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ATTRACTING MILLENNIALS: AN EXAMINATION OF MILLENNIAL
PARTICIPATION IN ASSEMBLY OF GOD CHURCHES

by

Kenneth J. Hansen

Dissertation

Submitted to the Faculty of

Olivet Nazarene University

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in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for

the Degree of

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May 2018

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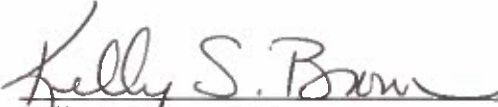
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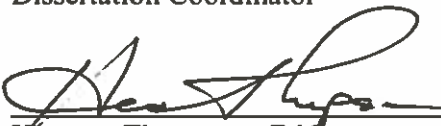
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Study and do your best to present yourself to God approved, a workman (tested by trial) who has no reason to be ashamed, accurately handling and skillfully teaching the word of truth. 2 Timothy 2:15 (Amplified Bible)

ABSTRACT

The greatest decline in church attendance of any age group has occurred among Millennials born between 1980 and 2000. This decline has created concern about the future of the church. The lack of understanding about Millennials by church leaders has hampered the ability to attract and maintain Millennial church participation. The purpose of this study was to determine what, if any, characteristics caused Millennials to be attracted to certain Assembly of God churches in Illinois and not others. Fifty-four Assembly of God churches that fell one standard deviation above and one standard deviation below the Illinois Assemblies of God Millennial attendance mean of 18% were asked to participate in this study. Pastors and Millennials aged 18 to 34 from participating churches were asked to take an online quantitative survey that utilized the U.S. Congregational Life, Faith Communities Today, and Seventh Day Adventist Young Adult surveys. The research questions used in the current study explored the experiences and preferences of the Millennial participants. The researcher found four statistically significant characteristics that were most related to Millennial church attendance in high attraction Assembly of God churches in Illinois: the presence of a strong discipleship ministry, the presence of intentional ministry to Millennials, the presence of technology, and an openness to innovation and change. The current study provides church leaders with a knowledge and understanding of the preferences and characteristics that attracted Millennials to high attraction Assembly of God churches in Illinois.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The title of Bob Dylan's 1964 hit, *The Times They Are A-Changin'* is an appropriate theme song to describe the relationship between the church and the generation known as the Millennials, which are individuals born between 1980 and the early 2000s (Pew Research Center, 2010; Waters & Bortree, 2012). The church has found itself at odds with Millennials because of the beliefs and behaviors Millennials embrace, which are different from those of previous generations such as the Baby Boomers and the Silent Generation. According to Wuthnow (2010), our viewpoints as humans are shaped, to a great extent by our life situation, experiences and environment. Wuthnow identified the following trends that have impacted the religious views and behaviors of young adults: delayed marriage, having children later, uncertainties over work and money, rising education levels, globalization, and the technology information explosion (Wuthnow). Hall and Delport (2013) agreed that because of shifting trends "the spirituality of the contemporary young adult is unlike that of previous generations" (p.3).

During the years 2016-17, when the current study was conducted, the age range of Millennials was between 18 and 38 years of age. According to 2015 United States demographic figures, Millennials comprise the largest population with 83 million members as opposed to Baby Boomers at 75 million (United States Census Bureau Report, 2015). Millennials are also the most racially diverse generation in history, with

44% being part of a minority race or ethnic group (United States Census Bureau Report). Because of their diversity, this generation defies description (Rainer & Rainer, 2011; Council of Economic Advisors, 2014). Millennial beliefs and behaviors are often misunderstood because they stand in such a stark contrast to traditionally held beliefs and behaviors. These misunderstandings have created frustration among Millennials, and an equal amount of frustration in church leaders trying to understand Millennials. For example, because Millennials do not feel the need to be affiliated with a church, baby boomer Christians have assumed that Millennials have no desire for spirituality or God. However, researchers have found that this generation considers themselves to be very spiritual, but do not consider themselves religious (Stetzer, Stanley & Hayes, 2009). In fact, Millennial beliefs and practices about the existence of God, heaven, hell, and miracles are surprisingly similar to previous generations (Pew Research Center, 2010).

Churches have experienced a drastic decline in affiliation, attendance, and participation among adults in general, but the greatest decline has occurred among Millennials between the ages of 18 and 30 (Chan, Tsai, & Fuligni, 2015; Desmond, Morgan & Kikuchi, 2010; van der Merwe, Grobler, Strasheim, & Orton, 2013). According to the Wave III National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health, the rate of decline in religious service attendance of Millennials was 69% in all denominations, and 75% in Catholic and Mainline Protestant denominations (Uecker, Regnerus & Vaaler, 2007).

Wuthnow (2010) wrote “the future of American religion is in the hands of adults now in their twenties and thirties” (p.2). If that is true, it is important for churches and church leaders to understand more about Millennials and their values, “The young adult’s

perception of religion and formal structures could also be regarded as indicative of the spirit of our contemporary age. This highlights the relevance of research on young adulthood” (Hall & Delport, 2013, p. 9).

According to Burke (2015), between 2007 and 2014, the largest increase in *Nones*, who are people unaffiliated with any religion, occurred among Millennials ages 18 to 38. Millennials experienced a 9% increase in this category compared to other age groups (Burke). As of 2014, one third of all Millennials classified themselves as unaffiliated.

Chan, et al. (2015) found that the religiosity of Millennials had declined between high school and college regardless of gender or ethnicity. The decline in religiosity among Millennials has been attributed to a number of factors, including the rise of postmodernism and a shift in attitude toward the need for institutional religion (Hall & Delport, 2013; van der Merwe et al., 2013). According to Beyer, Du Preez, and Eskell-Blockland, (as cited in Hall & Delport, p. 1) “postmodernism is regarded as a way of thinking and accepts not only facts, but also personal experiences and interpretations as real knowledge.” Rosenau (1992) described a postmodern individual as:

relaxed and flexible, orientated toward feelings and emotions, interiorization, and holding a ‘be yourself’ attitude. S/he is an active human being constituting his/her own social reality, pursuing a personal quest for meaning... Post-modern individuals are concerned with their own lives, their particular personal satisfaction, and self-promotion. Less concerned with old loyalties and modern affiliations such as marriage, family, church, and nation, they are more orientated toward their own needs. (p. 53)

According to Horell (2004), the complexities of postmodernism have created an environment in which the meaning and values of traditional religious structures are no longer adequate for Millennials, which has affected Millennial attitudes regarding the need for institutional religion and church attendance. Postmodernism has created a feeling that “the established truths of Christian worldviews are less and less helpful as guides for our lives and faith communities” (p. 9). The postmodern philosophy, which claims truth is whatever a person deems it to be, rather than what an institution declares it to be, has led to a questioning of traditional authority structures. This suspicion that exists toward authority structures such as the church, has led Millennials to turn to popular culture for religious guidance (Horell). Poe (2001) described the shift that has occurred from a modern to a postmodern sense of authority.

According to Lifeway Research Survey (2007), 70%, or 716, of the 1,023 Millennials surveyed, dropped out of church between the ages of 18 and 22. These Millennials who joined the ranks of the de-churched, a group Rainer and Rainer (2008) defined as “everyone in general, who once was part of a local congregation but has since neglected the fellowship of the church” (p.20). The term un-churched refers to any individual who has never attended a church (Stetzer, et al., 2009).

Much research has been conducted on the reasons Millennials leave the church, revealing several primary causes. According to Waters and Bortree (2012), one reason for the high dropout rate among Millennials is that churches have done a poor job of adapting to the differing attitudes and needs of Millennials, resulting in declining participation. “Religious denominations must be willing to engage in spiritual

conversations with potential members and make legitimate attempts to help them resolve personal and organizational conflicts” (p. 212).

A second reason for the high dropout rate among Millennials is that they did not feel they were a valued part of the church. Rainer and Rainer (2008) reported that Millennials said they wanted responsibility; they wanted to play a role in the life of the church, but in most churches they were relegated to the sidelines when it came to participation in services and leadership (Rainer & Rainer). According to Rainier and Rainier, 85% of the 1,023 Millennials surveyed were frustrated because they felt their gifts and potential were unused by the church. According to the Hartford Institute for Religion Research (2013), the greater the rate of youth involvement there is in a church, the greater the church’s growth. Among the 11,077 growing churches the Hartford Institute for Religion Research studied, 58% or 6,425 indicated a high level of youth involvement in their church. According to Hadaway (2006) who surveyed 884 randomly chosen congregations across the United States, congregations that failed to involve youth in their worship services declined in attendance by 32%. Researchers agree that if churches want to attract Millennials they will need to involve them in leading and serving.

A third reason for the dropout rate is that Millennials said they did not feel connected relationally within the church (Rainer & Rainer, 2011). Millennials reported desiring mentoring relationships where older adults teach them and where they can inform and teach older adults, which is called reverse mentoring (Chaudhuri & Ghosh, 2011). Three out of four Millennials indicated they would welcome a mentor who could teach them how to become a better leader (Rainer & Rainer). Reverse mentoring is not

just a phenomenon Millennials desire in the church context; many companies have utilized reverse mentoring in order to keep millennial employees engaged and leverage the expertise of both groups (Chaudhuri & Ghosh).

A fourth reason Millennials said that they dropped out of church is because of the hypocrisy they saw in the church. When surveyed, 67% of Millennials responded that they believed the church was full of hypocrites (Stetzer, et al., 2009). Davidson and Hogue (as cited in Waters & Bortree, 2012) reported that Millennials have left the church “because of the scandals that have plagued religious leaders (p. 201).

A fifth reason Millennials reported dropping out of the church is that they saw the church as inwardly focused and failing to meet the needs of the community (Rainer & Rainer, 2008). Young Adults believe that the church should be making a difference in the communities they reside in by meeting needs in those communities (Stetzer, et al., 2009). The missional or incarnational movement is one that has resonated with younger Christians. The word incarnation in the Bible means *in the flesh*. These movements teach that Christians are on a mission from God to impact their communities *in the flesh* or by their physical presence (Hirsch, 2008). According to Hadaway (2006), 43% of the parishioners that attended growing churches indicated that their church had a clear mission and purpose.

Stetzer et al. (2009), Rainer and Rainer (2011), and Barna (2014) have identified numerous reasons why Millennials have left the church citing busyness, disagreements with church stances on politics and social issues, and wanting a break from church. This pattern of decline in Millennial church attendance has led to concern on the part of church leaders about how to effectively attract Millennials to their churches.

Therefore, while the researcher offers a great deal of background information concerning Millennials and the issues surrounding their lack of church attendance and relationship with the church, the purpose of the current study was to discover why Millennials were attracted to some Assembly of God churches located in the Midwest and not others. To do this, the researcher examined the characteristics that were present in Assembly of God churches that had effectively attracted Millennials versus the characteristics in Assembly of God churches that had failed to attract Millennials. The current study also examined how the experiences of Millennials differed between these high and low attraction churches.

Despite a pattern of decline in Millennial church attendance, some churches have found ways to effectively attract Millennials and engage them in the life of their congregation. What is their secret? What are they doing that other churches are not?

In their research, Stetzer, et al. (2009), as well as Briggs (2013) found the following characteristics present in churches that effectively attracted Millennials. The first characteristic was a sense of community and belonging. A second characteristic was that they created opportunities for Millennials to serve others and become part of something bigger than themselves. A third characteristic was that they provided a spiritually vibrant worship environment, which helped Millennials feel and connect with God. Sahlin and Roozen (2011) reported that electric guitars and the use of multi-media projection equipment were key components in creating this type of worship experience. The fourth characteristic present in high attraction churches was authentic, transparent, conversational communication. The pastors were conversational rather than preachy in their communication style and exhibited vulnerability, authenticity and honesty.

Millennials are looking for something that is real rather than sugarcoated. “Twenties want to be challenged to think about difficult messages” (Snodgrass as cited in Liautaud, n.d. para. 49). The fifth characteristic was that they emphasized cross-generational relationships between older and younger members of the congregation. The sixth characteristic of high attraction churches was that they communicated with Millennials using technology and social media. A seventh characteristic found in the churches studied was a team approach style of ministry that included and emphasized ministry to Millennials. An eighth characteristic of these churches was that they emphasized spiritual practices such as prayer and scripture reading. The ninth characteristic found in churches Millennials attended was gender balance. Women outnumber men in most churches (Pew Research Center, 2014), but Briggs reported the churches that attracted Millennials had higher percentages of men in their congregation. The tenth characteristic was that new church plants were more effective in attracting Millennials than established churches. According to Sahlin (as cited in Briggs) “one of the most effective ways to reach young adults is to launch new congregations” (para. 3).

Research conducted by Barna (Barna, 2014; Liautaud, n.d.) identified several other characteristics that were important to Millennials when choosing a church. They reported that Millennials wanted visual clarity. Visual clarity is when what a person sees and experiences visually when they walk into a church building matches the message heard in the service. Millennials indicated that good signage is important, because they will not ask when they cannot find something (Liautaud). They also indicated a desire for church architecture that encourages rest, reflection, and connection with God (Barna). In light of these reports, the researcher examined Millennials that attended Assembly of God

churches to determine what attracted them to their churches and what they preferred in a church.

Statement of the Problem

Without young adult participation, the future of the Church is in jeopardy. “The decline in Millennials’ affiliation causes significant management concerns for religious leaders” (Waters & Bortree, 2012, p. 201). According to Hadaway (2006), congregations in which more than 40% of their regular participants are over 60 are very unlikely to grow” (p. 3). Roozen (2011) reported that the aging of Protestant congregations is a factor that has contributed to the decline in church attendance and will grow worse in coming years. Therefore, one of the most important aspects of a growing church is the ability to attract young adults and families with children (Hadaway). Currently, the median size of churches in the United States is 76 participants on Sunday morning (including children), according to the National Congregations in 21st Century America (Chaves & Eagle, 2015). According to the same study, those 35 years old and younger represent just 26% of those attending Sunday morning services. According to the Pew Research Center (2010) only 18% of Young Adults report attending religious services weekly (p. 9).

