

Transitions continue..

This is part 2 of “**Transitions**” as we try and catch up on those who are “retiring” from one responsibility to another.

As we share these stories’ I trust you will rejoice with them and pray for them.

Glenis & Kay Mullings -constantly transitioning/re-locating

We are currently in Jamaica on an extended vacation, one we are planning to take annually. We have been preparing for our retirement transition for the past 40 years as we have travelled back and fourth to Jamaica on shorter vacations over the years. We have connected with the local community in here in which I grew up and have started a Mission Centre with the help of the Midland, and Orillia Alliance churches.

We currently operate a weekly soup kitchen for the shut ins, distribute good used clothing, provide mentoring and leadership to young boys and run a “laying hen” ministry to teach the young boys; proper work habits, responsibility, accountability in preparation for the working world when they start working after finishing school.



I work very closely with the local church across the road from where we live.

I preach at the local church and get invited to preach at other churches in the communities.

I became fully ordained last November through the Alliance ordination process.

I retired in November 2016 from my nursing career of over 30yrs. When I return to Canada each year, I still work part-time at the hospital and continue my ministry as Pastor of Care at the Midland Alliance Church in Midland.

It is wonderful to hear what is happening in the lives of other servants of the Lord who are or have transitioned into their new life.

Kay and I will be returning to Canada this month, transitioning into Canadian ministry again

Bob & Wendy Beasley -CCD -Transitioning is coming some time???

We have transition in sight but I am still serving with Bible League Canada. Our office is in Grimsby Ontario. I continue to commute each week by train from Chatham to Aldershot and keep a little car at the Aldershot Via Rail station to drive back and forth to my office in Grimsby. (Bob is Vice President of International Ministry)



Wendy is still pastoring St. Clair Community Church in Sombra, which is south of Sarnia. They love her. They have recently moved into a little building that is a century-old former Anglican Church. It is lovely. She continues to feel very fulfilled in her ministry. We joke that Wendy and I are the poster children for the deepening relationship between the C&MA and the Evangelical Missionary Church, which is Wendy's denomination!

We are 63 now and are grateful for plenty of energy and a great opportunity for ministry. I am still connected to the CC District – I am involved in the Licensing and Ordination process as a mentor and am involved in interviewing candidates for licensing and ordination. I'm grateful for that opportunity.

We are in the process of building a new home in a little village of Pain Court for our next transition.

Dan & Melodie Ibsen -WCD

Dan and I were both saved and called to missions as children. We both grew up in loving Christian homes (not perfect, mind you!). We were given great teaching in our homes and in the CMA churches we attended and were also given many opportunities to discover our gifts and use them to serve.

Dan graduated from Moody Bible Institute in Chicago in their missions' program. I went to CBC for one year. We met at the University of Alberta while we were studying for a degree in elementary education. We got married after our third year. Dan taught with the Edmonton public school board for two years and then we went to CTS. After graduating, we planted the CMA church in Westlock, Alberta. From there we went to Quebec in 1985 to learn French before heading to Guinea, West Africa in 1986. Our ministries there included developing the Theological Education by Extension program, discipling new Muslim background believers to be leaders, field leadership, and a program for mentoring interns and apprentices from North America. We are currently filling the International Worker in Residence position at Ambrose.



We have four children and seven grandchildren. Twin boys are in heaven and one little granddaughter will be born in May. Our children are all serving overseas, two in Dakar, Senegal, one in Niamey, Niger and one in Leogane, Haiti.

In May 2019 we will move from Calgary where we have been teaching for two years and will return to Spruce Grove to live. We have one more year of home assignment and then will transition into "retirement" which will include traveling to visit our kids, serving in the Spruce Grove Alliance church, hopefully working new Canadians and also being available to teach wherever we are needed.

