude of the people at Vineyard has matured quite a bit, there is a better mix of age groups. It is much more diverse in that respect.

### **Xer Responses**

My perception has changed in that I'm much more aware of the hypocrisy of many Christians and avoid participating in the "organized hypocrisy" of the far-right wing of the Church. I'm orthodox in my beliefs but orthodoxy includes God's grace, something many Christians forget about.

Although I have been a Christian for the majority of my life, my current church has shown me how my faith can be relevant in my current culture and not just a place where I go once a week.

We have visited churches off and on since, but my husband who was a very new Christian (grew up Catholic) was totally turned off by the way we were treated by "Christians". It has been difficult to get him to go regularly since.

I thought God was all about judgment not love. I went to a Bible study where I learned that God is more love than judgment.

I feel more accepting of other denominations and or behavior of other denominations and how they might worship and/or pray.

Well now I am able to see varying degrees of Christians. There are old school Christians that believe that they preach from the Bible, however, they also believe that they never sin (which is a contradiction), and there are still Christians that believe that they are better than everyone else, and therefore judge everyone that they meet, and then there are Vineyard Christians, that actually preach & live what the Bible teaches us.

I am more confident in being a Christian.

My perception has changed with respect to my understanding of Christianity and how Christians interact. Prior to coming to the Vineyard I had almost this cultish perception of Christians (i.e. they were all friends, there never seemed to be any conflict). I have now learned that although you may love your brother in Christ, there is a good chance you still will not like them as a person outside of your common faith. For some reason this has been hard for me to accept.

### **Millennial Responses**

I was led to compromise in some areas because of some loosey goosey sentiments toward certain sin issues. Instead of calling sin what it really is, ugly filthy disgusting vile distasteful rebellious putrid stinking retched evil sin, it was called issues, struggles, something everyone goes through, etc. it sounded like sin was played down to just an inconvenience toward God and not much else.

I viewed it positively before, but now I view it in a different way. I see Christians as people of hope and action rather than just as comforters or friends, now.

My church didn't change my opinion on other Christians. Being open minded and observant of other Christians has shown me negative aspects of Christians.

My perception has remained the same.

## APPENDIX F

### OPEN-ENDED RESPONSES TO RESEARCH QUESTION 4

#### What are the current needs in your life?

##### **Boomer Responses**

Dealing with the emotional and spiritual needs of my grown children and grandchildren

Raising a troubled grandson

Concern for unsaved family members

We are relocating again, so looking for a new church.

Continue my spiritual growth

Need to be connected to other Christians.

Spiritual needs always

Wish I was married

Time management. I want to have more time for deeper study and for projects related to raising money for particular mission organizations I'm involved with

To worship God

Recently in a car accident and the insurance company wants to total my car.

Growing closer to my relationship with God

Life after divorce care

Thank you Jesus for providing

I consider myself extremely blessed but always desire an even closer walk with God.

Really... all the real life stuff

Remaining in close relationship with my Lord

Raising grandchildren

None

## **Xer Responses**

The health of my parents

Extended family issues

Make time for devotions

Spouse has MS, sometimes bad symptoms

Salvation for extended family members

I am very content with my life.

Childhood abuse/counseling

I can honestly say that life is pretty sweet. I am so blessed! I have a wonderful healthy family, a loving marriage, and a positive outlook on life. I am truly so very blessed!

## **Millennial Responses**

I'm trying to get a career in film.

Need for a place to serve in a way that directly connects with these kinds of needs in other people!!! God has blessed us a lot.

## APPENDIX G

## OPEN-ENDED RESPONSES TO RESEARCH QUESTION 5

**What do you believe are the 3 greatest needs of your generation?**

**Boomer Responses**

1) Connectivity 2) Usefulness 3) Inner Healing

Taking care of the less fortunate people, accepting Christ and living life as a Christian.

To feel loved, to have a hope for the future, and to discover a life in which true happiness is not bought or sold and which is the same yesterday, today and tomorrow no matter what circumstances we face.

1. Realization of the need for God 2. Churches that genuinely teach the Bible and the Truth. 3. Classes that give quality teaching and instruction. We don't need more "fellowship" or "fun" activities.

I believe all generations need: 1. to feel that someone cares about them. Our society is so fast paced we hardly notice the person beside us. 2. we all need good role models. I know I had become complacent with morals----the everyone does it syndrome. But at the Vineyard, Rich Nathan is very strong on the right way to live. That empowers me to try to be a better Christian.

focus on someone other than self, clearer understanding of right and wrong.

spiritual awakening understanding of the gospel resulting in relationship with God  
expression of kingdom reality

Life transforming relationship with God Affordable healthcare National security

1. Security in my elder years. 2. Knowing I can obtain healthcare and won't be a burden to my children. 3. Fear of loneliness and inability to maintain an active lifestyle.  
leadership, integrity, direction

Seeing Christianity and God as relevant. Help building relationships. Training in handling finances.