Because of this downward trend, churches need to find ways to reach and involve young adults in the life of the church. Further research is needed to identify strategies that will enable the church to attract young adults and subsequently involve them in the life of the church (van der Merwe et al., 2013).

According to Smith and Snell (2009), although there has been a decline in religious attendance among Millennials, there has not been a decline in the importance of

faith in their daily lives. Stetzer, et al. (2009) discovered encouraging news for churches concerning ministry to Millennials: Among 20 to 29 year olds, 89% indicated that if a Christian wanted to tell them what they believed about Christianity, they would be willing to listen. Within this group, 61% said they would be willing to study the Bible if a friend asked them to. Sixty three percent said that if a church presented truth to them in an understandable way that related to their life, they would attend. Fifty-eight percent reported that if they felt the church really cared about them as a person they would attend.

Stetzer et al. (2009) also reported that 74% or 1,343 of 1,815 Millennials surveyed believed that Christianity is a viable and relevant religion for today and 77% or 1,397 reported that believing in Jesus makes a positive difference in a person's life. Stetzer et al. believed that the results indicated that Millennials are open to returning to church, but they do not want to return to the same church they left, which they say lacks relevance and fails to understand their needs.

The purpose of the current study was to determine the factors that caused Millennials aged 18 to 34 to be attracted to some churches and not others. In this study, the characteristics and strategies of 27 churches deemed successful in attracting Millennials were examined to identify the reasons for their success. The information was contrasted with the same number of churches who were identified as unsuccessful in attracting Millennials. The current research study has been presented for the purpose of identifying Millennial preferences when choosing a church to attend. Information concerning the preferences of Millennials can then be used to equip church leaders with the necessary tools to more effectively attract Millennials to their churches.

Background

Change is a part of life, and has occurred in every generation throughout history. Tickle (2008), talked about the *new season* of radical change that has affected every area of society including the church. Those changes have been rapid and all encompassing. “Intellectually, politically, economically, culturally, sociologically, religiously, psychologically, every part of us and how we live has, to some greater or lesser degree, been reconfigured and those changes are now becoming a genuine maelstrom around us” (Tickle, 2012, p. 25). By their own admission, the beliefs and behaviors of this generation are very different from the generations before them, as stated by a Millennial named Archie who said, “We are really different from either Gen X or the Boomers” (Rainer & Rainer, 2011, p.15).

These differences extend beyond religious preferences into the overarching worldview of the millennial generation according to Rainer and Rainer (2011). An example of this would be how Millennials view work/life balance compared to previous generations. The issue of work/life balance is important to this generation (Becton, Walker & Jones-Farmer, 2014). While Millennials want to be financially secure and make a good income, they are unwilling to become workaholics in order to get ahead (Rainer & Rainer, 2011). They value time spent with their families and friends more than career advancement. This has led previous generations to label them as lazy and unwilling to do whatever it takes to get the job done. The truth is that they have chosen to adopt a value system that is the opposite of the Baby Boomer generation, who often sacrificed family time and relationships in pursuit of their careers (Smith & Galbraith, 2012). When given the choice between a 10% raise and two extra days of vacation,

Millennials chose the latter in order to be with their families (Smith & Galbraith).

This generation, unlike previous generations has been affected by the speed of technological advance that has occurred in our culture. Millennials have grown up in the world of the cell phone. “Seven out of 10 Millennials say the cell phone is vital in their lives” (Rainer & Rainer, 2011, p.43). Some of the methods of communication they utilize include texting, Facebook, Snapchat, and email. According to a Pew Research (2010) study, 75% of 18-29 year olds have a profile on a social networking site. Because of their immersion into technology, the Millennials have been referred to as the *connected generation* (Pew Research Center).

According to Booher (2016), Millennials are more connected to technology than any previous generation. One reason this generation communicates more often is because of the high value they place on relationships. According to Rainer and Rainer (2011), when Millennials were asked what was most important in their lives, 61% or 732 of the 1,200 surveyed responded that family was the most important thing in their lives, followed by their friends. One of the reasons relationship is so important to this age group is because they have seen and experienced the disintegration of the family to a greater degree than any other generation. Surprisingly, Millennial views of marriage are traditional with 80% stating that they only plan to marry once (Rainer & Rainer).

When it comes to the subject of religion and the church, Millennials embrace some beliefs that are very different compared to previous generations, however, they are no different when it comes to some traditional beliefs. For instance, out of 1,865 Millennials surveyed, (75% vs. 74%) are just as likely as older adults to believe in life

after death, heaven (74% each), hell (62% vs. 59%), and miracles (78% vs. 79%) (Pond, Smith & Clement, 2010, p. 16). According to Hall and Delport (2013), one of the areas where Millennials differ in philosophy with the past is that they do not feel the need to attend church services. However, 80% indicated that spiritual principles guide their lives (Hall & Delport). According to Schweitzer (as cited in Hall & Delport), spirituality has increased in postmodern times, but that increase has not occurred in the area of institutional religion.

The spirituality espoused by many Millennials is a reflection of postmodernism, which is based on personal experience as opposed to church doctrine. Postmodern spirituality emphasizes the element of personal choice and choosing the aspects of religion that suit the person (Hall & Delport, 2013). It is common for this generation to blend beliefs from various religions, self-help gurus, and philosophies into a unique, personalized spiritual system (Rainer & Rainer, 2011). Eighty-one percent of Millennials say they believe in the existence of God, however, their idea of God may differ from previous generations. Fifty eight percent believe that the God of the Bible is no different from the gods worshipped by other world religions (Stetzer et al., 2009). The reality is that religion and church attendance is very low on the priority list for most Millennials, because they do not see church attendance as essential or relevant to their lives (Rainer & Rainer, 2008).

The role of the church is to be people of hope and foster hope in a world that is losing meaning and value. By doing so, the church can become an essential and relevant influence in the lives of Millennials (Horell, 2004).

Churches with a desire to attract Millennials will benefit from understanding what motivates them. Because of their value system, one of the best ways to attract and motivate this generation is through relationship and connection. “The best way to get a Millennial involved in a service, activity, or ministry is through relationship (Rainer & Rainer, 2011, p. 105). Waters and Bortree (2012) found that involvement with a religious institution is related to how Millennials perceive their relationship with that institution. Chang-Ho and Tameifuna (2011) found that a caring relationship by youth pastors with their youth was more important than programs in shaping youth attitudes toward the church. Millennials reported that they left the church because of a lack of relationship or a relational conflict of some kind. Often, the conflict involved the churches belief system and practices. “The top down approach toward religious beliefs and attitudes passed from spiritual leaders to their followers has been rejected by young adults” (Waters & Bortree, p. 202).

Because they value relationship, Millennials are also motivated by teamwork and collaboration. Finn and Donovan (2013) found that it is imperative for supervisors to “emphasize teamwork, appreciation and support” (p.8) when working with Millennials. According to Thompson and Gregory (2012) the millennial generation also desires and values feedback on a regular basis from those with whom they work. When there is a lack of feedback and connection they may feel alienated. Whether it is in the work force or the church, Millennials desire to have a participatory voice in organizations. “A leadership style rooted in the individual consideration domain of transformational leadership - one that promotes relationships and meeting individual needs are the

managers who will most successfully attract, motivate, and retain their Millennial employees” (Thompson & Gregory, p. 243).

Millennials are also motivated by a desire for meaning and purpose in the work they do. In a study conducted by Smith and Galbraith (2012), 85% of the participants stated that meaningful work was the number one factor when considering potential jobs. Ninety six percent of Millennials believe that they can do something great (Rainer & Rainer 2011). This generation is passionate about making a difference in the world; unlike some in previous generations, they do not define greatness according to wealth, fame, and power. They define greatness as “doing something that makes a difference” (Rainer & Rainer, p. 18). Millennials have left the ranks of the church because they perceive the church has lost its passion and vision to change the world (Erlacher, 2012). One Millennial stated, “I was never challenged personally at the church where I grew up” (Rainer & Rainer, p. 34).

Researchers (Stetzer, et al., 2009; Briggs, 2013; Sahlin & Roozen, 2011) have identified several characteristics of churches that have successfully attracted Millennials to the church. The researcher used some of these characteristics to examine Millennial participation in the Assembly of God churches that participated in this study. This study administered surveys to two groups: senior pastors and the Millennials that attended their churches. The first goal of the surveys was to determine what characteristics Millennials preferred when choosing the churches they attended based on their experiences. A second goal was to survey Senior Pastors in order to determine the difference between the characteristics of high and low attraction churches. Characteristics examined in this study included but were not limited to: leadership style; music style; relevance of the sermons;

small group community; cross-generational connectivity; investment in spiritual formation; a caring, accepting and authentic environment; architecture and use of space; and the presence of a caring and authentic atmosphere (van der Merwe et al., 2013; Rainer & Rainer, 2011; Barna, 2014).

The researcher examined Assembly of God churches in the current study. The Assemblies of God was founded in 1914 in Hot Springs, Arkansas by a coalition of 300 ministers who desired to work together to fulfill common objectives, such as sending missionaries and providing fellowship and accountability (“Assemblies of God,” 2014). The Assemblies of God was birthed in the midst of the Azusa Street revival, which lasted from 1906 to 1915. The Assemblies of God quickly took root in other countries. It is currently the largest Pentecostal organization in the world with 67 million members worldwide (“Assemblies of God”). The uniqueness of the Assemblies of God lies in the fact that it is a voluntary cooperative fellowship rather than a denomination. While Assembly of God churches share many common characteristics, as a voluntary cooperative fellowship each Assemblies of God church has the freedom to develop its own unique personality and style.

As of the beginning of this study, the Assemblies of God had 12,849 churches and three million members in the United States (“Assemblies of God,” 2014). At the time of the current study, the Illinois District of the Assemblies of God reported 296 active churches and 54,659 members (“Assemblies of God”). In 1949, the Assemblies of God joined the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE). Two Assembly of God ministers have since served as presidents of the NAE: General Superintendent Thomas F.

Zimmerman served as president for the NAE from 1960 to 1962 and Don Argue served from 1992 to 1998.

The Assemblies of God is considered an Evangelical organization. There are four statements to which denominations must agree in order to be considered Evangelical. The first is that the Bible is the highest authority for belief. The second is that it is very important to personally encourage non-Christians to trust Jesus Christ as their Savior. The third is that Jesus Christ's death on the cross is the only sacrifice that can remove the penalty of sin. The fourth is that only those who trust in Jesus Christ alone as their Savior receive God's free gift of eternal salvation (National Association of Evangelicals, 2016).

According to a 2016 Pew Research Center Report, the national average for Millennial church attendance in Evangelical churches is 19% (Lipka, 2016). According to the 2014 Annual Church Ministries Report, the average for Millennial attendance in Illinois Assembly of God churches was 18%. According to these statistics, Millennial attendance patterns in general Evangelicalism and Assembly of God churches in Illinois appear to be similar.

Research Questions

The study was guided by the following questions:

1. What characteristics are different in churches that have demonstrated an ability to attract Millennials versus those that have not?
2. What differences exist in the experiences of Millennials in churches that demonstrated an ability to attract Millennials versus those that did not?
3. What characteristics do Millennials prefer when choosing a church?

4. What church characteristics are most likely to be related to Millennial church attendance?

Description of Terms

The following definitions provide specificity to the unique terms used in this study:

Assemblies of God: The General Council of the Assemblies of God is the largest Pentecostal denomination in the world, and its headquarters are located in Springfield, Missouri. (“Assemblies of God”, 2014)

Millennials: This term refers to individuals born after 1980 (Pew Research Center, 2010; Waters & Bortree, 2012).

Drop Out: Refers to “an individual that has left the church between the ages of 18 and 22” (Rainer & Rainer, 2008, p. 20).

De-Churched: Refers to “any individual that once was part of a local congregation but has since neglected the fellowship of the church” (Rainer & Rainer, 2008, p. 20).

Un-Churched: Refers to individuals who do not belong to any church (Rainer & Rainer, 2008, p. 20).

Postmodernism: “Postmodernism is largely a reaction against the philosophical assumptions and values of the modern period of Western history” (Duignan, 2014, para. 3). The modern period of Western history lasted from the time of the scientific revolution in the 16th and 17th centuries to the mid-20th century (Duignan). “Postmodernism is the philosophical proposal that reality is ultimately inaccessible by human investigation, that knowledge is a social construction, that truth-claims are political power plays, and that the meaning of words is to be determined by readers not authors” (“Postmodern Theory”,

2016, para. 1). Postmodernism teaches that truth and reality are whatever an individual or social group makes it to be (McDowell, 1999).

Significance of the Study

Because of the rapidly shifting culture, many churches have struggled to understand Millennials, which has led to the inability to attract and maintain Millennial participation in local congregations. In many cases, churches and pastors lack awareness that the environment they have created is not conducive to attracting Millennial attendance and participation in their congregations. “If the younger generations are going to be impacted with the Christian message, the community of believers must not start with an evaluation of the generation, but begin with an evaluation of the church” (Blank & Ballard, 2002, p. 16).

The solution to reversing the declining rate of Millennial attendance in churches is multi-faceted. Yes, churches must take the time to understand the unique beliefs, behaviors, and needs of this generation, but it cannot end there. Churches must be willing to examine their attitudes, practices, methodologies, and environment and be willing to change if they hope to reverse the current trend and attract Millennials. The purpose of this study was to help church leaders understand what characteristics attract Millennials between the ages of 18 and 34 to the church in order to equip congregations to more effectively reach this generation. Millennials have not lost their faith; they are just tired of church as usual and are hungry for spiritual experiences that are real, relevant, and authentic (Rainer & Rainer, 2008). Churches must do the hard work of translating and presenting the mission and message of Christ to Millennials in a way that is meaningful

to their lives (Blank & Ballard, 2012). This study is significant because effective tools are needed to help church leaders reach, engage, and disciple younger generations.