Gord & Ruth Stock -Chilliwack



The Great Retirement Conspiracy' ... *"I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me - My sheep listen to my voice; I know them and they follow me."*

(John 10:14, 27) One of the amazing realities of living & following Jesus Christ, is that He knows us... He knows everything about us, He knows what's best for us... and if we're serious about following Jesus, we have the unique privilege of listening to 'His' voice & following 'Him!' This is an incredible blessing that continues throughout our lives as Christ followers, no matter what stage of life we're at... and this reality is the essence of what I call '**The Great Retirement Conspiracy**'. Ruth & I had lived our lives following Jesus - listening to 'His' voice and following him no matter what. We had sought 'His' direction every step of the way since we met in the Sub Arctic Mission of the PAOC in Hay River, NWT in the early 1970's. I made my way to Hay River that 1st summer to make \$\$\$ to pay for my Bible College education at Canadian Bible College in Regina, SK. Ruth was serving as an RN in

H.H. Williams Memorial Hospital in Hay River. Both of us had distinctly listened for & heard God's "still, small voice" and were willing to follow 'Him' on mission wherever He might lead us! From the time we were married in the mid 70's, this meant a number of opportunities to serve from the time we went back to CBC in Regina to complete our formal Biblical Education... we served Jesus in a whole variety of settings & vocational areas over the years... Canadian Sunday School Mission, Youth For Christ Vancouver & Brandon, MB, heading up a Level III Treatment Centre for Youth, serving in the local teaching & youth ministry & eventually pastoring a medium sized church in MB. Ruth continued her nursing as an RN over those years, and we began a family. We pursued overseas Missions with the C&MA, feeling "compelled by the Spirit" like Paul in Acts 20:22, but were similarly prevented in going, like was in other places in the book of Acts!

When we started our family, God clearly showed Ruth & I that I should take on a specific 'trade' to provide for our family. During these years, I attended Brandon University where I obtained my BA, BEd., and Special Ed degrees and for the next 15-20 years we lived in Fort St. John, BC and Brandon, MB where Ruth continued to nurse and where I served in a variety of capacities in Education. During the course of these years, Ruth and I served in a variety of capacities in Fort St. John Alliance Church and McDiarmid Drive Alliance Church in Brandon.... Teaching, Life Group Leadership, Christian Ed, Church Eldership, Youth Leadership, and leading short-term mission teams to Mexico, Lebanon & Jordan. These were some of the most productive years of our ministries! 2001 was indeed a momentous year for Ruth and I... As our 3 adult children attended various universities & Bible Colleges pursuing different avenues of education, in addition to all getting married, Ruth and I began to realize that our time in Fort St. John was up. God began to instill in us a renewed passion for so-called full-time ministry, although as Ruth and I review our lives, we grasp fully that there is no such thing as 'sacred' and 'secular.' The Spirit of God began to show us that during this time when our 3 kids were pursuing their life partners & careers God had chosen for them, that this was indeed a 'new season' when Ruth and I were 'free' to pursue new avenues of ministry. He clearly opened ministry doors where Ruth & I led numerous mission trips to Mexico, China, & Haiti and Gord took a position as the ACTION Program leader for the Mennonite Brethren Missions in Abbotsford. We pastored briefly in Port Coquitlam, BC as well as served for 8 years as Lead Pastor of Rocky Mtn. House Alliance Church and for 2 years as the Transition Pastor of Bonnyville Alliance Church in AB.

This was also another time when God, in His amazing & infinite wisdom, prevented us from pursuing full-time overseas ministry... we were accepted to MB Missions in 2004 to teach in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia... I discovered I was one of the 2.5% of the population who was born with a bicuspid aortic valve which required repair of an aortic aneurism and subsequent replacement of the valve with a 'lifetime guaranteed' titanium aortic valve. This was compounded by a staph infection. It was during my days of hospitalization that I was inspired to write a book, which remains unpublished, entitled '**The Great Retirement Conspiracy**'. Not long after this, Ruth developed breast cancer which required both chemo and radiation. Needless to say, we could see very clearly that God was showing us that overseas mission was not in his plan for us! And by the way, we're both doing very well health-wise!!!

As Ruth and I have recently entered this new phase of life called "retirement", we fully understand that God continues to have a plan & purpose for our lives! Ruth retired after 46 years of nursing as an RN. I have worked full-time since I was 15 years old and have piled up some 49 years of employment and 12 years of post secondary education. Writing my unpublished book has definitely helped us prepare for this new phase of our lives. We continue to remain active... both Ruth and I love kid-sitting our grandsons who live in Chilliwack, visiting our other kids and granddaughters in Fort St. John and Calgary, serving in our local Yarrow Alliance Church, and taking on a part-time role serving the homeless of our community in Ruth & Naomi's Mission (RAN). We love to travel, hike the many trails & mountains in the Chilliwack area, ski, and I enjoy my newfound ministry trying to share the good news of Jesus while improving my golf score! The truth of retirement which I tried to outline in my book '**The Great Retirement Conspiracy**' is this: THERE IS NO RETIREMENT IN THE KINGDOM OF GOD. In the lyrics of Steven Curtis Chapman's song penned many years ago...

