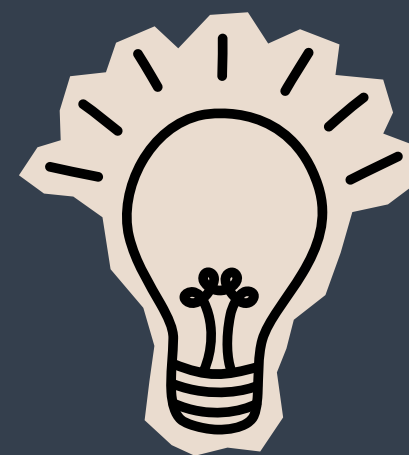


A Gen Z Perspective

on Missions in Your Church



Introduction



One of the most exhilarating feelings as a runner in a relay is the excitement and anticipation that courses through your body while watching your teammate run towards you with the baton. When your teammate enters the exchange zone ready to pass, purpose and passion fuel you to action.

There's a reason runners typically run faster in relays than individual events: seeing your teammate give it everything they have, finish well, and hand you the baton motivates you to do the same.

The opposite is also true, however. The level of disappointment you experience when your teammate does not finish the race and leaves you on the line without the baton, unable to complete the task before you, is unmatched.

The same is true in ministry: **Gen Z is on the line waiting for the baton, excitedly anticipating the moment when the generations before them will hand it off.** However, missions is more like a Ragnar Race than a 4x100.

In a Ragnar Race, teams are composed of 6 to 12 runners who collectively cover around 200 miles in the span of two days and one night. Each runner is responsible for their leg (or legs) of the relay but must also be ready to jump in and help their teammates at any moment. In the same way, the people not actively running in ministry (who have “passed the baton”) still have a vital role to play and will jump in to help when needed.





Vision Cast



What:

Engaging Gen Z in ministry and effectively passing the baton to them when the time comes is essential to the continuation of missions and the spiritual growth and development of the next generation.

Why:

“Passing the baton” is discipleship. The key to effective ministry is enabling it to stand the test of time. By mentoring, encouraging, and enabling the next generation to take part in missions, we are discipling young people and equipping them to respond to God’s call on their lives, as well as continuing to minister to those we serve by ensuring the mission continues after us.

Why It’s So Important:



The expansion of the church through missions is contingent on our ability to effectively pass it on to the next generation. Many young people are interested in missions and long to take part in them but do not know how. Gen Z has the interest in and passion for missions; now we must give them the tools to effectively and excellently engage in mission work around the world.

MYTHS & MECHANICS



Myth #1

Gen Z does not want to be involved in missions, viewing this field as outdated and behind the times.

Reality:

Gen Z wants to be involved in ministry, but it often seems inaccessible. Many people in Gen Z feel called into full-time ministry and even more people long to be involved in short-term or local mission work, however, these fields often feel inaccessible to them.

- Education and making missions more accessible are key to overcoming some of these barriers
- Don't upend the whole system to just suit the preferences of Gen Z, but equally don't exclude Gen Z for the sake of the system (change is not always bad)

Utilizing tools like social media can be very effective in reaching and educating Gen Z. According to Pew Research, 89% of Gen Z are active on at least one social media platform. Mentorship and relationally driven missions are also often more accessible to Gen Z, rather than event-based ministry.



Myth #2

Gen Z does not care about mission work.

Reality:

Gen Z is deeply passionate about mission work, but it may look slightly different than what older generations are used to.

- According to a 2021 report by Barna Group, over 60% of Gen Z expressed interest in participating in global missions or social justice efforts. However, they prefer missions that are action-oriented, focused on tangible impact.
- According to the same report, 49% of Gen Z would prefer to engage in missions that focus on justice, human rights, and community service, with the understanding that sharing the gospel will naturally follow.

Gen Z is not disinterested in mission work. In fact, justice, human rights, and community service are of deep importance to this generation. The mission field is the perfect place to realize these passions, especially as it becomes more and more accessible to Gen Z.