Process to Accomplish

This section of the dissertation outlines: how research questions were answered, who the population group was for this study and how that sample group was selected and incentivized, what the measurement tools used in this study were and how they were created, and how the data was collected and analyzed. In order to answer the research questions, the researcher used a quantitative research methodology that consisted of two separate survey instruments.

The first survey instrument was given to the pastors of the churches involved in the study in order to determine the characteristics of those churches. The second survey was given to the Millennials who attended the churches in order to assess the experiences they had with those churches and their personal preferences regarding the characteristics they most desired in a church. From these survey tools, the researcher was able to gather and assess quantitative data from the Pastors and Millennials who participated in the study.

Participants

The Illinois District of the Assemblies of God provided the researcher with data from the Annual Church Ministries Report (ACMR) in order to determine the average Millennial attendance in churches in 2014. One hundred and sixty two churches reported attendance numbers for Millennials. Based on the data, the average percentage of Millennials who attended Assembly of God churches in 2014 represented 18% of the total attendance in each church on any given Sunday.

The target population for this study was Millennials aged 18 to 34 who were attending Assembly of God churches at the time of the study. Three criteria were used to select the churches for this research study. The first criterion was that churches that participated in this study had to have a Millennial population that was one standard deviation above the average of 18% in Assembly of God churches. One standard deviation for churches was calculated to be 8.96 percentage points. All churches whose average Millennial population was one standard deviation above the average, which was 27% or higher, were deemed to be churches that were successful in attracting Millennials to the church. Based on the criteria, 27 churches were identified as high attraction churches.

A second criterion was used to identify low attraction churches, which enabled the researcher to compare data across both groups for the study. Churches that had a Millennial population that was one standard deviation below the state average, which was 10% or lower, were deemed unsuccessful in attracting Millennials to the church. Based on these criteria, 27 churches were identified as low attraction churches. Churches that fell between one standard deviation above and one standard deviation below the state average were not used for this study. The third criterion used in this study was that the congregational profile survey had to be completed by the Senior Pastor of each participating church in order to ensure continuity with smaller churches that did not have staff pastors.

Sample

The data for this study was collected from participating churches in Illinois between August and November of 2016. It was important to specify the district in which

this study was conducted due to differences in Assembly of God districts. The identities of the churches were kept anonymous. Convenience sampling was used in the selection of participants for this study (Gay, Mills & Airasian, 2012). Millennials and senior pastors from participating high and low attraction churches who agreed to participate in the study became the sample group. The demographic make-up of the sample group surveyed in this study was comprised of males and females from a variety of different ethnicities, educational levels, and geographic locations within the selected Midwestern state.

Instrument

A descriptive quantitative survey (Gay et al., 2012; Leedy & Ormrod, 2013) was administered to Millennials in this study. This survey developed for the current study was based on two measurement instruments, The Faith Communities Today Survey (Houseal, 2010) and the Seventh-Day Adventist Young Adult Study (Barna, 2013), which were used with permission. While each of these was an established instrument, there were no reported studies on reliability available for either of them. The researcher used both instruments in order to gather the information necessary to answer the research questions in this study. The Faith Communities Today Survey (Houseal) provided the foundational questions for this survey. Questions from the Seventh-Day Adventist Young Adult Study (Barna) were used to supplement the survey and provided specific questions targeted at Millennials.

The researcher modified a total of 21 questions from each of the two instruments by converting the questions into a five-point Likert scale format in order to facilitate comparisons and allow for continuity in scoring the scales. The researcher modified 14

questions from the Faith Communities Today Survey (Houseal, 2010), and seven questions from the Seventh-Day Adventist Young Adult Survey (Barna, 2013) in this manner. Some questions from the original measurement scales were eliminated in order to reduce the size of the survey and minimize participant fatigue or because the questions were not applicable. The data from this survey was used to gather information about Millennial experiences in the churches they attended and the characteristics they preferred in a church.

The Millennial survey consisted of six sections: about you, my congregation, worship service, mission and identity, programs, and leadership. The information asked in these sections ranged from demographic information to questions that rated various aspects of Millennial experiences in the churches they attended.

Participants were asked to respond to survey questions using several formats. Millennials were asked to respond to questions using a five-point Likert scale that ranged from: *strongly agree* to *strongly disagree*, *very satisfied* to *very dissatisfied*, and *very important* to *not important*. Further questions in the survey asked participants to respond using multiple-choice and fill in the blank formats.

The Senior Pastor survey developed for this study was based on the United States Congregational Profile Survey (Barnett, 2008), and the Faith Communities Today Survey (Houseal, 2010). The researcher paid to use the United States Congregational Profile Survey (Barnett), and was granted permission to use the Faith Communities Today Survey (Houseal). While each of these scales was an established instrument, there were no reported studies on reliability available for either of these scales. This survey was used to gather information to answer research questions one and three of the current study. The

Faith Communities Today Survey (Houseal) provided the foundational questions for this survey. Senior Pastors and Millennials were asked the same questions where applicable, which allowed the researcher to compare and contrast their responses.

The researcher modified questions from each of the two instruments by converting certain questions to fit a five-point Likert scale format in order to facilitate comparisons and allow for continuity in scoring the scales. The researcher modified three questions from the United States Congregational Life Survey (Barnett, 2008), and two questions from the Faith Communities Today Survey (Houseal, 2010) in this manner. There were questions in the original measurement scales that were not used in order to reduce the size of the survey and minimize fatigue or because they were not applicable.

The Senior Pastor survey was divided into the same six sections as the Millennial survey, and the questions followed the same pattern and format. Senior Pastors who took the survey were asked to respond to questions using the following formats: five-point Likert scale, multiple choice, and fill in the blank.

In both surveys, Likert scale questions were scored using a five-point system, which provided ordinal data. The researcher analyzed the data using Mann-Whitney U tests. The survey also contained questions that provided interval and categorical data. Independent *t*-tests were used on all interval data and chi-square analysis was used on all categorical data. A Hochberg correction was performed on the results from the first and second research questions in order to account for familywise errors due to multiple comparisons and determine the characteristics most likely to be related to Millennial church attendance (McLaughlin & Sainani, 2014). Fill in the blank and multiple-choice questions were given numeric values whenever possible to aid in reporting frequency

counts and percentages from the data. All fill in the blank questions were quantitative in nature and required that participants identify a specific number or percent in their response. Because of the nature of the questions it was not possible to generate subscale scores for the survey sections.

Process

The data for this study was collected from Millennials, aged 18 to 34, and Senior Pastors who were a part of Assembly of God churches in that met the criteria established for this study. The survey was administered using an online software tool called SurveyMonkey®.

The Senior Pastors from each congregation who met the criteria were contacted by regular mail and email by the researcher and asked to participate in the study. Each pastor was given the SurveyMonkey® web site address for participating in the survey as well as instructions and materials to present to the Millennials in the congregations asking for their participation.

In order to gain a higher rate of return on the survey, the pastors were offered an incentive, which opened the door to the possibility of bias. The researcher acknowledged that while offering incentives created the possibility for bias, the risks were minimal compared to the gain of acquiring a larger sample group. Senior Pastors were offered a book of their choice by the researcher, as well as a finished copy of this research study in the summer of 2018. At the end of the survey senior pastors were given the opportunity to provide their contact information, if they wished to receive the incentives. The names of pastors who provided contact information were placed in a locked safe in the home of the researcher until the study was completed. Once copies of the study were

disseminated, the contact information was destroyed. The names of participating pastors were coded so that the researcher was able to identify responses from the Millennials they pastored and whether it was a high or low attraction church.

Millennials in participating congregations were asked to participate in the online survey by their senior pastor or ministry leader. Instruction cards were distributed to the Millennials in participating churches via church bulletin and email. The instruction cards contained the web site address, as well as instructions for participating in the online survey. In order to gain a higher rate of return for the survey, participants were incentivized, which opened the door for the possibility of bias. Participants were informed that those who completed the survey would be entered into a drawing to be held in January 2017, to win their choice of either a new iPad or a laptop computer.

Millennials were also given the opportunity to receive a copy of the completed study in the summer of 2018. At the end of the survey, participants were given the opportunity to provide the researcher with their contact information in order to be entered into the drawing. The names of those sharing their contact information were converted into a numeric number and the name key was placed in a safe in the home of the researcher until a copy of the study was sent to them in the summer of 2018 at which time their contact information was destroyed. The names of participating Millennials were coded in order to match them with the pastor of the church they attended and identify whether they were part of a high or low attraction church. The researcher acknowledged that while offering incentives created a possibility for bias in this study, the risks were minimal compared to the gain created from acquiring a larger sample group.

Senior Pastors and Millennials were asked to identify their church at the beginning of the survey so that the researcher could identify whether participants attended high or low attraction churches. Participating churches were identified with a numeric number to insure anonymity in the current study.

Analysis

This study was guided by the following research questions and the following methods of analysis. Research question one was: What characteristics can be found in churches that have demonstrated an ability to attract Millennials versus those that have not? To answer this question, data that was obtained from churches that were deemed successful in reaching Millennials and those that were not were compared. A descriptive analysis was used to identify if any differences existed between high and low attraction churches. Descriptive research is designed to describe the “current state of affairs at the time of the study,” (Salkind, 2012, p. 197) and helps the researcher understand how events that are occurring in the present relate to other factors.

The researcher compared across variables to determine if there were significant differences in the characteristics between the churches. Independent sample *t*-tests were done on the interval data that was collected in the study. Chi-square tests were performed on the categorical data in order to compare the characteristics found in high versus low attraction churches (Leedy & Ormrod, 2013). Mann-Whitney U tests were used to analyze the ordinal data from the survey in order to compare the characteristics found in high versus low attraction churches. Because of the large number of variables in this study, which required numerous tests, a Hochberg correction was used to adjust for familywise errors due to multiple comparisons.

The second research question was: What differences exist in the experiences of Millennials in churches that demonstrated an ability to attract Millennials versus those that did not? The researcher used several types of inferential statistics in order to answer this question (Salkind, 2012). Mann-Whitney U tests were employed to identify any differences between the two groups based on the ordinal data. Chi-square analysis was used to determine any differences between the groups based on the categorical data of the experiences identified by Millennials. The researcher also used Spearman-Rho correlations to analyze questions 27, 32, 33, and 35 of the Millennial survey to determine any differences between the experiences of Millennials in high and low attraction churches. A Hochberg correction was used on the results of these tests to adjust for familywise errors due to multiple comparisons.

The third research question was: What characteristics do Millennials prefer when choosing a church? In order to answer this question a descriptive analysis using frequency counts was used to determine which characteristics were most meaningful to Millennials when choosing a church.

The fourth research question was: What characteristics are most likely to be related to Millennial church attendance? In order to answer this question, the researcher used a Hochberg correction procedure on each of the statistically significant findings from research questions one and two in order to determine which characteristics were most likely to be related to Millennial church attendance (McLaughlin & Sainani, 2014).

By using these methods of analysis, the researcher was able to identify which characteristics were most likely to be related to Millennial church attendance, and gained a better understanding of the preferences and experiences of Millennials who attended

Assembly of God churches. The information gained from the current study enabled the researcher to provide church leaders with greater insight and understanding about Millennial church attendance.

Summary

This study examined characteristics and methodologies that can be employed by churches in order to attract higher rates of Millennial attendance and participation in the local church. Previous research had identified a drastic decrease in Millennial attendance and affiliation with religious organizations, which poses a threat to the future livelihood of the church and its mission. However, in the midst of this alarming trend, there are also reasons to be encouraged, because although church attendance has declined, the desire to pursue spirituality among this age group has remained. With this information in mind, the current study surveyed the experiences and preferences of Millennials in Assembly of God churches that met the criteria in order to discover the characteristics that attracted them to attend those churches. The Senior Pastors of those same churches were also surveyed in order to determine the differences in the characteristics between churches that were deemed successful in attracting Millennials and those who were not. The researcher's goal for the current study was to provide ministry leaders and churches with information that would help them to create an environment in their churches conducive to attracting 18 to 34 year olds. In order for ministry leaders and churches to reach Millennials, it is important that they are aware of the research that has already been done on Millennials.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

Approximately every 500 years, western civilization, particularly the Church, has been marked by a period of significant change and upheaval (Tickle, 2012), in which a major transformation or shift has occurred in society. A prime example is the Protestant Reformation of the 1500s led by Martin Luther, which opened the floodgate for a series of drastic and revolutionary changes religiously, politically, economically, scientifically, and socially. Another example of a cataclysmic shift that turned society upside down occurred 2000 years ago when Jesus Christ lived, taught, died, and rose again. The last event is what makes Christianity so unique among world faiths. That cultural shift was so dramatic that today we mark that time period on our calendar with the designations *before Christ (B.C.)* and *(A.D.)*, which means *in the year of our Lord* (Tickle).

Each of these *reformations* hit society like a tsunami, changing the landscape in a manner that made it impossible to return to *life as usual*. In the year 2000, at the beginning of the new Millennium, another reformation began. This reformation has been led by the Millennial generation who think differently, and therefore, have challenged many of the traditional views and values held by previous generations (Graham, 2014). These differences have created discomfort in a number of areas of society, including the church. Strauss and Howe (1997) referred to the social cycle of generational change and

challenge that takes place in a society as the *fourth turning*. Strauss and Howe identified four stages within this cycle. The first stage begins with a *catalyst*, which is a “startling event, or sequence of events that produce a sudden shift in mood” (Strauss & Howe, p. 16). The second stage is *regeneracy*, which is the presentation and struggle over the creation of a new set of vision and values. The third stage is the *climax*, which occurs when the old vision and values finally die and give way to new ones. And the final stage is *resolution*, which is when the new vision and values are accepted and implemented into the culture. According to Strauss and Howe, this process of change is accompanied by a period of fear, uncertainty, and doubt in society.

In order to better understand the radical shifts and changes taking place, and to create a roadmap for the future that will attract and engage Millennial participation in society and the church, it is necessary to examine the existing literature on Millennials. It is also necessary to have an understanding of the role Postmodernism has played in creating the climate that gave birth to the current societal shifts and changes.