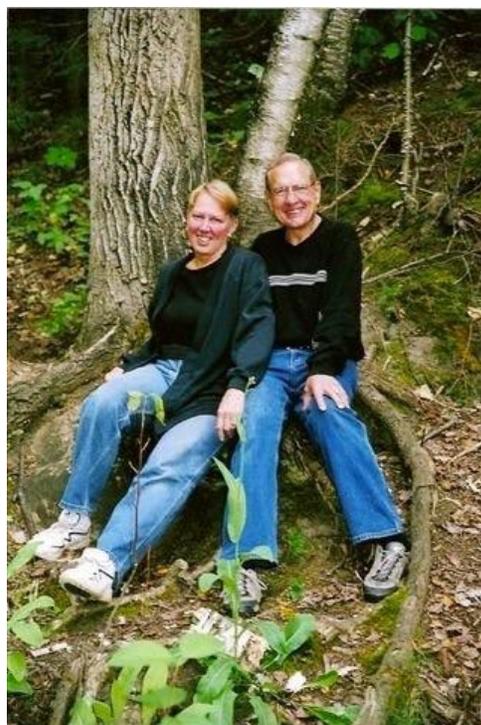
"Saddle up your horses,
We've got a trail to blaze
through the wild blue yonder of God's Amazing grace
Let's follow our leader into the Glorious unknown
This is the life like no other whoa whoa
This is the great adventure!"

- Gord & Ruth Stock

Ed & Marilyn Kirk

Ed Kirk was my (Wayne Kerr) intern at Glencairn in Regina in 1985. One of the first experiences of that internship was to help me remove the sewage pump from the jacking station, clean it and replace it (not something Ed learned about ministry at Canadian Bible College.) While he was training for ministry at CBC Marilyn was our church secretary. She was not accredited but viewed this as her ministry. She felt as much a part of the Alliance family serving as the spouse of a pastor.

In our latest **CONNECTOR**, Marilyn responded since Ed is not able to at this season of his life. We thank her for her continued ministry beyond the pastorate. She writes: "Ed officially retired... if we use 'that word'... from pastoring Luseland Alliance Church, SK in 2013; concluding 23 years of pastoral ministry. We then headed to Vientiane Laos for a few months to volunteer serving in their ESL program. The ministry we worked with was the focus of an Alliance Women's project years ago entitled: Tricked, Trafficked & Treasured.



In April 2017, Ed had a 2nd stroke that affected his health. In January 2018, he entered a permanent long term care facility in Kindersley, SK. I continue to direct Luseland Bible Camp with his blessing. Ed served on the board of LBC for 16 years. I'll head back to Luseland for the spring/summer camp season. We're still working on a camp succession plan & hopeful for a couple to step into the director role in 2020. Until then... I still love it & these young people have way more energy than me.

Ed is limited now in what he can do. He's confined to a broda bed wheelchair & his speech is often not understandable. We are blessed by the care he is given daily. He still recognizes many, cheers others on from the sidelines & says 'I love you' when I leave. He wishes he could do more. For now, we trust God with our timelines, His wisdom in all & the peace he gives us each day to day.

Marilyn for us both!!



Dan & Joy DeGaris -CCD

Transitioning out of our Pastoral ministry a number of years ago was hard but He has landed us in a safe and fruitful place of ministry along with being blessed by loving children and grandchildren which counts for eternity.

Joy is a Certified Career Development Practitioner and serves as Coordinator for Career Services with the Centre for Education and Training. (I wonder if they have to pay extra for all ink on her business card)

In her "spare time" she works with me as an affiliate staff member with FamilyLife Canada.

I work with FamilyLife Canada bringing help and hope to marriages and families. What a thrill it is to see couples who were ready to give up on their marriage reconnect and to see couples reach out and do what they can where they are to help others.