Accountability, Christian support, and weight management. Really, have you ever seen a fatter subset of the population than Christians in Church. Gluttony is the prevalent sin no one talks about.

friends good family

To KNOW God personally To be less materialistic and to care about others eternal destiny

1) Salvation 2) Salvation 3) Salvation

1. Knowledge 2. Fellowship 3. Personal time with God, one on one.

That non-Christians see that Christians are not judgmental. That more Christians not be judgmental. That our children are able to see the Christian message in a world of confusion.

We need Jesus! We need to be in a support network with other Christians. We need to ignore the "priorities" of the world!

spiritual guidance salvation dependency on Christ

1. Spiritual Awareness and knowledge of Jesus - I think many my age were allowed to grow up without a strong push in any direction so that we could make our own choices about 'religion' when we grew up. IN that process, we have failed to teach our children (those in their 20s now) who are now becoming parents with no idea of who Jesus is. 2. Physical needs - as our generation ages, we are increasingly unhealthy due to the way we eat/exercise, etc. I think God is disappointed with the way we care for our temples. Medicine provides us with the means to extend our lives, but I don't think we are living rather existing. 3. EMotional support for families raising children/teens and taking care of aging parents at the same time.

A spiritual relationship with God. Humanity. Humility.

To recognize their need to know and believe absolute truths. To know that they cannot do everything on their own; that they need other people. To learn to share what they have with other; to quit being so focused on themselves.

We need God, God and more of God.

salvation; inner peace; differentiating God's plan versus our own

father son and holy spirit

Real truth true purposes for life Jesus

To get up off our blessed assurance and be involved. To be political, and to preach the truth even if it offends someone, better to prevent someone from going the hell than to tickle their ears with topical safe subjects.

give more and reduce selfishness, be more accepting to others who do not look like you or do not have what you have.



Less materialism. More concentration on meeting others needs. and more concern about the life here-after.

God, relationships-love,healing from past dysfunctional relationships

More Spiritual strength Better Health Care Better way to pay for schools

(1) Faith (2) Family (3) Connectedness - we are all little separate islands

These answers are too big for words for me right now. Sorry.

I think the greatest need is coming to an understanding of their need for God in their lives: to know He loves them and wants to bless them. The next need is to know the Word of God so they have wisdom and guidance to make choices in everyday life that will be good for them and their children. There is such Biblical ignorance today. And I think the third need is to realize they have purpose in their lives other than to acquire material possessions.

personal relationship with Jesus Christ commitment to the moral standards of Gods word the satisfaction of helping others

Love Acceptance Fellowship

Spiritual Guidance, The need to feel included and involved, Willingness to accept the changes around us.

the grace of god

I am not good at this generational thing. Maybe because I am older. When I graduated in "65" the way I had connected with God was in church (very old fashioned) When I came back to Christ in 2000 the way I connected with God was in the church ( very updated with the new music and all). The greatest need we have is God. Why are the needs of one generation any different than another. Our basic need is God. Are the kids today going through stuff I never had to. Yes. Do they need someone to relate to. Yes. I had youth group when I went as a youth. Today they have youth group. Different from mine I am sure. But isn't part of that to help them to reach out to other kids. I had Youth for Christ, they have Young Life. I think the greatest need of any generation is a relationship with God. If you are talking about social needs, I don't know what the 3 greatest needs are.

PRAYER SUPPORT. BETTER RELATONSHIP WITH GOD FAMILY SUPPORT

1. Show Love more. 2. More Christians to be filled with the Spirit. 3. More Godly Leaders

commitment, discipline, integrity

The loss of the family unit, lack of love world wide for children, no empathy for others, and showing no remorse for injuring, killing, physically, mentally and emotionally hurting others.

God, time, love,

To see that there really is a relevant, loving God To see people living out bold, confident faith in everyday life, more prevalent than the liberal, unChristian masses To connect with God in a meaningful way in all areas of life.

To know God To keep God in our school, on our money and the pledge To teach the children about God

Closeness to God Purpose Friendships

Relationship with God, Knowing Christ as their Personal Savior Relationship with Church "Family" Most don't know what a relation with a family is like bring prayer and discipline back in school

Friendship Assistance with needs (physical/financial/spiritual) Places to use your gifts in the Body

To have real, close friends. To belong to something greater than ourselves. To know how much God loves us.

Belief in God, Taking this country back to the roots of Belief in God, and instilling our children and grandchildren to follow Good Orderly Direction until they can discover God's love for themselves.

Control debt. Live a healthy lifestyle. Return to society that encourages Christian values.