Postmodernism began to overtake the standing philosophy of Modernism after WWII when the belief people had of being able to create a peaceful, harmonious society based on rational thought and intellect collapsed, creating a lack of confidence in humanity’s judgment and ability, as well as objective truth (Ki, 2010). Modernism was introduced during the Age of Reason or Enlightenment and emphasized the pursuit of order, unity, and self-discipline (Bristow, 2011). Modernism relied on the scientific method in order to define and determine truth.

In comparison, Postmodernism is comfortable with disorder, embracing pluralism, which is the belief in “two or more kinds of ultimate reality” (Pluralism,

2016). Postmodernism argued that science was not adequate for defining truth because there were many things science could not explain. Postmodernism taught that objective truth could not be known and was ultimately to be determined by the individual (Mohler, 2005). According to Golden (2013), “at the heart of Postmodernism is a war for the definition of truth and for the authority to determine what is truth” (para. 7). Postmodern views related to pluralism, truth, authority, and disorder have impacted how people view the world. The prevalence of Postmodernism during the Millennial generation has shaped and impacted how Millennials think about morality, truth, values, and cultural expectations compared to previous generations (Toledo, 2007).

Reviewing the literature will give us a clearer understanding of the attitudes, behaviors, views, values, and lifestyles that fuel this generation. According to DeMaria (2013), Millennials, “will have a unique and transformational impact on the world” (2013, p. 1654). This chapter examines the literature related to the characteristics, traits, values, and views of those born between 1980 and the early 2000s, commonly referred to as the Millennial generation (Guldalian, 2013; Winograd & Hais, 2011), and how their views differ from previous generations. This chapter also focuses on the existing research literature explaining how Millennial involvement has impacted the workplace, education, technology, church, and social norms. Since the focus of the current research project is the discovery of common characteristics predictive of Millennial church attendance, this chapter will also present research literature that has examined strategies for how churches can effectively attract and engage Millennials.

An Overview: Who Are the Millennials?

The Millennials comprise the largest and most diverse generation, both ethnically and racially (DeMaria, 2013; 2011Mendelson, 2013; Winograd & Hais). In 2015, Millennials between the ages of 18 and 34 numbered 83 million members as opposed to Baby Boomers who numbered 75 million members (United States Census Bureau Report, 2015). In 2015, Millennials represented the most racially diverse generation in history, with 44% being part of a minority race or ethnic group (United States Census Bureau Report). Millennials also represented 30% of the voting population, and 38% of the work force in America (Frey, 2016).

According to Brandau (2012), Millennials are difficult to define as a whole because they are less homogenous than other generations. Based on a Boston Consulting Group survey of 4,000 Millennials, Brandau identified six categories of Millennials for marketing companies. The first category was the *hip-ennial*, who is a cautious, globally aware and information-hungry consumer. The second category was the *Millennial mom* defined a health oriented, digital savvy female consumer. The third category was the *gadget-guru Millennial*, who is a successful, free spirited, single male consumer. The fourth category was the *clean and green Millennial* who is a cause driven, health oriented, optimistic consumer. The fifth category was the *old-school Millennial*, who is cautious and more likely to be Hispanic. And the final category was the *Anti-Millennial*, who is a locally-minded, conservative consumer.

While the name Millennial, first used by Howe and Strauss (1991) is the most widely used term to refer to this generation (Howe & Strauss), they have also been identified by several other names in literature, such as Generation Y, Echo Boomers,

Digital Natives, and the iGeneration (Kjaerstad, 2014). The age group between 18 and 29 have also been referred to as *emerging adults*, based on Arnett's (2000) groundbreaking theory of emerging adulthood. Arnett argued that a new stage of development called emerging adulthood needed to be created because "changes over the past half century have altered the nature of development in the late teens and twenties" (p. 469). According to Arnett, three changes that have affected Millennial development have been the rise of postmodernity, the advancement of technology, and globalization. Arnett identified five characteristics present during the age of emerging adulthood. The first characteristic was *identity exploration*, which is a time of trying out various possibilities and experiences in life. The second characteristic was *instability*, and the third was *self-focus*. The fourth characteristic was *transition*, or feeling like one is in-between adolescence and adulthood. And the final characteristic was *possibilities*, when "hope flourishes, and people have an unparalleled opportunity to transform their lives" (Arnett, 2012, p. 8).

It is during this stage of emerging adulthood that a large portion of a Millennial's social identity develops. According to Giddens (1991), identity is the vehicle that individuals use to understand and interpret themselves. A person's social identity is shaped from the feedback of others and how they fit into various social groups. Millennials derive much of their identity from how they differ from the generations that preceded them (Guerrero, Anderson & Afifi, 2014). According to Twenge (2009), societal shifts and changes are often reflected in changes in the generations. In other words, to understand a particular generation, researchers must study that generation in the cultural and historical context in which it existed. Twenge (2006) believed that, in most

cases, the time of a person's birth was more important to a person's identity than their upbringing or socialization.

Several things should be noted about the identity of Millennials. First, one way that Millennials manage their social identity is through the relationships they maintain on social media (Kjaerstad, 2014). Although many Millennials want to portray a strong image when it comes to their public persona (Twenge, 2006), in a study done by Yerbury (2010), which consisted of interviews with 24 Millennials who were active in civil society online, they admitted that "they were immature, still developing their sense of self, and still working out their values and how to present them" (p. 28). Twenge also discovered that one component of Millennial identity was the desire to be unique and different, with an emphasis on individuality and being yourself. Yerbury reported that while Millennials live with a great deal of uncertainty, they also possess confidence and optimism. This may be attributed to the unique relationship Millennials have had with their parents. Kjaerstad describes Millennials as the *wanted generation*. Societal shifts in parenting over the last generation have given rise to a phenomenon known as *helicopter parents* (Fingerman et al. 2012).

The term helicopter parent was first used by Ginnott (1969) and was also used by Cline and Fay (1990). By the year 2011 the term had become so popular that it was included in the dictionary (Bayless, 2013). Dr. Anne Dunnewold (2007), defined helicopter parenting as "being involved in a child's life in a way that is overcontrolling, overprotecting, and, overperfecting, and is in excess of responsible parenting" (p. 16). This style of parenting, which has occurred over the past four decades, represented a major shift in the parent-child relationship of previous generations (Fingerman et al.,

2012). Bayless and Somers and Settle (2010) have offered possible explanations for this phenomenon. The first is that the parents fear their child will fail to succeed, and experience hurt and disappointment. Second, parents overcompensate with their children because they were ignored, rejected or unloved by their parents. These feelings also keep parents from letting go. Third, parents feel pressure when watching others, making them feel guilty for not being more involved in the life of their own child. Fourth, there is a perception by parents that competition to get into a good college is strong, therefore, they must help their child with the college entrance process. Fifth, the advent of technology has made helicoptering easy. Parents are able to stay connected with their children around the clock via cell phone. Keppler, Mullendore, and Carey (2006) described the cell phone as the world's longest umbilical cord. A sixth reason for helicoptering is that parents may feel their young adult is not psychologically ready or capable of taking on certain responsibilities because of the prolonged period of emerging adulthood. And the final reason for helicoptering is the advent of child abductions, which has caused parents to maintain a vigilant watch over their children.

While much is reported about the negative effect that helicopter parenting has had on Millennials, Schiffren et al. (2014) reported that little research has been done on this topic. Schiffren et al. surveyed 297 college students and came to the conclusion that it is the type of parenting that one engages in, and not the amount of parenting that determines the positive or negative effectiveness of parenting (Schiffren et al.). It was determined by Schiffren et al., that parents who were overcontrolling produced children that had higher levels of depression and lower levels of satisfaction in their personal lives as well as their family life. Lemoyne and Buchanan (2011) reported that helicopter parenting led to an

increase in the use of prescription drugs among teens for depression. These effects were the result of an inability by parents to respect the child's needs for autonomy, which allows a child to develop competence and confidence. In their study, Bradley-Geist and Buchanan (2013) reported that overparenting was a major contributing factor to maladaptive workplace behavior by Millennials. It has been suggested by Caruso (2014), that helicopter parenting has also contributed to the rise of narcissism and a sense of entitlement among Millennials. Segrin, Wozidlo, Bauer, Givertz, & Murphy, (2012), reported that helicopter parenting promoted the notion in young adults that others should solve their problems for them. Padilla-Walker and Nelson (2012), reported that the development of decision-making skills as well as independence was hampered by the behavior of helicopter parents.

The news concerning helicopter parenting is not all bad. A research study done by Fingerman et al. (2012) reported that young adults whose parents had been intensely involved in appropriate ways in their lives experienced higher life satisfaction and better goal achievement than those who had little to no parental involvement. In particular, young adults reported that practical parental support and involvement during the transition years between high school and adulthood was very beneficial (Aquilino, 2006; Fingerman et al. 2012; Schoeni & Ross, 2005). According to Somers and Settle (2010), the issue of helicopter parents is "a complex behavior that requires much more extensive examination" (p. 8). It should be noted that in his research on Millennials, Smith and Snell (2009) reported that relatively few Millennials had problems with their parents. In fact, many Millennials had experienced a closer relationship with their parents, as they grew older.

Because of the longer transition into adulthood, Millennials are living at home longer, and when they do leave, they often boomerang back. According to a 2013 census (Vespa, Lewis & Kreider, 2013), there were more Millennials between 18 and 34 living at home in 2013, than there were in the early 2000s. According to the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth (1997-2009), which studied 9,000 young adults between 1997 and 2012, 54%, or 4,860 participants had moved back home at one time or another before the age of 27. The survey also reported that 21%, or 1,890 young adults were still living with their parents at age 27. Interestingly, Whites returned home more frequently than did Blacks or Latinos, but Latinos had the highest rate of Millennials still residing at home at age 27, followed by Blacks, then Whites. According to study results, the ability to earn higher wages was the greatest contributing factor to establishing and maintaining independence outside of the home, which leads to another issue that plays a vital role in understanding Millennials, the economy.

Research done by Stein, Hennigs, & Langner (2012) reported that Millennials are suffering from higher levels of stress and depression due to the strain of personal finances and the impact that changes in the United States economy had on them and their families. According to Taylor et al. (2012), the economic crash of 2008 impacted Millennials aged 18-24 to a greater degree than any other age group. Many Millennials have been unable to afford health insurance, often working multiple full, or part-time jobs to just to survive (Mendelson, 2013). According to a 2013 Harvard study, only 6 out of 10 Millennials were employed, with half of those jobs being part-time jobs (Donegan, 2013). College students have been the hardest hit by financial pressure because they have been saddled with a staggering amount of loan debt in order to earn a college degree (Stein et al.).

According to United States Student Loan Debt statistics (Josuweit, 2016), the average graduate owed \$37,172 in student debt. The financial stress faced by Millennials was not only related to the most recent economic crisis in America, but was also due to a lack of knowledge pertaining to managing personal finances. Many Millennials are ill-equipped when it comes to budgeting, credit cards, and managing loans and debt. The creation of free programs specifically designed to assist Millennials with their finances provides a great opportunity for the church to connect with Millennials (Serido, Mishra, & Tang, 2010).

A recurring theme in the lives of Millennials is transition and change. More than any other generation, Millennials have been tasked with navigating a constant stream of transition in their lives. One of those transitions may be the change in family dynamics due to divorce. Millennials have also experienced changes in their living arrangements. As they attempt to move away from home, they often find themselves returning again because of the inability to support themselves financially (Donegan, 2013). According to Smith and Snell (2009), “they go to college, they drop out, they transfer, they take a break for a semester to save money, some graduate, and some don’t” (p. 34). When it comes to jobs and careers, the same pattern applies. Even their relationships experience transition as they leave old friends and meet new friends, find a roommate, and then find another one, because the old one did not work out. According to Smith and Snell, there is very little in the life of a Millennial that is stable or enduring. Smith and Snell stated that “the central, fundamental driving focus in the life of nearly all emerging adults is getting to the point where they can stand on their own two feet” (p. 43). Because Millennials

have lived through so much change and transition, they avoid long term commitments and place a high value on flexibility (Kaifi, Kaifi, Khanfar, & Nafei, 2012).

Many Millennials lack a sense of confidence concerning the direction and purpose of their lives (Smith & Snell, 2009) due to the instability of the economy, unemployment, and changing cultural values. This lack of direction due to uncertainty can be seen in the fact that Millennials are living at home longer and getting married later (Henig & Henig, 2013). This lack of direction and purpose provides the church with a wonderful opportunity to engage Millennials in discussions about the meaning and purpose of life. Despite the difficult economic and global issues taking place in the world, the amazing reality is that the vast majority of Millennials have maintained their optimism regarding the future (Taylor & Keeter, 2010). Millennials choose to live a no regrets lifestyle, choosing to keep the past in the past where it belongs.

Millennials are the most educated generation in history (United States Chamber of Commerce Foundation, 2012). Many Millennials place a high value on education and believe that it is important to finish school and get a good education. Millennials have been raised to believe that they are special, and that they “can be anything they want to be,” and do anything they want to do (Biaggi, 2014, p. 6). Because of this, Millennials believe that they can change the world, and feel an obligation to do so by making the world a better place (Smith & Snell, 2009). Millennials have been referred to as the *trophy generation* because they are used to getting rewards for participating, not just winning (Tolbzie, 2008).

The data presented thus far in this introduction has been designed to give you a general portrait of the Millennial generation. However, there is a great deal more when it

comes to who Millennials are, and what they believe. In order to reveal the views and values of Millennials, and how they contrast with previous generations a more thorough examination is needed.

Millennial Views and Values

The views and values of the Millennial generation often stand in stark contrast to those of previous generations. Because Millennials tend to see the world through a different set of glasses, there has been a great deal of misunderstanding, confusion, and frustration that has occurred among those who have dealt with Millennials. While there are some characteristics Millennials possess that are frustrating, such as their bent towards narcissism and their apparent lack of loyalty and commitment to anything, there are also a number of characteristics to be excited about (Myers, 2015). For example, according to a Red Brick research report, Millennials were deemed to be more creative, entrepreneurial, and adaptable to change in the workplace than previous generations (Myers). So how do Millennials see the world around them and what are their values?