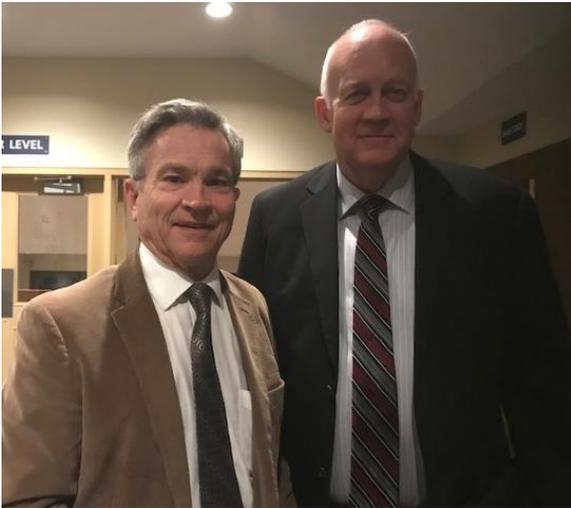
I am serving as the Ontario Team Lead with a growing staff of 17. A growing part of our ministry is in the development of Indigenous Marriage Ministries.

Last year our ministry took us west to Chatham, east to Ottawa and north to Big Trout Lake (600 kms north of Thunder Bay).

Part way through the year I (Dan), also took on the role of a part time transitional pastor with Freedom in Christ Church, a wonderful Filipino church in Mississauga. I've also been pulpit supplying at the Mississauga Carmel Mandarin Alliance Church.



TWO DSs transitioning before our next **CONNECTOR** is issued.



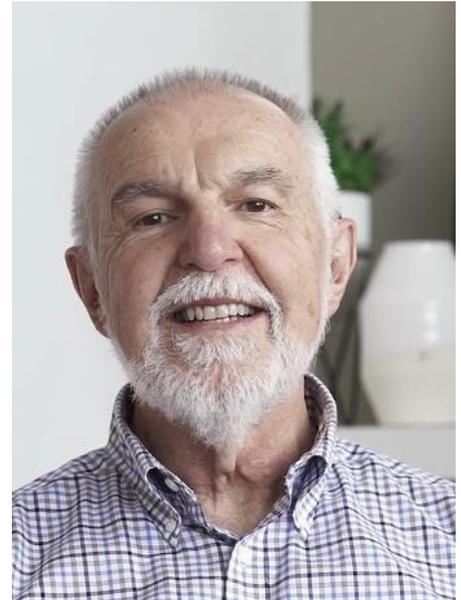
John Healey has been **POWER Teams** greatest encourager and supporter since its inception. He will be “retiring” after 12 years as the EC District Superintendent in May and “transitioning” into a new reality in Calgary come summer 2019.

He and Connie will be honored during the ECD Conference May 28-30th

Al Fedorak

will be “retiring” from his responsibility as DS of the CM District. He is not sure at this point where he will be transitioning to, so pray for him and his wife. Their celebration will be at the CMD Conference June 10-12. We thank Al for his support of **POWER Team** through Jack & Pat Mulholland.

With these transitions/retirements taking place this year, **POWER Team** sees a whole new chapter of “Former DSs” in the camp, with a number of them settling down in Calgary.



POWER Team leadership in transition

Sharon Ralph transitioning in



We are so delighted that **Sharon Ralph** has accepted the ministry of **POWER Team** Volunteer Coordinator for the WC District. She will also be a great asset to the National Leadership of POWER Team. She has taken over from Doug & Judith Wiebe.

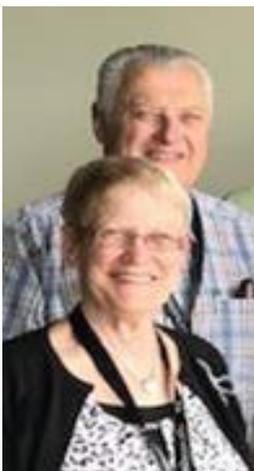
Sharon served in the Eastern and Central Canadian District Office of the C&MA for four years, then after marriage and seminary days, Peter & Sharon spent thirteen years pastoring at Georgetown Alliance in Ontario.