1. Being able to communicate the importance of a relationship with Jesus to the generations younger than 40. And for those over 40, if they haven't had this to introduce them to the knowledge and love of Jesus. 2. Emphasizing biblical/common sense morality. 3. Restoring and maintaining standards of the laws of living found in the bible that this country was established.

strength to be the sandwich generation, wisdom for living with teens and guiding them, encouragement to continue on striving to search for more of God

TRUTH! Things are NOT okay just because they feel good. DIRECTION: a loss of focus leaves for a meandering group that should be leading instead of still searching for the meaning of life. UPWARD/OUTWARD FOCUS: It really is not all about "me"; It is all about God.

faith, hope & love

## Hope Truth Discernment

### TO BECOME BORN AGAIN CHRISTIAN

couples staying married children obeying parents

Spiritual growth Family time genuine love for the lost

- To see that they have a need for Salvation through Christ. - To realize that there is a TRUTH and stand by it - To take a position for morality and NOT be disuaded by the world/political attitudes and agendas

financial security marriage enrichment strong friendships

### THAT HE IS A GOOD, HE LOVES THEM AND WANTS TO BLESS THEM

1. Commitment to God. 2. Building relationships in a community of faith. 3. Realization that it isn't "all about me."

### Prayer Understanding Fellowship

To know Jesus Christ as our personal savior To quit being so obsessed with money and material items. Less divorce. It is hurting our children!

Greater gov't supported health care A better justice system - one you can count on to provide what you have invested in for lifelong security Being there in support of the younger generations

More acceptance of the younger generation but also not caving in to the liberality and lowered values in our modern society. As a senior, I hate to see other seniors avoiding the issues that are a part of our world and going into their cave of self satisfaction.

Retirement planning Community service projects Relationship building

1. The knowledge of of Jesus' saving grace. 2. The guts to have the God given faith to believe. 3. Love.

Closer relationship to God, Gloser relationship to family, friends. Accountability

Feeling wanted, Companionship, Good Health Care

To know God Respect for yourself and others Respect for others property

1) Loss of spiritual guidance and center. When God was removed from our schools, I believe we did a great disservice to our youth. They/we were allowed to "flounder" without receiving any spiritual/moral direction, leading to many of the other problems

that we face today. 2) Concern for our fellow man... we have adopted too much of a “me first” attitude and far too many have suffered as a result. I suppose this could be an extension of #1. 3) As my generation ages, it is imperative that we address the need for affordable and accessible healthcare for all citizens. It’s unconcionable that people are forced to choose between putting food on their table and purchasing a medication that they may need. This applies to any “third world” country, including areas in the U.S. that are very much “third world-like.”

Salvaton Joy Fellowship “Biblical”

1. Hope 2. Love 3. Forgiveness

Develop servants heart Focus on the Kingdom of God Take lead in mentoring next generatio

independence vs co-dependence financial freedom making God/our spirituality a priority

Faith Salvation Peace

Loss of identity Lonliness Business Many of us are becoming empty nesters now and it is difficult especially for us who are mothers, to find purpose and direction.

1. A belief in an absolute God, a monotheistic view of God, not an all paths approach. 2. A church that accepts them as they are, musically, manner of dress, and an understanding that they di rebel against their parents church system. 3. A “defocusing” on the materialistic aspect of the Western Christian church. Wealth does not equate to spirituality.

Companionship Healthcare Life plan

INNER COMPLETENESS/PEACE/CONTENTMENT (FILLING THE “GOD” VOID)  
BALANCING FAMILY AND WORK DECREASED EARNING POTENTIAL WITH  
DECREASED EARNINGS

Spiritual growth. Acceptance. To be needed.

## **Xer Responses**

Health care Single parenting of special needs child Counseling in a Christian setting

1. To realize God loves us, wants the best for us and wants an intimate relationships with us 2. supportive, positive relationships with other christians who have an intimate relationship with God. 3 to know and follow Gods will for our lives

2.

emotional that we are needed/ can be used practical ways to be involved in ministry in “everyday life” recovery alot of drug, alcohol, and substance abuse

Strong leadership, being less material (not just jeans or PS3's but careers and insignificant relationships as well)

1. Identity: Someone to help us know who God made us to be ... to regain & preserve our unique personality and gifts. 2. Empowerment: Someone to provide personal training/discipling with hands-on training rather than just a lot of teaching. 3. Stability: Someone we can always count on.

Community, positive role models/mentors, to have a kingdom mindset

I think the three greatest needs are community, wise counsel and love.

Loyalty, truth, and wisdom

Relationship with God. Relationship with one another. A proper perspective on the Kingdom of God.