Postmodernism

Nicole Kidman's character in the 2006 movie, *The Invasion* states (as cited in Mercadante, 2012), "something's happening, I don't know what it is, but I can feel it" (p. 21). There is no doubt that people feel that something has happened in society over the past 40 years, even though they do not always know how to explain it. Leadership guru Drucker (1993) made the following observation,

Every few hundred years in Western history, there occurs a sharp transformation...within a few short decades, society rearranges itself, its worldview; its basic values, its social and political structure; its art; its key

institutions . . . fifty years later, there is a new world and the people born then cannot even imagine the world in which their grandparents lived and into which their own parents were born. We are currently living through just such a transformation. (p. 1)

In this statement, Drucker described one of the most important philosophical changes that has ever occurred in the western world, which is the transition from modernity to postmodernity (Mercadante, 2012). Millennials are natives of a postmodern mindset, which has caused them to see the world differently than their predecessors. “Postmodernism is a mindset, or way of looking at life, a worldview” (Mercadante, p. 10). The term Postmodernism was coined by the architectural world in the early 1970s, but did not become a “popular term until Jean Francois Lytard’s book *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge in English* in 1984” (Hulse, 2007, p. 5).

According to Betz (1992), the beliefs of Postmodernism have been most effectively spread to the mass population through the media of television. Dyck (2010) states, “it is important to understand the impact on the culture and learn how to speak meaningfully to those under its sway” (p. 30). The best way to understand postmodernism is to contrast it with the ideas espoused during the period of the Enlightenment, which has been the prevailing view held by society until recently. The Enlightenment gave rise to Modernism, which taught that the use of human intellect, rationale, and scientific thought, could help man discover objective truth and thereby make the world a better place. A product of Modernism was the scientific method, which taught that truth was not to be found through revelation, but through a five-step scientific process of investigation and reason (Dyck, 2010). The five steps of the scientific method

are observation/research, hypothesis, prediction, experimentation, and conclusion (“Science Made Simple” website, 2016).

Modernism painted a positive and bright picture of a Utopian future with its belief that through man’s abilities to discover objective truth, many of the longstanding problems that had plagued the world, such as poverty, war, and disease could be eradicated. However, that was not to be, “after two world wars, the threat of nuclear destruction, the Jewish Holocaust” (Mercadante, 2012, p.10) and the inability to solve many other world problems, the promises made by Modernism about the creation of a utopian society were called into question. The failure of modernism opened the door for the advent of Postmodernism.

The tenets of Postmodernism rejected the prevailing philosophy of Modernism, which was that one could discover and know objective or absolute truth (Moulton, 2001). Instead, Postmodernism declared that truth was relative. Postmodernism validated the role of “feelings, relationships, intuition, and experiences as a means of arriving at truth” (Mercadante, 2012, p. 11). In Postmodernism, there is an emphasis on personal feelings. The commonly held belief is that “what is true is what is real, and works in one’s situation and context” (p. 11). This emphasis on the primacy of feelings is a basic tenant of existentialism (Burnham, 2016). Postmodernism rejects rules, and teaches that issues of right and wrong are to be a matter of personal opinion (Hulse, 2007). Postmodern communication emphasizes story and metaphor and has replaced knowledge with interpretation (Hulse). Therefore, each person can have his or her own version of truth based on their particular vantage point, which is referred to as moral relativism (Westacott, 2016). Postmodern adherents believe that it is intolerant and disrespectful to

judge another person's perception of truth (Mercadante). This explains why Millennials tend to reject what they believe to be judgmental and arrogant stances held by the church on social issues such as whether or not homosexuality is a sin. In keeping with Postmodernism, the tendency of the Millennial generation is to believe that truth is relative.

Postmodernism emphasizes pluralism, which is the belief that no one religion is superior to another. Pluralism teaches that all opinions possess the same value, and therefore have no universal value, except to the people who hold them (Hulse, 2007). It also emphasizes the fact that the playing field must be level for all religions because religion is a matter of personal choice that should never be forced on others. Tolerance is the buzzword of pluralism. The classic definition of tolerance referred to respecting the right of another to hold a viewpoint different from oneself. In this scenario two people with opposing viewpoints simply *agree to disagree*. But the meaning of tolerance has changed. Tolerance now means that one person does not have the right to disagree with, or call into question another person's viewpoint, because the meaning of truth is defined by each individual (Geurino, 2010). It is considered blasphemy to declare that one particular religion is the only *true* religion (Knitter & Netland, 2013).

Another tenet of Postmodernism is deconstructionism, which is the belief that language cannot be tied to an objective world, because it has no point of reference outside of itself, therefore, it is impossible to know what a deceased author meant, so it is permissible to assign any meaning you wish to their writings (Hulse, 2007). Deconstructionism invites people to read and interpret the scripture as they wish, abandoning the rules of proper exegesis, since "there is no world beyond your

interpretation” (Hulse, p. 8). Deconstructionism creates a problem for Christian theologians who generally contend that the foundational truths of the Christian faith have been built upon the words of God, an idea Postmodernism rejects. This Postmodern rejection is referred to as nihilism. The Concise Oxford Dictionary defines nihilism as, “the total rejection of current beliefs in religion, morals and the meaning of life” (Stevenson, 2011, p. 462).

There are several positive attributes about Postmodernity that should be noted. First, the Postmodern emphasis on experience and participation reminds the church that transformation in life comes by having an experience with the living God, not from head knowledge alone (Dyck, 2010). It reminds us that Christianity is not about acquiring knowledge; it is about putting the truth of Scripture into practical action. Millennials are driven by experiences. They desire to have firsthand encounters with God and people. They would rather experience something and do something, rather than hear or read about it. This means that Millennials are more interested in *doing* the Gospel, rather than *hearing* about the Gospel. Churches who are not perceived as *doing* the mission of Jesus are unattractive to Millennials. Millennials want the church to *be* Jesus to people, not tell them about Jesus. *Immanuelization* is the process in which communities of faith become the presence of Jesus to people (Mercadante, 2012).

How Millennials connect with God is different than previous generations, they experience Jesus first, and then learn the facts afterwards (Stark, 2016). In Postmodernism, there is an emphasis on practicality and reality (Mercadante, 2012). This emphasis should be a reminder that the church needs to show people how the Gospel is relative and effective in everyday life. It also speaks to the need for the church to be

authentic and real in its relationships. Millennials are attracted to authentic community and they are looking for a place where they can belong first and foremost (Loskota, Roumani, Flory & Belzer, 2007; Chang, 2010; Stetzer et al., 2009). However, according to Belzer et al. (as cited by Heft, 2006), many young adults he interviewed stated, “they do not feel integral to congregational life” (p. 105). In fact, Setran and Kiesling (2013) reported that Millennials “don’t feel that they fit in, and that the church ignores them” (p. 93).

Although Postmodern philosophy is different in many ways from the principles taught in Christianity, that does not mean that Millennials in this Postmodern era are unreachable. Times have changed, and there is no going back to what once was. In the words of Sweet (2000) our only question is, “will we live the time God has given us? Or will we live a time we would prefer to have?” (p. 47). The church must decide how it is going to create an atmosphere of belonging where Millennials can experience the presence of Jesus.

Narcissism

Much has been written about the attitudes of Millennials. They have been dubbed selfish, narcissistic, lazy, spoiled, entitled, rebellious, unpatriotic, whiny, non-committal, disloyal, and distracted (Ingraham, 2015; Myers, 2015; Twenge, Campbell, & Gentile, 2012). The research demonstrates that when it comes to Millennial attitudes, it is a mixed bag, some assumptions are true and some are false.

Research by Twenge, Campbell, and Gentile (2012), who have spent a great deal of time studying Millennials affirms the fact that their level of self-confidence is higher than previous generation. Millennials rated themselves above average in a number of

categories including: speaking and writing ability, leadership, academics, and the drive to achieve (Twenge, Campbell, & Gentile, 2012). Higher levels of narcissism have been reported in Millennials than in any other previous generation (Twenge, 2006; Twenge, Konrath, Foster, Campbell & Bushman, 2008). Twenge et al. (2008) attributed the rise of narcissism to two factors. The first factor was the promotion of, and emphasis on, self-esteem, confidence, self-admiration, believing in yourself, and everyone being special that was prevalent in the culture and the academic world in the 1970s and 1980s. According to Twenge (2006), this emphasis “caused people to consider themselves better than they actually were” (p. 411). According to Twenge (2006), the culture Millennials grew up in is partly to blame for their narcissism. The message heard over and over again through media, music, books, and movies centered around self. An example would be Whitney Houston’s smash 1980s hit, *The Greatest Love Of All*, which was a song about self-love.

The second factor that contributed to narcissism among Millennials has been over indulgent parents (Caruso, 2014). Baby Boomer parents brought up by cold, frugal, Silent Generation depression era parents desired to give their children the opposite of what they experienced. In an attempt to make up for their lack of time, due to heavy work demands, Baby Boomer parents overindulged their children with material possessions. Still others became helicopter parents who smothered their children with non-stop affection, attention, and involvement. Millennials have been referred to as *the wanted generation* because with the advent of the pro-choice movement, parents could now choose to have children on demand. According to Caruso (2014), the result of all of this is that “parents

who overly indulge their children and overly gratify their needs may see these individuals grow up developing narcissistic traits” (p. 83).

Less Empathetic

Another attitude among Millennials is a decrease in the ability to feel empathy for others. According to meta-analysis research done by Konrath, O’Brien and Hsing (2011), the level of empathy in 13,737 college students they surveyed reported that 40%, or 5,495 students measured as being less empathetic than previous generations. According to Dolby (2014), empathy is a critical skill needed by people in order to foster relationships, work with people, and meet the increasing challenge of improving a broken world.

Entitled

Another adjective used to describe the attitude of Millennials is *entitled*. Webster’s dictionary defines entitlement as, “the feeling or belief that you deserve to be given something (such as special privileges)” (Entitlement, n.d.). Once again, helicopter parents have been reported as a contributing factor to the sense of entitlement exhibited by Millennials (Alexander & Sysko, 2013). Alexander and Sysko reported that research has strongly supported that Millennials felt “they could do anything they wanted in life, and everything should revolve around them.” (p. 130). In the same study (Alexander & Sysko), there was data to support the belief that Millennials “will only do something if they have to do it, and that they will only do something as long as there is a benefit attached” (p. 130). Much of the literature written on this topic suggests that Millennials want it all, and want it now, because of their sense of entitlement (Ng, Schweitzer, & Lyons, 2010). Interestingly, according to Thompson and Gregory (2012), the generation

that has complained the most about Millennial entitlement has been responsible for creating that sense of entitlement.

According to Pike (2014), Millennial attitudes can be summed up in three words, value, convenience, and experience. Millennials want value in whatever they do or purchase. Because of the technology that is readily available, Millennials like doing their own research to make sure they are getting the best value possible when buying. Millennials value experiences, and so adventures that allow them to be hands-on and fully immersed in an activity excite them. Millennials also want things to be fast, convenient and easy when trying to do something. Because of the instant nature of the society in which they have grown up, Millennials want instant gratification. Millennials do not see any value in delayed gratification; they want what they want, now (Taylor, 2005).

Tolerance

One of the differences between Millennials and previous generations can be seen in their attitudes toward tolerance. Millennials have a higher degree of tolerance than previous generations when it comes to diversity, religion, and alternative lifestyles (Bucuta, 2015). Jim Henderson dubbed them the *great agreement generation* (as cited in Kinnaman, 2011), because Millennials do not like division and conflict. Instead they seek to find common ground and understanding with others who are different.

As a whole, Millennials are more comfortable than previous generations with embracing racial and ethnic diversity and equality for all (Taylor, 2005). When given the choice, most Millennials prefer to be part of heterogeneous groups and are more attracted to churches that are diverse like the schools and workplaces they frequent (Rainer III,

2011). This is because they have grown up in the most racially diverse time period in America's history. According to Frey (2015), by the year 2044 Whites will no longer be the majority population in America, instead, America will be made up of a rainbow of various ethnic and racial groups. A *no majority* America has already become a reality within the one to five-year old demographic in our nation (Frey). In interviews with 1,200 Millennials, Rainer and Rainer (2011) reported that 87%, or 725 were willing to marry someone from a different race or ethnicity.

While Millennials generally embrace diversity, that is not true of all Millennials. A study done by Abdul-Alim (2012), found differing views held by Whites and Blacks regarding racial tolerance and politics among White Millennials who had strong religious affiliations. In the 2012 presidential election, White Evangelical Protestant Millennials did not vote for President Obama to be re-elected (Jones, Cox & Banchoff, 2012). So while Millennials in general, embrace diversity, there are some Millennials who do not.

When it comes to religious tolerance, Millennials live by the motto *take or leave what you want*. By that they mean that people should adopt the aspects of religion that they find helpful, and that align with their experience, and discard ideas and practices that are not to their liking (Smith & Snell, 2009). Millennials believe that everyone is different, therefore just because something may not be right for them, does not make it wrong for someone else (Smith & Snell). Millennial thinking in regard to religious beliefs has been affected by the concept of pluralism, which is a part of the Postmodern mindset that has saturated the present culture.

The final area in which an attitude of tolerance can be seen among Millennials is in the area of alternative lifestyles. In a study done by Kinnaman (2007), Millennials

were asked to positively or negatively rate 20 different traits as they related to the church. At the top of the list was the belief held by Millennials that the church stands in direct opposition and disagreement to the homosexual lifestyle. Millennials believe that it is wrong to let your disagreement about the validity of a lifestyle turn into anger and negative feelings towards any group of individuals (Kinnaman). Unlike their parents and grandparents, many Millennials now accept homosexuality as an acceptable way of life. According to Kinnaman, “those under the age of twenty-six are much more likely to accept homosexuality without consideration” (p. 99). Most young adults believe that laws should be changed to accommodate same sex marriages and equal rights for gay and lesbian couples.