They have served twenty- three years in various areas at CBC/CTS, which now has become Ambrose University. Both Peter & Sharon are now retired. In addition to grand babying their fifteen grandchildren, they are attempting to reach out to neighbors who are from almost every region of our world. The Ralphs have Ambrose students living in a student suite in their home, and have an extra room or two that is available to folks who need a place to stay when they come to Calgary.

As a couple, they love to make road trips, many of which end up in Ontario to visit their large families who still live there. They are thankful that their four adult children have married four wonderful in-law children, three pastoring in Saskatchewan and the fourth in entrepreneurial work in Calgary and very involved in lay ministries.

They say: “We keep saying that we are going to dust off our cross country skis, to use during the long Calgary winters, and our bikes and helmets for the warmer days, but that hasn't happened yet! Maybe next year ...”

Jack & Pat Mulholland transitioning out of leading the **POWER Team** ministry in CMD. They were part of the initial unfolding of **POWER Team** nationally and have served well in volunteering their time in the CMD. Due to health limitations and increased ministries in the local church in Winnipeg they have felt it time step down. We thank them and pray God's blessing for many years of fruitful service.



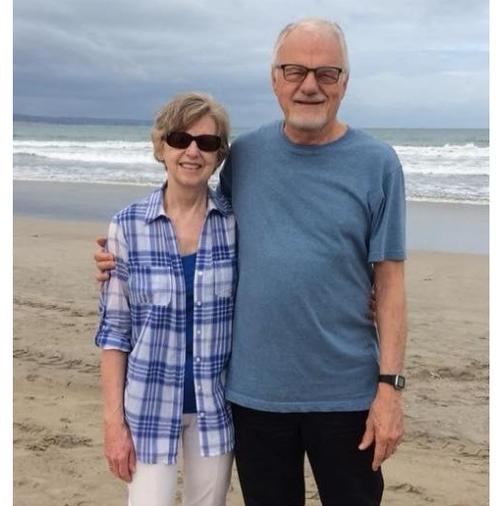
Ray & Viola Downey –CP Volunteer Coordinators of **POWER Team** are not transitioning but we did find them on Facebook doing some Maui 'beach ministry' to the turtles.



Floyd & Joyce Grunau trip to Indonesia

We were able to spend time with our youngest son and his family in Bali and Singapore. We returned to Bali for some vacation as a couple to wait until the faculty and staff from Jaffray School of Theology in Makassar returned to the school after their Christmas vacation.

We both taught there for 4 years up to December 1981. We held a 2- day spiritual retreat for faculty and staff. (Students were not yet back.) It was so very special to be back! We have returned once to Jakarta and twice to Borneo/East Kalimantan where we ministered our first term, but it was our first time back to Makassar. Floyd led 6 sessions and Joyce led 2. Participants responded well to the focus on the inner life! We had some significant conversations as well.



The president asked if they could have the material to use with their students. It was also so special to meet with 2 of our students from those 37 years ago - one who is still teaching at Jaffray School and the other who taught and is now retired. One of them remembered where we had lived for 4 years and we discovered it was now a smoke- filled coffee shop. We have a sense it might be the last time we will return to Jaffray School and are thanking God for such a beautiful closure! While back home in Calgary,

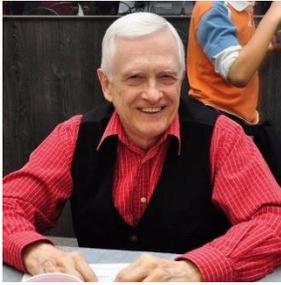


Floyd & Joyce with Jaffrey Prof and wife

Floyd continues to enjoy serving as a spiritual director and lately 3 new men are coming to their home for SD. They both enjoying keeping active. Floyd ministers regularly in various Seniors homes and church activities.



SOME notes of interest



Nelson & Jan Annan no sooner settled into their new digs in London Ontario when Nelson accepted the invitation minister at the Tillsonburg Alliance Church (a 40 minute drive) away. The Lead Pastor there is taking a three month sabbatical. Nelson and Jan's ministry started April 1.

Don & Chris Olsen are packing their bags/boxes and moving off of Vancouver Island to Cambridge Ontario. Pray for the sale of their house and a smooth transition.