1) we don't want religion, but we are so yearning for spiritual fulfillment... we inherently know that God wants to connect with us on a personal or spiritual level, but we only seem to find more impersonal religion. 2) chances to do big works, to serve big, to mentor under someone else who dreams big and acts big 3) many of us feel judged on all sides: the church, society, family, friends, advertising, etc.... We fear that we do not understand love in the slightest, esp in its truest interpersonal and spiritual form. The message of Jesus is so confused by nearly every element of society. It is hard for anyone to sort through the miles of gunk to find the truth.

Innocence Feeling of Belonging to something Discovering purpose

Being made to see that partying and the whole lifestyle that goes with it is not the answer; showing why homosexuality is wrong in God's eyes, not just hearing why, but really focusing on the nitty gritty of the whole issue; sexual sins in general

1. Real relationships 2. Truth 3. Jesus' power and authority in our lives

Belonging Purpose Direction

relationships with depth spiritual, emotional, financial, and psychological healing Fresh understanding of Jesus

My generation wants a place that they are known, they want to know people care about their personal well-being and they want some concrete answer about the purpose of their life.

God, Hope, Relationship.

Acceptance Flexibility Support

Jesus, Relationship/Community, Purpose/Direction.

small groups & “comfortable worship services” with powerful messages noting the consequences for not following the word.

Hope for the future Assurance that God is Real Purpose in our lives that makes a difference in others

Purpose, community, (true) love.

Love, prayer and discipline

Relationship with God, Greater sense of community, God’s power to bring change in the world

community, mentoring, being involved with social justice

Rooted Family/Friends Unconditional Love Someone to talk to that actually listens and isn’t judgmental

Mentors- to guide us through this crazy world. To be taken seriously- given opportunities and authority. Financial stewardship- to be taught good practices with money, tithing and stewardship.

Support (this world is scary!), relevance (the church needs to show young people how the Bible and God and the church are relevant in today’s world), and how to cope with current pressures of society

to be loved unconditionally to feel needed or a valuable part of something to be noticed & given a chance to work out God’s calling in our lives

Understanding, emotional, and physical

patience morals forgiveness

direction, discipline, focus

saving for retirement, paying off debt, being strong in faith

Real Relationships To be selfless Less gray areas in their life

Faith, Love, Loyalty

Love, Purpose, A Clear National Identity (What it means to be an American)

love, compassion, taking responsibility for the actions they take

Knowing who Christ is and not that he is controlled by the church, and that the churches actions do not necessarily reflect Christ. Truth about what they are involved in.

Emotional and spiritual healing

Meaningful relationships Spiritual focus Cultural shift away from sex saturated media

To know Jesus, true friendship, and to look to God for fulfillment.

Love, Peace, and Harmony.

teaching outreach home groups

love, acceptance & unconditional forgiveness.

1. Education and guidance in incorporating your spirituality in every aspect of your life.
2. Finding God's purpose for me. How I should serve God.
3. Education and guidance for how to talk to non-Christians about Christ.
4. Accepting God's will for my life as opposed to pursuing my own will and desires. (I know it says three but this is important).

God, Discipline and integrity.

God's guidance, discipline, ?

Salvation, spiritual growth, understanding that America is not the center of the world

Spiritually - a relationship with Jesus, discipline and a hands-on knowledge of the Bible (not a 3rd party's interpretation of it.)

attention, GOD, better financial responsibility

To return to traditional values To know God personally To recognize and stop tolerating sin

- 1) God (Obviously)
- 2) The need to love and accept themselves as they are.... not comparing ourselves to anyone else.
- 3) The need to view and measure "success" differently. Instead of viewing career, money, status as the ONLY measure of success - my generation should also view success as becoming more like our Creator intended, raising Godly children and showing compassion, love, and generosity towards our family, friends and even strangers.

relationships, financial, emotional

Acknowledging the Lord, repentance, and following the Lord.

Knowledge of God's Love, grace & mercy A sense of worthiness/belonging Formal education ~ reading, writing, etc.

Two career families juggling jobs and children. Single parents juggling jobs and children. Working through the tension of our culture's message that you have a right to be happy with one's obligations and responsibilities.

Community Feelings of being needed Wanting to be involved with something that makes a difference

compassion love understanding

1. To know that Jesus loves them. 2. To know that they are not alone in this world. 3. To know that when we close our eyes to this life, that we open them up to eternity (life after death in Christ).

1) Since of purpose and belonging 2)The ability to do and not just give money  
3)Affirmation

Hope, Truth, real people helping in real ways.

Social Acceptance, Family Time, Bible Teaching

Learning the truth Sharing the truth Living the truth

connection substance depth

feeling of community sense of belonging more positive activities

Family values MArrriage support financial guidance

1) to become less self-centered and more God-centered 2) self-discipline 3) stronger commitment to values These all tie together for me. We're so focused on doing what feels good in our timing that we forego self-discipline and sacrifice our values. discipline, strength and commitment

to know christ to come to christ to escape the strong grasp of the evil one  
Financial stability in future, morals of next generation (or lack of), stronger relationships freedom from the assaults of the world (pornography, alcohol, drugs, violence) through teaching loyalty, forgiveness, peace - teaching kids how to be married and stay married - teaching kids how to problem solve and resolve conflict and teaching kids how to walk proudly by doing what's right - eating right, being kind to others etc.