According to Kinnaman (2007), this represents a shift compared to older generations. Millennials place a great deal of value on respect for all. In their eyes, when the church aligns itself against homosexuality it is demonstrating a lack of respect for homosexuals as people (Kinnaman). Closely tied to the issue of tolerance for Millennials is their belief that the church is judgmental. Being judgmental ranked second on the Millennial list of most negative church traits. The church has garnered a reputation for being known “for what we stand *against*, rather than what we stand *for*” (p. 26). Millennials indicated that the church is insensitive to others, old fashioned, not accepting of other faiths, and judgmental of those who do not adhere to religious rules.

Millennial views concerning alternate lifestyles have been driven by their attitude toward morality in general, which differs from previous generations. Millennials have adopted a *live and let live motto* when it comes to morality (Winograd & Hais, 2011). This attitude coincides with the Postmodern belief in moral relativism, which posits that

there are no absolutes, therefore, *what is right, is what is right for the individual* (Hulse, 2007). Postmodernism supports an individuals' ability to choose their own truth and morality. Smith and Snell (2009) reported that most Millennials are moral intuitionists, which means they make decisions about right and wrong based on subjective feelings and intuitions. At the end of the day, Millennials believe that "the absolute authority for each person's beliefs or actions is his or her own sovereignty" (Smith & Snell, p. 49).

Authority

Millennials appear to have a different attitude than their predecessors when it comes to authority and authority structures. The intent of Millennials concerning authority is not to rebel against it, or reject it, but to redefine how authority is exercised (Rainer, 2011). Millennials exhibit a great deal of dissatisfaction, mistrust, and skepticism towards institutions, which has led them to challenge the rules and the status quo (Kinnaman, 2007; Taylor, 2005). Millennials "have rejected the authority of religious institutions in favor of the authority of their own experience" (Winston, 2014). Most Millennials are unwilling to take the "answers and perspectives presented by established authorities as unquestioned givens" (Horell, 2004, p. 11). Millennials are also tired of seeing the proverbial can kicked down the road and want to be involved in reshaping the nation's institutions (Winograd & Hais, 2011).

According to Belzer, Flory, Loskota, & Roumani, (2006), Millennials, by and large, have an aversion to hierarchical authority and leadership structures, which tend to drive Millennials away from churches and organizations. Millennials have been turned off by the abuse of power and authority they have seen in their lifetime, from clergy sex scandals, to corrupt politicians who used their authority to oppress and rob their

constituents. Millennials do not respond well to authority that is derived from position (Rainer, 2011). They seek authority figures who operate in a transformational capacity that is transparent, authentic, honest, and relational (Brandau, 2012). They are willing to follow authority figures that will work side by side with them to develop their gifts and abilities, and empower them to make a difference. Unlike the Silent and Baby Boomer generations who were more likely to carry out directives from superiors, Millennials chaff at carrying out directives without an understanding of the purpose and reason associated with those directives. It is important that businesses, educators, and churches understand how Millennials view authority in order to be able to effectively lead and direct them (Thompson & Gregory, 2012).

Marriage and Family

Unlike preceding generations, Millennials have chosen to delay getting married and having children until later in life. The average marriage age for Millennials was 27 for females and 29 for males at the time of this study. In 1960, the average age was 20 for females and 23 for males (Murphy, 2016). According to Murphy, an unparalleled number of Millennials will remain unwed until 40. According to a Pew Research Report (Wang & Parker, 2014), an astonishing 25%, or 500 out of the 2,003 Millennials surveyed were unlikely to marry, which represents the largest percentage of unmarried individuals in any generation throughout history.

Although most Millennials responded that they would like to marry, a Gallop survey reported they feel they are either too young, or have not laid the proper foundation economically to do so (Newport & Wilkie, 2013). Millennials are unwilling to enter into marriage blindly (Gadoua, 2014). According to that same survey only 9%, or 184 of the

2,048 Millennials surveyed stated they have no desire to get married (Newport & Wilkie). Another contributing factor as to why Millennials are waiting longer to marry is because of changing social views on marriage that have made living together an acceptable alternative (Murphy, 2016). It should be noted that Millennials are more tolerant of same sex marriages and other marriage arrangements than previous generations (Taylor & Keeter, 2010). In a Time magazine survey of 1,000 Millennials, 43%, or 430 stated they would be in favor of a marriage model that involved a two-year trial period (Cole, 2016). Millennials also delay marriage because they want to enjoy the freedoms of this season of their lives where they can explore, experiment, travel, and chase their dreams (Smith, 2009).

Even with changing societal views concerning marriage, Millennials view marriage as a highly significant life event, and believe that they will only be married to one person during their lifetime (Rainer & Rainer, 2011). The value Millennials place on their wedding day can be seen in the rising cost of weddings. In 2014, the average cost of a wedding was close to \$31,213 (Borresen, 2015).

Another reason Millennials are taking longer to marry is because many of them have come from broken homes. Only 62%, or 1,252 of the Millennials surveyed in a Pew Research Report stated their parents were married while growing up (Taylor & Keeter, 2010). Thirty three percent, or 24 million Millennials have been born to unmarried women under the age of 28 (DeMaria, 2013). Because both parents were not always present in the home due to divorce or long hours at work, 61%, or 732 of the Millennials surveyed stated that family life and spending time with their children was the second most important priority in their life next to marrying the right person (Rainer & Rainer,

2011). It should be noted that most Millennials reported having good relationships with their parents and desire to have them involved in their lives (Smith, 2009).

Racial Equality

Unlike previous generations, Millennials fully support racial and ethnic equality and inclusion (Winograd & Hais, 2011). Frey (2016) states that, “racial diversity will be the most defining and impactful characteristic of the Millennial generation” (paragraph 1). Minorities total more than 50% of the Millennial population in 10 states (Frey). For the first time in America, White children aged one to five are the minority (Frey). The current Millennial generation is only 51% White, demonstrating that Millennials are “the bridge generation to a more diverse America” (Frey, para. 11). A 1987 Pew research poll indicated that only 48% of Americans at that time supported interracial dating and marriage. Today, 92% of Millennials believe that interracial dating and marriage is acceptable (Winograd & Hais).

Education

When it comes to education, Millennials are smart but impatient (Carlson, 2005). As was stated earlier, this generation is the most educated in history (United States Chamber of Commerce Foundation, 2012). Because of how they are wired and how they learn, Millennials have changed traditional classroom strategies in education (Skiba & Barton, 2006). Millennials process information in a different manner than did previous generations (Papp & Matulich, 2011). Because Millennials have been immersed in technology and media all their lives, they are not content to sit in a classroom and listen to lectures, hour after hour (Merritt, 2002). The preferred learning style of Millennials is through multi-media (Nicholas, 2008). They prefer to learn in groups, use technology,

seek practical knowledge, and are audio, visual, and kinesthetic learners (Biaggi, 2014). It is important for Millennials to understand how what they are learning will benefit them. They often use the acronym, WIIFM, which means *what's in it for me?* (Papp & Matulich, 2011). The Millennial generation uses the Internet as their primary source for communication and learning (Bauman, Marchal, McLain, O'Connell, & Patterson, 2014).

In order for educators to effectively connect with Millennials, educators must involve students in the process of active learning through discovery, the utilization of current technology, and engagement through a variety of methods (Metz, 2011). Active learning is a critical component in teaching Millennials. Active learning focuses on helping students search for meaning and understanding, take more responsibility in the learning process, and develop skills as well as head knowledge (Phillips & Trainor, 2014). One way to execute this strategy is through the flipped classroom. A study done by Phillips and Trainor confirmed that the flipped classroom model was an effective way to teach Millennials. In the flipped classroom model, teachers record short video lessons and post them online for students to watch in their free time, which creates more classroom time for the application of the material. When students arrive in class, teachers engage them in discussion, hands-on activities, problem solving, and games designed to engage students in higher-level thinking and problem solving (Phillips & Trainor). According to Honeycutt and Warren (2014), the goal is “creating, evaluating, synthesizing, and analyzing together” (para. 5). This learning style works well with the desire that Millennials possess to collaborate as a team (Phillips & Trainor).

According to Nikirk (2012), “the brains of Millennial students are wired differently” (p. 41) from students in previous generations. Therefore, it is necessary to

teach in a way that helps Millennials connect with the materials being presented. Millennials have a short attention span and find it difficult to focus (Papp & Matulich, 2011). Several suggested strategies are to use more visuals, move from concrete concepts to abstract concepts, create a learner-centered classroom, utilize students as teachers, and value independent and creative thinking (Nikirk). Millennials enjoy self-directed learning, therefore it is important that teachers do not force their ideas on them, but instead, let them engage in the process of discovering the answer for themselves. In self-directed learning, teachers act as guides for the students. It is important for those who teach Millennials in any capacity to understand that their learning style is very different from their predecessors. It is vitally important that the church understand that the methods they have used in the past will not be effective in teaching and discipling Millennials. Twenge (2006) suggested that to be effective in teaching Millennials, teachers need to engage the three H's: Head, Heart, and Hands.

Technology

Technology is the lifeblood of Millennials. According to DeMaria (2013), “the most distinctive characteristic of Millennials is their use of technology” (p. 1654). Millennials reported that the connections they are able to make with others because of technology make them feel good (Botterill, Bredin & Dun, 2015). They have been referred to as *digital natives* because technology is their first language (Papp & Matulich, 2011). This is in contrast to *digital immigrants*, which is the term used to describe previous generations who did not grow up with technology and had to learn to use it. Because of technology, Millennials have unprecedented access to knowledge and information that other generations did not have. This access has had a profound impact

on the way Millennials think about and relate to the world around them (Kinnaman, 2011). The access created by current technology and the Internet has rapidly increased the pace of change taking place in our world.

There are several concerns that have been raised about the use of technology among Millennials. The first is that the constant exposure they have had to the Internet has decreased their ability to focus (Bauman et al., 2014). “Calm, focused, undistracted, the linear mind is being pushed aside by a new kind of mind that wants and needs to take in and dole out information in short, disjointed, often overlapping bursts, the faster the better” (Carr, 2010, p. 104). According to Prensky (2001), physical change has occurred in the brains of young adults as a result of their constant exposure to digital media. One of the ways the church can be of assistance to Millennials is by helping them to recognize the value of, and develop the skill of focused contemplation and thinking (Bauman et al.). Because of the constant demand on Millennials from incessant posting and texting, a new phenomenon of anxiety and depression called, *alone together* has occurred in Millennials. It is the result of constantly being available to others without periods of silence and solitude (Turkle, 2012).

A second concern about the effect of technology on Millennials is the loss of empathy. Frederickson (2013), who studied how the brain connects, reported that “if you don’t regularly exercise your ability to connect face to face, you will eventually find yourself lacking the biological capacity to do so” (para. 4). The third concern about constant Internet use is what Bauerlein (2011) referred to as *Google gullibility*. This is the inability to evaluate the truth and reliability of Internet sources. Bauerlein suggests that it

is important that Millennials be taught how to discern the good from the bad, and what is true from what is false or opinion.

Despite concerns about Internet use, the reality is that technology and all that comes with it are here to stay. As Martin Luther used the power of the printing press in his age to spread the Gospel, ministry leaders and churches need to capitalize on present technology to spread the Gospel. As *digital natives*, Millennials prefer to do just about everything through technology. A study by Rainer & Rainer (2011), estimated that one third of a Millennial's life will be spent in front of a computer screen. That means if churches want to connect with Millennials, and speak into their lives, they will have to speak their language, which is comprised of social media and technology. Churches who did not use technology are seen as being out of sync with the world and will not attract Millennials (Thumma, 2011). Although using social networking and digital media can never replace the power of personal relationship, it is important for ministry leaders to understand this medium as a powerful ministry tool because Millennials place great value on technology (Tan, 2009).

The 2008 presidential race was a primary example of the power of social media technology. President Barack Obama was catapulted to victory by Millennials who spread his message of change through their social media networks (Rainer & Rainer, 2008; Winograd & Hais, 2011). One benefit of ministry via the Internet is that it provides a way for Millennials to share their problems and struggles without the embarrassment of personal contact (Tan). Technology provides an avenue for reaching Millennials who do not currently attend church (Stetzer et al., 2009). In fact, a number of churches have started online Internet campuses to minister to Millennials (Caston, 2014).

Workplace

One of the most contested conversations concerning Millennials is in regard to the views they hold about the workplace. The stereotype of Millennials in the workplace is that they are lazy, inflexible, selfish, entitled, and uncommitted (Ferri-Reed, 2013a). Many managers and organizations find themselves frustrated in their attempt to work with Millennials (Ferri-Reed, 2010). While some of those labels may contain a measure of truth, there is a great deal of misunderstanding about the views and attitudes Millennials hold about work (Ferri-Reed, 2013a). Millennials are not lazy, they want to succeed at work, but they are unwilling to succeed at any cost (Rainer & Rainer, 2011). Instead of a work to live mentality, Millennials value an appropriate work-life balance in their lives (Ferri-Reed, 2013b). Millennials are turned-off by companies with a *command and control* style of leadership of management (Winograd & Hais, 2011) because they prefer the collaborative, creative, team based approach found in the organic and transformational models of leadership (Titleman, 2016).

Millennials are not deliberately disengaged; they just need to know that the work they do has meaning and purpose (Titleman, 2016). Adams (2012) reported that a sense of calling and meaning is an important part of vocation selection for Millennials. Millennials are not trying to be distant or aloof in the workplace. Managers need to understand that their preferred style of communication is through social networking, texting, and video as opposed to in-person interactions (Mendelson, 2013). It is not that Millennials do not want to support an organization; they just want to know the vision, mission and values of that organization before they are willing to commit to it (Tulgen, 2009). It is important that the vision and values of the company they work for are clear. It

is also important to Millennials that the organization has a social conscience and desires to make the world a better place (Ferri-Reed, 2013a). Pepsi made the decision not to run advertisements during the 2010 Super Bowl and redirected that money to non-profit initiatives because of the influence of Millennials and their belief in social responsibility (Winograd & Hais, 2011). According to Wertman (2008), graduate business schools are changing their curriculum to include courses on how to make social responsibility a part of an organization's mission.