Bill McAlpine gave his "retiral/transition" message to the Ambrose Chapel April 2nd. He challenged them on the "thresholds" of life whether it was his transitioning from Ambrose after 25 years or students who are transitioning from their studies, with graduation coming in May, to whatever God has for them in their next season of life. It was a good word and I am sure you can listen to that on the Ambrose FB.



Franklin & Gay Pyles have moved to Michigan and are spending some of the winter in California near one of their sons.



Retired from Life on Earth to Life in the Presence of our Lord

Earl Swanson April 21, 1927 – March 2, 2019



Earl was born in 1927 in Prince Albert Saskatchewan. Earl is survived by the love of his life, Edna Swanson (nee Sawatsky) to whom he was married for 69 years. They met at Western Canadian Bible Institute in Regina, Saskatchewan and married on May 28, 1949. Earl was an ordained minister and served with the Christian and Missionary Alliance as a pastor and youth director in Western Canada and Ohio from 1949-1961. He moved on to become the Canadian President of Scripture Press Publications from 1961-1990. After retiring from Scripture Press, he enjoyed his time travelling and boating. Winters in Arizona and summers on the water with his wife were the enduring joys of his later years. Following their move to Brantford in 1989, he became actively involved with the Kiwanis Club of Grand River and served as a board member with the Canadian Diabetic Association of Brantford

A recent **POWER Team** member, **David Freeman** represented our Alliance National Ministries Center and spoke at Earl's Celebration of Life Service. David conveyed, "Earl invested his life and career into a project that might seem kind of strange. He invested it into ensuring that as many people as possible were exposed to a particular book. He personally

became an expert in that book and he was committed that others would become experts as well. He so believed in the life changing potential of that book that he studied it, he taught its content and he made it possible for others to teach its content as well. That book, of course, was the Bible. And as a pastor, as an educator and as the President of Scripture Press, Earl introduced people to the Bible. He studied it personally. He taught it in Sunday School for many years. And when you use Scripture Press curriculum (could there be any other?) you taught through the entire Bible every seven years. And for almost 30 years Earl used the platform of his role as President of Scripture Press Canada to ensure that many ordinary people learned how to teach children, youth and adults about this life-changing book – the Bible.”

“Earl also invested his life into the lives of other people. When Earl and Edna were attending the Ritson Road Alliance Church in Oshawa, a youthful youth pastor was hired on staff, named Dave Hearn. Some 40 years later, that youth pastor is now the president of The Christian and Missionary Alliance in Canada, the denomination that Earl and Edna have been part of all these years. The other day President Dave messaged Earl’s son Rod with these words: ‘Your dad was one of the people who had a profound impact on my life when I was just starting in ministry. I hold him in high esteem.’ And I know that Dave Hearn speaks for many, many others who would also acknowledge the impact of Earl on their lives.”



Transitioning into Eldership

Here are a couple of articles used by permission to challenge each of us as we have or are moving into that age where we find ourselves older than the majority of those around us. Every year you will find this to be more evident when you attend church, a district conference, General Assembly or just visit the hospital and meet doctors and nurses who you may assess as still students in high school.

Hey, Boomers! Let’s Step Up And Be the Elders the Church Desperately Needs Right Now

By
[Karl Vaters](#)

-
November 26, 2018

What’s wrong with today’s younger generations?

I hear that question all the time. Especially from my fellow [Baby Boomers](#).

The quick answer?

Nothing.

Nothing is wrong with the current and upcoming generations that hasn’t been wrong with every previous generation.

With one possible exception. They don’t have the elders and mentors that almost every previous generation before them has had.



And why is that? Because (I hate to say it) my generation of [Boomers](#) is not discipling the next generation as well as previous generations did for us.

Boomers, It's Time to Become Elders

If you, like me, are a Christian and a Boomer (born between 1946 and 1964) you need to know that our primary mission at this stage of our lives is to become the elders and equippers that every generation of the church always needs.

Instead, too many of us stand back, cross our arms and complain that Millennials are entitled, they're lazy, they're

loud, they're (insert your complaint here...on second thought, don't).

But that is no truer of this generation than of our generation. In fact, I'm convinced that the biggest "sin" Millennials have committed in the eyes of many of my Boomer colleagues is...not wanting to do church exactly the way we did it.

But no generation should do church exactly the way anyone else did it. Because they're not like anyone else.