Jesus Christ Personal Mission Statement Life Purpose

generosity, loving everyone, giving of selves



One to one encounter with the Holy Spirit; A greater obedience to the leading of The Lord; Less worldly values/goals

Financial Literacy Having faith,... have to believe in something more than money, power, getting ahead, etc. It's scary what people are living for ... - and – mentoring.... we need more mentors for these kids today,... so many teen pregnancies, high school drop-outs, broken homes; divorce rate is at an all time high. we need mentors.. these kids are our future.

Moral absolutes, a less self-centered attitude, a sense of purpose in life (other than satisfying every pleasure)

stability, friendship, education

1.) People are too busy in thier own life to reach out to others 2.) Release from indiviualism and seperatism 3.) The rebuilding of the FAMILY unit

real truth, room for our children, not the big hype

To have a greater desire to know Him To focus on Him and not what we think we need “material stuff” To Focus on the family

God God and more God

Chrisitan parenting, relationships with your spouse as well as other in your life and the need for God.

1. lost souls coming to Christ. 2. a real need for deep personal relationships 3. to feel as they belong to a group or orginiaztion with positive results

the greatest need of this generation is the need to follow Jesus and his teachings about loving other people as one love themselves. This would change more in the world than anything else

1. To develop a spiritual connection to each other (thought God). 2. To learn to deal with emotions in their proper time (sometimes we do too much with our emotions, other times not enough). 3. Less education and more experience.

Family values. Re-sanctification of marriage. The need to simplify.

Salvation, to be more sensitive to things, meaning my generation is too descencitized to society, and to be more friendly, reach out more.

1. Understanding 2. To be heard 3. Support

Family, understanding the Bible in our terms and knowing how to give this knowledge to our children

Healthful living, positive support, childcare

1. To realize the relevance of God's Word & Jesus Christ to all aspects of life 2. Genuine long-term relationships with other people 3. Other-centeredness- to recognize the narcissism of our culture and to break out of it in self-sacrificial love

Financial advice with a Godly basis, relationship guidance for today for unmarrieds, marriage counseling for marrieds,... the real life stuff we all deal with.

Relationships, relationships, relationships

1) A Kingdom perspective 2) A sense of identity within the Kingdom 3) An anointing to do Kingdom work.

humility selflessness compassion

To learn about accountability, To be shown love, & to learn loyalty

Emotional coping, self-esteem and learning to trust in Christ.

GOD, EDUCATION, RETIREMENT PLANS

To really understand what it is to love others; To take an active part in helping other with no other goal but to help them; To take care of themselves as much as the others, as compared to more now.

Relationships Identity Acceptance

To have a support group of friends to talk to who share the same life experiences (raising a family, single parenthood, divorce, etc.)

Reality, responsibility, response

family cohesion marriage assistance/counseling children activities

education, community, great leadership

Discipline Acceptance Discipleship

-Viewing the church as relevant -Life/occupational purpose -Economic

hope, security, community

Acceptance, Unconditional Love of God and stronger morals (not in any particular order). That would at least help.

I think the greatest needs of my generation are genuine relationships, intellectual discussions, and a need to feel like we're a part of a family.

hope, security, community

### **Millennial Responses**

Wisdom Role models relationships

a sense of worth, food, shelter.

encouragement consistent discipline with love acceptance

realativity,

1. To see that Christians are different and not the same as EVERYBODY else, if we aren't different then we don't have anything they don't have already. 2. Justice 3. Love,... Not sloppy agape love, but the genuine fire love that J-House, and VCC seem to have lost.

Jesus, Purpose, Truth

1. to know absolute truth in a world that's given itself to post-modernism, 2. to find freedom from the materialism and consumerism of Americans and to truly understand finances and the heart of God, 3. to be connected to community in a society that's all about individualism and to participate in vulnerably walking through deep healing with people that love them.

1. Acceptance 2. Truth 3. Love

Stability, Truth, and Encouragement.

God, Community, and people to look up to.

Healthy relationships, hope, and Jesus

Real Relationships with people. Real Relationship with God. Healing from society

projecting the correct "image" of what you should act and look like.

close personal relationships, Stability, values that are shown to work in a gray world.

stable and authentic relationships, direction in life, a place to bring our questions

A better perspective on Marriage and Family. Self Esteem, knowing you have purpose. Leadership abilities- It's easy to accept things when everyone around you is. My generation really have to be strong to make a difference.