Kowske, Rasch and Wiley (2010) reported that Millennials were not malcontents as some had surmised, but were interested in improving the workplace. According to Winograd and Hais (2011), "Millennials are determined to change the world of work once and for all" (p. 139). So what are the keys to engaging Millennials in the workplace? The first step is that employers need to give them a strong start by creating an effective onboarding process (Ferri-Reed, 2013a). The orientation process for Millennials must consist of more than a brief meeting where they are handed an employee handbook, or shown a boring slide presentation. To tap into the energy and creative potential of Millennials, it is necessary to engage them from the start (Ferri-Reed). By involving Millennials in the creation of the onboarding process, the chances of the orientation process being effective is increased.

It is important to remember that Millennials are extremely visual and prefer that information be delivered to them via video, interactive websites, phones, and social media (Cates, Cojanu & Pettine, 2013). The onboarding process should be focused, brief, and interactive to maintain the attention of Millennials. During the orientation, employers should demonstrate the value, meaning, and purpose of the work being done and how it

makes the world a better place. The final way to make the onboarding process a success is to create a system for feedback. Millennials love to give feedback concerning ways to improve the organization, and are hungry for feedback about expectations and their job performance (Ferri-Reed, 2013a).

There are several other steps that can be taken to insure success in managing Millennials. The first is to create a workplace that is collaborative, challenging, and fun (Ferri-Reed, 2010). The second is to balance negative feedback with plenty of praise and affirmation. As the *trophy generation*, Millennials are accustomed to generous amounts of praise. The third step is the creation of a clear career path that leads to promotion, because Millennials do not intend to stay at the same level for long (Ferri-Reed). According to Ferri-Reed (2010), Cates et al. (2013), when employers seek to understand Millennials and engage them in appropriate ways, the result is employees that are engaged, creative, enthusiastic, and committed to the organization.

Relationships

Even though Millennials are narcissistic, they consider themselves to be more relational. Relationship and community is ranked at the top of their priority list. Because of technology and social media networks like Facebook, Millennials have a more diverse and nebulous set of relationships than previous generations. While they may be *connected* to many people, it is not always easy to determine the type or depth of relationship they have with those people. Because of the nature of the relationships they have, it is often necessary to have a *define the relationship* talk to determine the status of the relationship (Smith & Snell, 2009).

There has been much debate concerning the pros and cons that technology has had on Millennial relationships. On one hand, Millennials report that technology and social media sites allow them to stay connected and have relationships with more people than would normally be possible. While that is certainly true, the question is not how many relationships do you have, but how meaningful are your relationships? The argument against technology is that it has alienated people from one another (Kinnaman, 2011; Hertlein & Ancheta, 2014). It is now a common sight to observe families sitting together at a restaurant with each family member staring at his or her cell phone screen. Some argue that technology has eroded face-to-face contact between individuals, which is ultimately detrimental to the individual and the society (Stetzer et al., 2009). Hertlein and Ancheta reported that the effect of technology on relationships is mixed. It provides benefits that previous generations did not have, like immediate access in case of an emergency. Also, it can support the development and maintenance of relationships. Hertlein and Ancheta also found that technology led to distancing, lack of focus, and impaired intimacy when overused. Technology is here to stay; therefore, society will need to seek ways to address these problems.

Because many Millennials grew up in dysfunctional homes, they long for authentic, transparent, relational connections with others (Kinnaman, 2011). During the 1960s, unmarried women accounted for 5% of all births. Today, that number has risen to 42%, which means that Millennials are eight times more likely to be born without their parents being married (Kinnaman). Another reason that relationship and community is important to Millennials is because as society has become more mobile in nature, families have found themselves spread around the nation and the world (Rainer & Rainer, 2008).

Because Millennials have to travel to where they can find jobs, many Millennials find themselves living in new environments away from their families. These issues provide a wonderful opportunity for the church to open their doors to Millennials and offer them a safe environment for relationship building and community (Stetzer et al., 2009).

Stetzer et al. (2009), revealed that Millennials desire relationships that go beyond *hello and hi*. Millennials are looking for relationships in which they can share their struggles and still find acceptance for who they are. Millennials want relationships with people who are willing to be authentic, honest, and vulnerable. Millennials also desire to belong to community. The reason that Starbucks has become a favorite hangout for Millennials is because Starbucks does not just sell coffee, it sells community. Starbucks has created what has been referred to as a *third place* by urban sociologist Ray Oldenburg (Hummon, 1991). The CEO of Starbucks, Howard Schultz said, “Starbucks has a role and meaningful relationship with people that is not only about coffee. We are in the business of human connection and humanity, creating communities in a third place between home and work” (Schultz, 2006, para. 5). Oldenburg identifies three places where people gather and connect. The *first place* is the home, the *second place* is the workplace, and the *third place* is a location that exists beyond the home that promotes community, such as pubs, cafes, and coffee shops. The popularity of Starbucks is not an accident; it has spent a great deal of time and money to develop a *third place* strategy (Stetzer, et al.). In the past, the church was known as a community gathering point for people, a third place, but that is no longer true (Rainer & Rainer, 2008).

According to a study done by the Seventh Day Adventist church (Jenkin & Martin, 2014), Millennials desired to be engaged in both mentoring and intergenerational

relationships. Jenkin and Martin reported that the presence of intergenerational relationships was a key factor in Millennials remaining in the churches they grew up in. Millennials recognize that they do not have all the answers, and therefore are open to mentoring relationships from older generations (Williams, 2015). According to Stetzer et al. (2009), Millennials want to learn from the mistakes and experiences of others. One type of mentoring that Millennials seek is called reverse mentoring. Reverse mentoring is when individuals learn from each other simultaneously. Millennials not only desire to be taught, but desire to teach previous generations about their experiences and share what they know. Reverse mentoring is being used by many companies to build relationship, and foster productivity between older and younger employees (Powell, 2013)

A unique aspect of Millennial relationships, which differs from past generations is a behavior known as *hooking up*, which has become popular in Millennial circles. *Hooking up* is a nebulous term that refers to everything from casually hanging out with friends at a party to drink, to being set up on a blind date, to engaging in sexual activity with strangers depending on the Millennial (Cole, 2016). The phenomenon of *hooking up* has become so routine in the world of Millennials that it does not even warrant a raised eyebrow (Smith & Snell, 2009).

Entertainment

The role of entertainment and media in the lives of Millennials is unprecedented (Moore, 2012). Since birth, they have been inundated with an array of multi-media experiences that has shaped the way they think, learn, and relate. The Kaiser Foundation conducted a study in 2010 that reported American eight to 18 year olds had been exposed to media an average of 10 hours and 45 minutes per day (Winograd & Hais, 2011). This

represented an increase of three hours and fifteen minutes from a similar study conducted in 1999. Millennials have come of age in a world that has progressed from the videocassette recorder (VHS), to the technology of 3D Television, video gaming, video streaming, and on-demand programming that can be watched on the go 24/7 via their favorite mobile device. The tastes and values of Millennials have impacted how entertainment and media are consumed. Research by Botterill et al. (2015) reported that it is now common for Millennials to be engaged in multiple activities while watching television, such as tweeting, surfing the web, and watching content on a separate device. According to Botterill et al., computers ranked as the highest choice for media intake. Millennials are considered to be the masters of multi-tasking to the point that some studies have posited that the amount of multi-tasking they have engaged in has actually rewired their brains (United States Chamber of Commerce Foundation, 2012).

The relationship that Millennials have with technology has also changed the way media content is delivered. With the advent of the iPod, most Millennials prefer to download musical and movie content via an MP3 or MP4 file format, which has caused a decrease in the number of CDs that have been sold (Willens, 2015). The music industry in Great Britain revealed that more than half of its music sales came from digital download sources, rather than physical sales (Willens). However, Willens reported that even though the preferred method of delivery is streaming or downloading, 49%, or 490 of the 1,000 Millennials surveyed continued to purchase CDs. Eighty percent, or 800 of the Millennials surveyed said they used Internet radio and free livestream music stations like Spotify and Pandora to check out new musical artists and then bought and downloaded what they liked (Willens). Willens reported that the majority of Millennials

downloaded television and movie content in the same manner. Surprisingly, in a study of 2,500 Millennials between the ages of 18-34 reported that 45%, or 1,125 legally paid for the music in their possession (Asen, 2017). This is in contrast to previous generations. Asen revealed that as a person's age increased, their willingness to pay for music decreased. Only 12%, or 300 people age 65 and up paid for music.

Millennials have not only impacted the method and delivery of media and entertainment, they have also impacted the content. In the mid-1990s, marketing strategists realized that Millennials held a much different worldview than Generation X. The risky, alienated mindset of the Generation X crowd preferred edgy programs and music videos. However, Millennials preferred programming that was upbeat, group oriented and socially concerned as opposed to the more cynical mentality of Generation X (Winograd & Hais, 2011). The MTV channel experienced huge ratings among the Generation X crowd, but by the mid-1990s their ratings began to plummet because their programming was not suited to Millennial tastes. In the late 1990s, MTV changed its programming to reflect the worldview of Millennials and ratings began to skyrocket. Another example of how Millennials have driven media content occurred with the now defunct ABC Family Channel. In the 1990s the Fox Family Channel was purchased from the Christian Broadcasting network. However, the programming found on the Fox Family channel was not suited to the tastes of Millennials. Disney bought the channel from Fox in 2001 and proceeded to make it the first channel specifically geared to Millennials. Disney's strategy worked and by 2009 the ABC Family channel had earned the best rankings in its history (Winograd & Hais). Needless to say, Millennials have had a great deal of influence on the content, method, and delivery of entertainment.

Civic Engagement

The term *civic engagement* describes how Millennials relate to the world politically and socially. In contrast to some of the stereotypes about Millennials, they care about the world they reside in (Rainer & Rainer, 2011). From the time they were children they were told that they were special and could make a difference in the world, therefore they are extremely motivated to do so (Safer, 2007). Discontented with politicians and leaders who have been all talk and no show, Millennials have been determined to take action to change the world (Winograd & Hais, 2011). During the 2008 election, the presence of Millennials changed the landscape of American politics. In the 2008 Presidential election, 66%, of Millennials voted for Barack Obama because his message of change and action resonated with them (Keeter, Horowitz & Tyson, 2008). Millennials are motivated and driven by causes, whether politically, socially, or environmentally (Feldmann, 2014). Dyck (2016), stated that when it comes to the church, Millennials “do not want pizza and video games, they want revolution and dynamism” (p. 149).

The Millennial generation has demonstrated a greater willingness to participate in community service and volunteerism than previous generations (Stetzer et al., 2009). According to the Millennial Impact Report (Feldmann, 2014) 75%, or 1,135 of the 1,514 Millennials surveyed gave to a charity and 63%, or 953 volunteered in some capacity. Because of their skepticism of institutions, Feldmann reported that Millennials do not give money or volunteer their time blindly without checking out organizations to make sure they are producing tangible results. While Millennials are willing to volunteer and give, the statistics reveal that not all do. Millennials need to find purpose in their volunteering and giving (Horoszowski, 2016). Organizations that fail to clearly articulate

how volunteering and giving makes a difference will not elicit the involvement of the Millennial crowd.

Millennials have also exhibited a greater concern for social justice issues than previous generations. Millennials have been dismayed by the fact that churches and businesses have not done more to address societal issues (Winston, 2014). A recurring complaint among Millennials is that the church has been silent on key issues facing society. One example would be the AIDS crisis. When the crisis first became public, the church as a whole failed to respond (Jonsen & Stryker, 1993). Eventually, after appeals by U2 lead singer Bono, and other voices, the church responded to the crisis (McDonald-Radcliff, 2011). Millennials have led the charge for companies to be more socially and civically minded (Welch, 2014). A study of 1,500 employees revealed that 33%, or 495 applied for jobs at their companies because they provided opportunities for employees to make a difference socially by volunteering (O'Neil, 2016). Millennials desire to get their hands dirty, so organizations that demonstrate a passion and mission for helping others will attract Millennials (McCracken, 2010). One reason the missional church movement has resonated with Millennials is because its main focus is carrying out the mission of God, which is helping the poor, marginalized, and needy, as opposed to remaining within the four walls of the church (McCracken). Millennials want to see a compassionate church that is serving those who society has forgotten.

The desire for service and civic engagement among Millennials is good news for the church because historically churches have led the way in addressing various humanitarian concerns through a lifestyle of self-sacrifice and generosity (McCracken, 2010). Churches that are committed to serving the community and solving the critical

issues in society, such as poverty, racism, education, and immigration will arouse the attention of Millennials. It is important for churches to understand that many Millennials believe that the church has become too political. They believe that the mission of Jesus has taken a backseat to the pursuit of a political agenda and the promotion of right wing politics (Kinnaman, 2007). Kinnaman suggests that the church should not ignore or neglect politics, but that it must be mindful that it does not express its views in an unchristian manner, which alienates people from the message of Jesus. According to a Barna poll taken in 2007, 110 million Americans expressed grave concerns about the involvement of *conservative* Christians in the political arena (Kinnaman). Millennials have not followed the traditional path of their parents in regard to their political and social views. Millennials hold little regard for the use of the Bible in public life and the concept of America as a Christian nation (Kinnaman). This makes it imperative that churches and ministry leaders learn how to communicate social and political issues in an apolitical manner.

Church and Religion

Millennial attitudes toward the church are complicated. Most Millennials are skeptical of the institutional church and have been turned off by the bureaucracy, leadership styles, hypocrisy, judgmentalism, intolerance, scandals, and archaic views of the church. The Barna Group reported that 75%, or 791 out of 1,055 participants surveyed held a negative opinion of institutional religion and the church (Kinnaman, 2007; Dyck, 2010). According to Kinnaman, Millennials are anti-church because “it is intolerant, elitist, anti-science, overprotective, shallow, and repressive” (pp.92-93). Jenkin and Martin (2014) reported that these six perceptions among Seventh Day

Adventists Millennials who had left the church were higher at 37%, or 180 of the 480 surveyed, than the national norm reported by Kinnaman, which was 25%, or 324 of the 1,296 Millennials surveyed. Loskota et al. (2007) reported that many Millennials did not attend church because they did not feel their presence was valued, or that there was opportunity to be involved in the leadership of the church.