Each generation needs to honor God, worship Jesus, [disciple believers](#), reach their community and teach the unchangeable truths of God's Word in the way God leads them to do it. Not in the way their parents are most comfortable with.

A Generation Ready to Be Mentored

Like every generation that preceded them, today's young believers need the wisdom, kindness and counsel of previous generations to become the mature disciples they want to be.

And, despite all the protestations to the contrary, this new generation is as open, maybe even more open to being mentored by their elders than Boomers ever were. We're the ones who came up with the phrase "[don't trust anyone over 30](#)," remember?

If we will step up, they will listen. But we can't become the elders the church needs by complaining, demanding or whining about them. As I wrote in a previous post, "[We Can Whine About the New Generation or Worship With Them—but We Can't Do Both](#)."

Here are three ways we Boomers can start to become the elders the church needs:

1. Stop Isolating, Start Engaging

We won't be heard if we refuse to participate.

In too many churches, pastors are still having to divide the church into young/old, contemporary/traditional categories to try and please everyone. And, in my experience, that happens far more often because Boomers refuse to sing new songs, than because [Millennials](#) refuse to sing old ones.

We need to show up, help out and worship with all our heart and passion, whether we like the music or not.

We can't lead, guide and help [younger generation](#)s if we're cutting ourselves off from them during the time the entire body should be getting together.

2. Stop Complaining, Start Encouraging

No one will open themselves up to learn from a person whose default response is to complain about everything—or most things.

[Complainers](#) have little influence. Encouragers have a lot. After all, no one's life was ever made worse by receiving too much encouragement.

Too many compliments? Too much flattery? Those are a problem. But there's no such thing as too much encouragement.

If you want to have influence start by being an encouragement. Encouragement is like water in the desert. It softens hearts, cools tempers and opens people up to receive what we have to give.

3. Stop Demanding, Start Equipping

Now I'm gonna get blunt.

If you're a mature believer, you need to act like one. Show up at church to serve, not to be served.

Put yourself in a position of influence by becoming the servant Jesus calls all of us to be.

Stop demanding that the pastor, the worship leader and the young people (if your church has any) do church your way, and start asking how you can help the next generation serve Jesus with even greater passion and wisdom than previous generations.

We have the years. The experience. The tools. The maturity.

Now we need to add the willingness to [engage, encourage and equip](#). And maybe even learn a few new things along the way.

It's time to get to work.

(For some practical steps on doing this better, check out my follow-up post, "[3 Ways to Become the Godly Elders Today's Youth Need—and Want to Follow](#)."

This is the follow-up suggested above

[Christian Unity](#) July 16, 2018

3 Ways To Become The Godly Elders Today's Youth Need – And Want To Follow

The best way to help foster the Fruit of the Spirit in others is not by demanding it of them, but by living it out with them. *Karl Vaters*



This generation wants to honor its elders and be mentored by them.

That may not feel like it's true – especially if you, like me, are old enough to qualify for AARP/CARP membership.

I know this because I see it all the time. Youth, both in and outside the church walls are looking for genuine relationships with their elders.

They want to learn, connect and grow. They want to be

mentored and discipled.

No, not all of them. Most of us didn't consciously want that when we were their age, either. But in my experience, more of today's youth want godly older men and women in their lives than we think.

A couple weeks ago, I wrote, [Hey, Boomers! Let's Step Up And Be The Elders The Church Desperately Needs Right Now](#), and got a lot of feedback – most of it very encouraging.

But there was some pushback as well. All of the criticism expressed the same viewpoint: today's youth may *need* to have elders in their lives, but it's impossible to find any who are truly *willing* to be discipled.

So why is there such a difference in the experiences some older believers have with younger ones? And how can we do this better?

I think it comes down to three primary factors, all of which have more to do with how we, as elders, approach our role than how the youth behave or how they feel.

1. Meet Them Where They Are

Elders need to be willing to meet today's youth on their turf instead of demanding that they come to ours.

Start by serving, not demanding.

Living and walking along with them, not just talking at them. This means listening before speaking. Really hearing what they are going through. When we do that, we'll discover that they have three types of challenges.

First, they have challenges that are obviously universal. How to negotiate relationships and make wise decisions for instance. On those, we can offer wisdom from our own experience in Christ.