Connections to people in the church, Many opportunities throughout the week, Overseas missions.

Positive role models

personable real christians good and real role models

leadership, consistency, morals

Jesus, liberty, and discipline.

Love, Guidance, Faith

fighting greed, learning how to be accepting, spreading the word of god in a positive non judgemental way

1. A purpose 2. Proof that God is real 3. Love

Love, understanding, and spirituality

commitment morality relationship

ways to channel impulses toward social activism; a way to assess our own personal value that does not rely on a need for constant praise and affirmation from other people (specifically in work settings); tools to process, analyze, and understand the degree to which we are influenced and constructed by advertising, media, technology, and capitalism

Love, support, sympathy

1. Authenticity--in the sense that we want something real. We are not looking for fake smiles and hallelujahs. We want heart from God's heart instead of some man up on his soap box. 2. Direction--To be completely honest, our generation is lost. We walk around aimlessly looking for answers to why we exist. 3. Peace--This applies on two levels. First, the world seems to be falling apart before our very eyes and it makes us uneasy. Secondly, the world is so busy and demanding that we cannot seem to find any time to sit and listen to what God is trying to say to us.

Realness, Relationships, and Loyalty.

1. Realness, this generation is sick of an attainable gospel. If they are shown a gospel that expects them to be perfect, they won't even try. 2. Availability. By that I mean this

generation is scattered about in all kinds of groups. If all the Christians are all hanging out in the same place, those outside will never be reached. We need to not be afraid to go to the darkest of places. 3. Power. If all we do is keep talking about what God can do, with never allowing them to see what he can do, it sounds like we have a conflicting faith.

## APPENDIX H

### OPEN-ENDED RESPONSES TO RESEARCH QUESTION 6

#### Other Factors That Influenced People to Stick Around

##### Boomer Responses

The opportunity to develop and use my gifts in service to others.

feeling God's presence and love when there. Also, connecting with a pastor (Stephen Van Dop) has had a great impact also.

I am not yet released from the season of rest.

Biblically based in every decision, message, initiative, and class/service.

The message always hits home with us. We know this is where we belong.

The Lord's will for me to be there right now

we have stayed in our current church because the doctrine is sound and the teaching is

Biblical. I like all the other stuff - music, convenient service times, support groups, etc, but I wouldn't stay for that alone if the teaching wasn't truth.

The Bible says do not forsake the gathering of the brothers (believers).

vineyard family reunion

God,... this is where He has placed us to serve and to grow.

The consistent depth of teaching/preaching that encourages spiritual growth and service.

And the emphasis on God's goodness, faithfulness and mercy toward us. It draws me closer to God

The Holy Spirit said this is where you belong

I know our church is not perfect but the caring attitude of the people is great. We have a wonderful staff. All the pastors and all the other staff members. Each one of them is great. The sermons always leave you with lots to think about not just right then but all through the week. It is a place where you can get as plugged in as you want. There are servant evangelism projects every Saturday. It is a place where I can really connect with God. I now like the idea of homegroups. Found one I really like. Also, I know many people there were praying for my husband before he accepted Christ. It has been amazing

to watch him grow in this environment. I have never been a part of a church that was this caring and sincere

The fact that there are so many men that are involved in the church. It makes my husband sooooo much more at ease to realize that all christian men were not 95 years old or wimps

Because this is where I believe God has told me to be, for this point in my life. I don't pick and choose a place, except on matters of preaching a true word. I go where God wants me, and He blesses me and my family through it.

"The Pastor" includes all of the pastors as well as the senior pastor. All our well-versed in the scriptures and bring an honesty and openness in communicating Christian life.

Commitment to be where the Lord wants us

Really it was Tom and Denny and how they handled people within the Church. I also felt that I belong here.

My husband won't attend any other church.

All the staff are a joy and inspiration but the Word of our Lord is upheld as the ultimate authority. Prayer is not optional.... the needs of His people of every race are served here. I miss the hymns though.

## SENSE OF CALLING

I just like the casual atmosphere. I like the feeling of being in "Dad's House" and at home.

## **Xer Responses**

The most important factor was the relationships I made with others in my small group and at church. The sermons are also very relevant to everyday life and I like how the church reaches out to help the people in the community. The Bible basics class has also been very helpful.

Theology

Rich Nathan

Vision of the church--where it's going and what it wants to do for the community and world--and beliefs of the church about Jesus, the world, the kingdom

Bible study group

I am out looking for a new church to go or might decide not to join any church again which is not practicable

Time of service

I could check most of the above but the truth is Jesus Christ lead me to this church and he will be the reason I leave.

I love being able to help serve in a ministry. It makes me feel like I'm more a part of the church body.

The presence of the Holy Spirit.