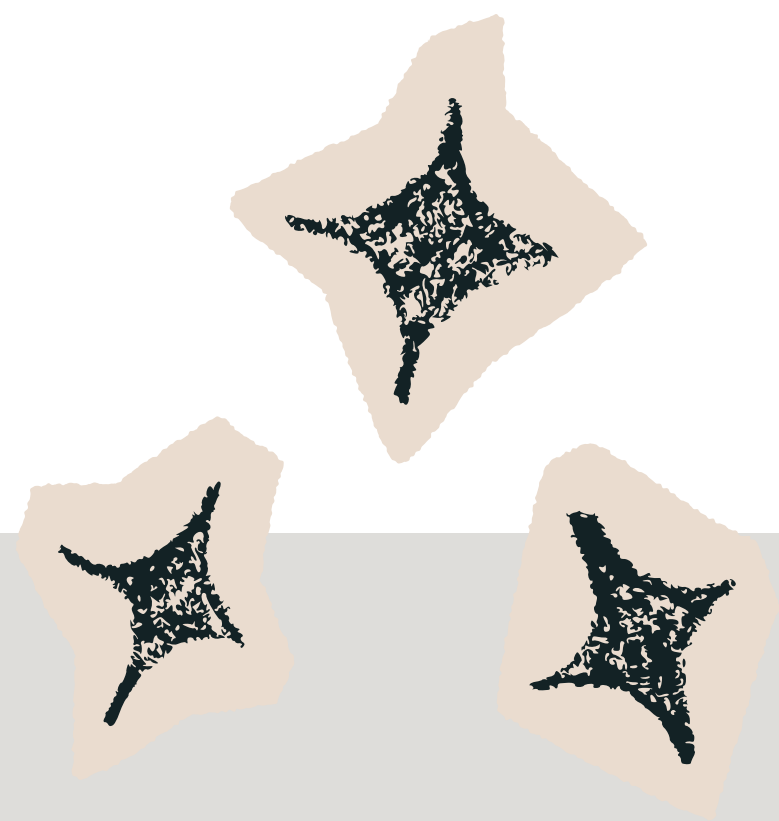


Myth #3

Gen Z needs to be equipped for ministry in the same method and manner that I was.

Reality:

Gen Z does not want to wait to make a global impact. They know they have things to learn, but they also know that they can become equipped in alternative ways. They also know that because of our world's growing interconnectedness, they can have a global impact right now. This doesn't mean they don't have humility, it means that they know not only what is possible, but what is happening right now. If they are told that they need to go to Bible School or Seminary first, they will, but they also see the possibility of gaining education and experience while engaging in ministry.



INTEGRATION IDEAS





- Provide resources to Gen Z which show them how to enter into the mission field. Connect them with current and former missionaries who can mentor them and help equip them to become missionaries themselves. Show them how they can use their degree to do mission work.
- Lead short-term mission trips with your church and advertise or encourage Gen Z to participate in programs like TEAMtrek. Give them opportunities to participate in ministry—they are often looking for them but don't know where to begin!
- Aim outreach opportunities at meeting practical needs where participants can see a tangible impact. Also, try to ensure mission work is relationally driven, not event based: both tangible impact and relationships are very important to Gen Z.



In Barna's 2020 study, 65% of Gen Z preferred to engage in mission activities that were relationally driven rather than event-based, indicating a desire for deeper connections with those they serve, rather than just “going through the motions.”

HOW TEAM CAN HELP

TEAM works with you.



At TEAM, we have a specialized, short-term missions program designed to help young adults and rising generations explore their calling and experience missions all while being developed and journeying with Jesus. Our Missions Coaches would love to talk with you, or any young adults or Gen Z-ers that you know who might be ready to explore next steps towards engaging their calling. Our Missions Coaches are also available to walk with you as you walk with young people on their discernment journey and as you get ready to “pass the baton.”

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

TEAM Church Resources