Second, they will express ideas and desires that will seem strange at first (like their choice of entertainment or wanting tattoos), but the more we listen, the more we'll find common ground. Underneath most of those choices is a desire to both fit in and stand out. When we were younger we felt the same confusion, but expressed it in different ways. (Remember how our parents reacted to our hairstyles and choice of music?) In those situations, we can share wisdom from our common underlying needs, even if we don't share their tastes.

Finally, there are the challenges they face that truly are different from anything we had to face. For instance, it's likely that our kids' and grandkids' generation will, for the first time in our nation's history, make less money than their parents did. They're also facing a culture that is increasingly indifferent, even hostile to a Christian witness. None of that is their fault, but they have to live in the fallout of it. In such situations, the greatest gift we may have for them won't be good advice, but a listening, sympathetic ear and prayerful, loving friendship.

To become the effective elders the next generation needs, we must have a similar approach as missionaries do when they go in to a culture that is new, and therefore feels strange and sometimes scary to us. In such situations, humility goes a long way. We have to listen and learn before we will have anything to teach.

2. Be Worth Listening To

We need to behave like elders worthy of honor. Living lives that people want to emulate. Following Jesus with such joy, passion and hopefulness that others can't help but be drawn to him.

If you have a hard time finding young people who want to be mentored, seriously ask yourself this question. Are you behaving in a way that is worthy of being honored? Are you truly setting an example to follow? Not just in (self)righteous behavior, but in selfless generosity and humble teachability.



No one wants to listen to an old crank with a "what's wrong with youth today?" mentality or a "when I was your age we knew how to respect our elders" attitude.

As elders, it is not our job to convict of sin or correct their behavior. That's Jesus' job. And he does it very well.

It's our job to love them. To lead by example as we live a life of humility, holiness, patience and joy.

Certainly there will be moments of correction. But we have to earn the right to do that by showing ourselves to be trustworthy first.

The best way to help foster the Fruit of the Spirit in others is not by demanding it of them, but by living it out with them.

3. Help Them Be Like Jesus, Not Like Us

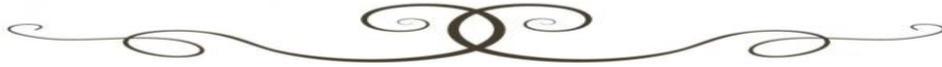
The goal of an elder or a Christian mentor is not to help the next generation become more like us. It's to help them become more like Jesus. The only way we can do that is becoming more Christlike ourselves.

The current and coming generations don't want to do church the way we did it. This is a good thing. Becoming like your elders isn't discipleship, it's mimicry. Repeating their habits and behaviors isn't growth, it's going through the motions.

When elders become more like Jesus, we show those coming behind us how to do it too. Then, when they become more like Jesus, they'll challenge us to keep growing even more. Each serving and blessing the other in an upward cycle of faith.

A servant will always become like their master. But an elder isn't a master. An elder *follows* the Master, and helps others follow him, too.

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**A DUCK, A SKUNK AND A DEER
WENT OUT FOR DINNER AT
A RESTAURANT ONE NIGHT.
WHEN IT CAME TIME TO PAY,
THE SKUNK DIDN'T HAVE A SCENT,
THE DEER DIDN'T HAVE A BUCK,
SO THEY PUT THE MEAL ON THE
DUCK'S BILL.**

No horse gets anywhere until he is harnessed. No stream or gas drives anything until it is confined. No Niagara is ever turned into light and power until it is tunneled.

No life ever grows great until it is focused, dedicated, disciplined. -Harry Emerson Fosdick, Clergyman

I never could have done what I have done without the habits of punctuality, order, and diligence, without the determination to concentrate myself on one subject at a time. -Charles Dickens, Novelist

Their purpose is to teach people to live disciplined and successful lives, to help them do what is right, just, and fair.

Tune your ears to wisdom, and concentrate on understanding. -The Bible



We trust you have been enlightened, encouraged and challenged by these “transitional” stories in this issue. We would love to have you included in future issues so please take the initiative without having to be asked personally and send HIStory (His Story) in your journey of life. We would love to hear from you. Send in a 4-500 word presentation along with a picture to:

waynebettyk@rogers.com or phone 519-207-4204 for any clarification.