We like the style of teaching from the pastor. Our young adult kids that stay in the service can understand and relate.

The fact that Grove City Vineyard focuses on the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; and not the Me, myself, and I (they do not judge people).

God uses the church in my families life. He is working in us through all aspects of the church.

we just feel God wants us at the vineyard that it is our church hoem and we are needed there and God wants us working and growing there

God

He preaches the Word and is an example of Christ.

Move of the holy spirit

### **Millennial Responses**

diversity

I'm not too close to anyone in the church yet.

Parents, thats it really

I can feel the HOly Spirit there

These are all the things I particularly value and use. I think that other things on this list are very important, though, and I want to go to a church that includes them.



## NOTES

### Chapter One

1. This claim has been made due to personal on-site visits and collaboration with Vineyard church leaders.

2. Boomers, Xers, and Millennials are defined and elaborated on in the Definition of Terms and Literature Review sections of this study.

3. Non-contextual and modernistic paradigms refer to a more “traditional” church approach as opposed to a more contemporary approach in regards to structures, styles, and methods.

4. Vineyard Columbus seems to be a diverse congregation, Vineyard Grove City is located in “white-suburbia” and has limited diversity, and Vineyard Chillicothe is located in a southern Ohio “blue-collar” factory town that largely reflects a white, lower-middle class demographic. However, African-Americans and Hispanics attend, reflecting ethnic diversity as a priority of this Vineyard.

5. See *Pre-Christian/Unchurched* section on page 11 for definitions of these terms.

6. Dr. McPhee is my dissertation mentor at ATS, and he shared this definition of evangelism in one of our personal meetings.

7. This understanding of structures was derived from an e-mail conversation with Dr. Howard Snyder, retired professor of Christian Mission and Church Renewal at Asbury Theological Seminary.

8. A more comprehensive analysis of Modernism and Postmodernism is located in the Literature Review section.

9. This information was based on a conversation with my dissertation mentor, Dr. Arthur McPhee, who wrote an extensive history of J. Waskom Pickett.

10. Rambo’s stage model is described in the Literature Review section.

11. This introduction of postmodernism is derived from my own personal observations and reflections.

12. Latch key kids refer to children who came home to an empty house due to their parent(s) working outside the home. This term was popularized in the 1980s.

13. Rainer, founding dean of the Billy Graham School of Missions, Evangelism, and Church Growth at Southern Baptist Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky, presented the

results of his study at Amsterdam 2000. This information was obtained from Michael James Thompson's D.Min. dissertation entitled "Beyond Generation X: A Baby Boomer's View of Training Generation X and Millennials for Ministry" at Fuller Theological Seminary, 2002.

## **Chapter Two**

1. Vineyard Columbus Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) brochure, "What Is Important at Vineyard Columbus."
2. Vineyard Chillicothe informational brochure situated in the church lobby.

## REFERENCES

- Arn, Win, and Charles Arn. 1998. *The Master's Plan of Making Disciples*. 1982. Grand Rapids: Baker.
- Babbie, Earl. 2005. *The Basics of Social Research*. 3d ed. Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth.
- Barna, George. 1995. *Generation Next*. Ventura, CA: Regal Books.
- Bergman, Shirley. "The Graying and Greening of the Church." *Issues in Christian Education*. Spring 2007. Concordia University, Seward, NE. 26-37.
- Bizzell, Patricia, and Bruce Herzberg. 1990. *The Rhetorical Tradition: Readings from Classical Times to the Present*. Bedford, MA: St. Martin's.
- Burke, Spencer. 2003. *Making Sense of Church: Eavesdropping on Emerging Conversations about God, Community, and Culture*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan.
- Bloesch, Donald G. 1995. "Conversion." *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*. Ed. Walter A. Elwell. Grand Rapids: Baker. 272-73.
- Creswell, John W. 1994. *Research Design: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Durey, David D. 2002. *Attracting and Assimilating the Unchurched in the 21st Century*. D.Min. diss., Asbury Theological Seminary.
- Fowler, James W., Karl Ernst Nipkow, and Friedrich Schweitzer, eds. 1991. *Stages of Faith and Religious Development: Implications for Church, Education, and Society*. New York: Crossroad.
- Gibbs, Eddie, and Ryan K. Bolger. 2005. *Emerging Churches: Creating Christian Community in Postmodern Cultures*. Grand Rapids: Baker.
- Glaser, Barney G., and Anselm Strauss. 1967. *The Discovery of Grounded Theory*. Chicago: Aldine.
- Goetzmann, J. 1980. "Conversion, Penitence, Repentance, Proselyte." *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*. Ed. Colin Brown. Grand Rapids: Zondervan. 357-59.
- Guder, Darrell L., ed. 1998. *Missional Church: A Vision for the Sending of the Church in North America*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.

- Haig, Brian D. 1995. "Grounded Theory as Scientific Method." *Philosophy of Education Yearbook, 1995*. [journal online] accessed 7 April 2007; available from [http://www.ed.uiuc.edu/EPS/PES-Yearbook/95\\_docs/haig.html#fn1](http://www.ed.uiuc.edu/EPS/PES-Yearbook/95_docs/haig.html#fn1).
- Heck, Joel D. 1988. *New Member Assimilation: Practical Prevention of Back Door Loss through Front Door Care*. Austin, TX: Concordia.
- Hicks, Rick, and Kathy Hicks. 1999. *Boomers, Xers, and Other Strangers: Understanding the Generational Differences That Divide Us*. Wheaton, IL: Tyndale.
- Hiebert, Paul G. 1994. *Anthropological Reflections on Missiological Issues*. Grand Rapids: Baker.
- Holtz, Geoffrey. 1995. *Welcome to the Jungle*. New York: St. Martins.
- Howe, Neil, and William Strauss. 1997. *The Fourth Turning: What the Cycles of History Tell Us about America's Next Rendezvous with Destiny*. New York: Broadway.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2000. *Millennials Rising: The Next Great Generation*. New York: Vintage.
- Hunter, George G., III. 1996. *Church for the Unchurched*. Nashville: Abingdon.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2003. *Radical Outreach: The Recovery of Apostolic Ministry and Evangelism*. Nashville: Abingdon.
- Jackson, Bill. 1999. *The Quest for the Radical Middle: A History of the Vineyard*. Cape Town, South Africa: Vineyard International Publishing.
- Jackson, Robert Ernest. 1999. An Evaluation of the Evangelistic Emphasis of the North American Power Evangelism Movement, 1977-1997. Ph.D. diss., Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.
- Johnson, Benton, Dean R. Hoge and Donald A. Luidens. "Mainline Churches: The Real Reason for Decline." *First Things: Journal of Religion, Culture, and Public Life*. March 1993. New York, 13-18.
- Kimball, Dan. 2003. *The Emerging Church*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan.
- Kraft, Charles H. 1991. *Communication Theory for Christian Witness*. Rev. ed. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis.
- Laubach, F. 1980. "Conversion, Penitence, Repentance, Proselyte." *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*. Ed. Colin Brown. Grand Rapids: Zondervan. 353-55.

- Lyotard, Jean-François. 1984. *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*. Trans. Geoff Bennington and Brian Massumi. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- McAllister, Dawson. 1999. *Saving the Millennial Generation*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers.
- McGavran, Donald A. 1970. *Understanding Church Growth*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
- McIntosh, Gary L. 1995. *Three Generations: Riding the Waves of Change in Your Church*. Grand Rapids: Baker.
- McLaren, Brian D. 1998. *The Church on the Other Side*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2002. *More Ready Than You Realize: Evangelism as Dance in the Postmodern Matrix*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan.
- Miller, Donald E. 1997. *Reinventing American Protestantism*. Berkley, CA: University of California Press.
- “Our Vision.” *GCVineyard*, accessed 30 July 2007; available from <http://gcvineyard.org/OurVision.html>.
- Rainer, Thom S. 1993. *The Book of Church Growth: History, Theology, and Principles*. Nashville: Broadman.
- Rambo, Lewis R. 1993. *Understanding Religious Conversion*. New Haven, CT: Yale.
- Thompson, Michael James. 2002. *Beyond Generation X: A Baby Boomer’s View of Training Generation X and the Millennials for Ministry*. D.Min. diss., Fuller Theological Seminary.
- Schaller, Lyle E. 1978. *Assimilating New Members*. Nashville: Abingdon.
- Stark, Rodney. 2004. *Sociology*. 9th ed. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
- “State & County QuickFacts.” 2007. *U.S. Census Bureau*, accessed 21 June 2007; available from <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/39/3932592.html>.
- Stetzer, Ed. 2006. *Planting Missional Churches: Planting a Church That’s Biblically Sound and Reaching People in Culture*. Nashville: Broadman & Holman.
- Sweet, Leonard. 2000. *Postmodern Pilgrims: First Century Passion for the 21st Century World*. Nashville: Broadman and Holman.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1999. *Soul Tsunami*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan.

- Tajfel, Henry, and John Turner. 1986. "The Social Identity Theory of Intergroup Behavior." *Psychology of Intergroup Relations*. Ed. Worchel and Austin. Chicago: Nelson Hall. 7-24.
- Wagner, C. Peter. 1983. *On the Crest of the Wave*. Ventura, CA: Regal.
- Wimber, John, and Kevin Springer. 1992. *Power Evangelism: Signs and Wonders Today*. New York: HarperCollins.
- Yin, Robert. 2003. *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*. 3d ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