According to Probasco (2012), the most rapid decline in church attendance in America among any group over the last four decades has occurred in Millennials between the ages of 18 and 30 (Chan, et al., 2015; Desmond, et al. 2010; van der Merwe, et al. 2013). One factor that has contributed to the decline of church attendance across America has been the secularization of Sunday (Mohler, 2014). A longitudinal study by Gruber and Hungerman (2008) reported that the repeal of blue laws, which restricted many Sunday activities such as shopping, in order to promote a day of worship and rest, resulted in a decrease in church attendance. The key finding of the study was that while church attendance decreased, it was not because people left the church. The decrease in attendance was the result of people not attending as frequently because they either had to work, or they were involved in other activities that kept them out of church. The repeal of blue laws reduced the frequency of attendance, but did not cause people to stop attending church (Gruber & Hungerman).

A second factor contributing to the decline of church attendance according to Gruber and Hungerman was the competition that existed for people's time. Church attendance has taken a backseat to the number of activities families are involved in that leave no time for church. When it comes to Millennials, the emerging adult years are fraught with disruptions and distractions in the form of college, work, and finding their

way as adults. Millennials have received the label *the distracted generation* (Barnett, 2008) because of their active and connected lives.

Gruber and Hungerman (2008) revealed that the decrease in church attendance has increased the level of risk taking behavior engaged in by young adults, which has had a costly effect on society. This information is important for church leaders because it affirms that churches are competing with extra-curricular activities for people's time. Millennials will only devote their time to church attendance if they feel that it contributes meaning and purpose to their lives (Rainer, 2011).

It is important for the church to realize that it cannot blame all, or even the greatest portion of church decline on the issue of secularization. McMullin (2012) pointed out that it is easy for churches to blame secularization as the cause of declining attendance and fail to recognize that the main issue is the fact that the church needs to change. The use of secularization as a scapegoat provides a convenient excuse for leaders to avoid making unwanted and inconvenient changes within their churches. Churches that insist that secularization is the culprit for decreased attendance, and therefore fail to make necessary course corrections will continue on a path of decline (McMullin).

Although Millennial church attendance has declined, most Millennials still believe in some form of God and remain open spiritually, while not claiming membership in any particular faith (Smith & Snell, 2009; Winograd & Hais, 2011). Because they have not affiliated themselves with any religion, researchers refer to this group as the *Nones* (Burke, 2015). *Nones* represent the fastest growing religious group in America growing from 16% of the population in 2007 to 23% of the population in 2014 (Emery-White,

2014; Lipka, 2015). According to Lipka, men are more prevalent in the *Nones* category than women.

The Millennials favorite way of describing themselves is that they are *spiritual but not religious* (Stetzer et al., 2009; Scott, 2014). This term first came into being during the Age of Aquarius movement in the 1960s (Tickle, 2012). According to Tickle the phrase referred to those who did not attend an established place of worship. According to Smith and Snell (2009), while it is true that many Millennials say that they are spiritual but not religious, that phrase can convey the wrong impression if not understood correctly. While the concept of spirituality is a popular notion among Millennials, how they define the meaning of spirituality is different from previous generations. It is a spirituality that encourages individuals to pick and choose from among a Disneyland, cafeteria-style list of choices in order to construct a spirituality suited to their liking (Scott; Smith & Snell). Wuthnow (2010) referred to this type of behavior among Millennials as *spiritual tinkering*. This pluralistic spirituality can include a variety of beliefs such as Christianity, New Age, Judaism, eastern religions, and Wicca mixed together in the same pot (Scott). Critchley and Webster (2013) referred to this type of spirituality as “the Gospel according to me” (para. 2).

The term that has been coined for this system of belief by Smith (2005) is *moralistic therapeutic deism* (MTD). MTD can be boiled down to five basic beliefs held by Millennials (Smith). First, they believe that there is a god who created the universe but remains at a safe distance from his creation. Second, they believe that this God desires that people treat each other with fairness and kindness. Third, they believe that the purpose of life is to be happy and to feel good about yourself. Fourth, they believe you do

not need God involved in your life except when you need him to resolve a problem. And fifth, they believe all good people go to heaven. The central tenet of MTD is that life is about being a good person, and one does not need religion to be good, therefore it is optional (Wells, 2008). According to Dyck (2010), this type of faith is self-serving and utilitarian and is contrary to what the scripture teaches. MTD makes the individual, rather than God, the one who determines what is right and wrong based on their experiences and opinions. MTD fits the Postmodern mindset, by allowing individuals to pick and choose what they like about religion and leave out the parts that are troublesome or outdated.

While there is certainly great concern about the decline in church attendance in general, and particularly among the Millennial generation, researchers have discovered that the news about Millennials is not all bad. While Millennials may be abandoning the church, they are not necessarily abandoning faith (Sutherland, 2014). Although they have rejected institutional religion, Millennials are open to hearing about Jesus. When speaking to Millennials it is wise to “introduce them to Jesus first, and the church second” (Guldalian, 2013, p. 43). According to Smith and Snell (2009), 85%, or 2,089 of the 2,458 Millennials he surveyed classified themselves as spiritually open while 10%, or 245 said they were irreligious or hostile towards God. While not the majority, there are Millennials who are willing to attend a church; it just has to be the right kind of church. It must be a church that aligns with their perception of what the church should be (Root, 2015). The current study is designed to examine church characteristics that are predictive of Millennial attraction and involvement.

Because of Millennial attitudes towards the institutional church, some have painted a very bleak picture of the future of the church and Christianity. However,

according to Root (2015), there is hope because while many Millennials have left the church, there are others who have remained and are ready to change the world. In an effort to quell ministerial angst over the future of the church, Root recalls the words of Dietrich Bonhoeffer (as cited in Root), “the future of the church is not youth itself, but rather the Lord Jesus Christ alone” (p. 30). The reality is that the church of Jesus Christ has found a way to survive for 2,000 years. Millennials are not the savior of the church, Jesus is. “The church is not our creation; it is prior to creation. We must have the confidence that we are the body of Christ and not just some transitory means to an end. We are the end” (McCracken, 2010).

Root (2015) contended that while we should be mindful of the lack of Millennial involvement in the church, because it points out the need for change and adaptation, we should not become fixated on the problem to the point of despair. Bonhoeffer’s methodology for engaging the youth of Germany was to introduce them to an authentic encounter with the Word of God and the power and presence of the Holy Spirit devoid of religious trappings. Bonhoeffer discovered that when young people had these types of experiences they became engaged, involved, passionate, and committed to the cause (Root). “The Millennial generation is the most unchurched group in history” (Guldalian, 2013, p. 41). According to Shaw (2013), our world has changed and we cannot go back to the ways things were, however, the church can be instrumental in helping Millennials find their way by turning the lights on for them.

The Rules of Attraction

Although researchers have reported the exodus of Millennials from the church, and their discontent with church as usual, that is not the entire story. There are a growing

number of churches that are *getting it*, and have been able to attract, engage and involve Millennials between the ages of 18 and 34 into the fabric of their congregations. The following pages reflect research that has been conducted on the effective characteristics and strategies that have been used to reach Millennials at the time of the current study.

Community

Millennials highly value relationships, therefore, the churches that are attracting Millennials are those that have found ways to connect and build relationship with them. It is important for congregations to offer multiple entry points for Millennials to build relationship and connect (Belzer et al., 2007). It is also important that the value of community is seen as a high priority in a church, and that it is a place where community and relationship can flourish (Stetzer, et al., 2009). Millennials like harmony and recoil when there is division in relationships and organizations. One of the reasons Millennials abstain from church is because they see religion and the church as a divisive force in the world (Campbell & Putnam, 2010). Therefore, churches that are supportive, encouraging, and diverse are attractive to Millennials. Millennial feelings can be summed up in the motto “in essentials unity, in non-essentials liberty, and in all things love” (Stark, 2016, p. 71). Churches that place a high priority on diversity will be more attractive to Millennials because they want to see the same diversity in the church as they see at school and work (Cimino, 2010).

Community and unity can be fostered through small groups, medium size gatherings, group activities, and service projects. The key is to be intentional in thinking about and creating atmospheres for relationship building. Millennials desire connection through relationship (Rainer & Rainer, 2008). If they do not connect with a church, they

will not stay. One of the benefits of small groups is that they enable connection to occur and felt needs to be addressed in a manner that cannot be dealt with in a Sunday service. In the research that has been done on reaching Millennials, the presence of community and relationship via small groups has stood out as one of the best ways for attracting and maintaining Millennial engagement and involvement. However, it should be noted that small groups do not always look the same for Millennials. Because of their active schedules, they are just as comfortable with conducting a small group via technology, as they are meeting in person (Stark, 2016).

Millennials are also looking for community via the presence of cross-generational relationships. It is important for them to have relationship with previous generations. Over the years, a *silo effect* has occurred in the church that has separated the generations so that they no longer interact. They have been isolated from each other in order for them to receive targeted ministry to their age group. The unintentional consequence has been a generational fragmentation in the church that has robbed the generations of valuable learning through interaction with one another (Glassford & Barger-Elliot, 2011). An important part of developing community is making sure that intergenerational ministry occurs. This does not eliminate the need for age groups to have their own ministries; that is still necessary. Churches who have attracted Millennials have been intentional about making sure the generations get the opportunity to be with one another (Glassford & Barger-Elliot). The starting point for community is the second method in which churches are attracting Millennials.

Hospitality

Marketing studies of Millennials have reported that customer service is important to Millennials, and leads to customer loyalty (Beauchamp & Barnes, 2015; Hurd, 2014). Beauchamp and Barnes reported that Millennials look for customer service representatives to be caring, friendly, attentive, helpful and knowledgeable about their product. For those who meet Millennials at the door of the church, this information is important for them to understand. When Millennials enter the church, they expect to encounter caring, friendly, attentive, and helpful people who can assist them with the knowledge they need to make their visit worthwhile. The atmosphere and environment created in the church is a critical factor in attracting them. Many Millennials feel ignored by the church and fail to feel a sense of belonging (Setran & Kiesling, 2013).

Many Millennials who attend church are overlooked for invitations to after church lunches or other activities. One of the ways churches can engage Millennials is by having congregants invite them to dinner or an activity (Drummond, 2010). It is one thing to greet them warmly, but an entirely different thing to take the next step to reach out and invite them to do life with you. Doing life side by side with Millennials accomplishes two things. First, it allows them to experience authenticity, which they value in relationship (Arnett, 2012). The second thing that occurs is that doing life with Millennials allows, what Boshers and Poling (2006) call, the *be with it factor* to take place (Boshers & Poling, 2006). This is a kind of informal mentoring that occurs by spending time with people. Millennials want to be mentored by previous generations because many of them are from broken families, so mentoring relationships provide them with a sense of stability and security (Arnett). Acts of shared hospitality with Millennials create

opportunities for dialogue and relationship building, which is what Millennials thrive on (Bass, 2001).

Chang-Ho and Tameifuna (2011) studied the impact that full-time, paid youth pastors had on teens. What they found was that the most important aspect of keeping teenage Millennials involved in the church was not programming, but the relationship they had with their youth pastor and where they *hung out*. The conclusion that they drew was that the money churches spent to hire full-time youth pastor was a worthwhile investment because of the positive impact it had on teenagers (Chang-Ho & Tameifuna). When congregants spend time together with Millennials, it also gives the opportunity for the sharing of stories, which is one of their preferred learning styles. These stories are a way of encourage, nourishing, and fortifying faith (Schram, 2003). Hospitality is an important part of creating a sense of belonging in people. Therefore, churches that are intentional in their hospitality towards Millennials will attract and maintain this age group because they want to belong and be noticed.

Service Opportunities

Another way churches successfully attracted Millennials was by providing opportunities to serve. Millennials want to serve in practical ways, and so they are looking for churches that exhibit a social conscience, and want to *do* the Gospel, rather than *talk* about the Gospel (Stark, 2016). Millennials are attracted to churches that express compassion for the less fortunate (Jenkin & Martin, 2014). Outreach and service must become a mainstay in any church that hopes to attract Millennials. Millennials are attracted to organizations they perceive are making a difference in the world. A prime example is TOMS shoes. Millennials will choose TOMS over other brands of shoes

because TOMS has promised that for every pair of shoes they sell, they will donate another pair to people around the world in need of shoes (“TOMS”, 2016).

One of the ways churches are facilitating service opportunities is by networking with organizations in their communities to provide them with volunteers (Stark, 2016). Service opportunities provide a great onramp for Millennials to get to know a church (Stetzer, 2014b). In many cases, the first contact a Millennial has with a church comes as the result of volunteering for a service project (Stark). The impact of serving in people’s lives is captured in this quote, “the world desperately needs the church to be the church, reflecting the kingdom of God so that those who are lost will know where to turn when their own kingdoms begin to collapse” (Tchividjian, 2012, p. 93).

Clarity

According to Liautaud (n.d.), Millennials are attracted to churches that have a clear vision, as well as a facility that has clear signage. Millennials need to see and hear a clearly articulated vision, mission, and purpose. Because Millennials are skeptical about institutions, they want to make sure that the organizations they are involved in provide meaning and purpose to their lives, and are making a difference in the world. Therefore, they want to know what the vision and mission of a church is. They also want visual clarity when it comes to the church facility via signage and information. Millennials do not like to look for things. Millennials want answers to two questions when they arrive at a church, “Where am I, and what is expected of me?” (Liautaud, para. 2).

Leadership

Churches that have attracted Millennials are those that have typically been led by transformational servant leaders, whose style emphasizes the concepts of teamwork,

collaboration, humility, creativity, and relationship (Ferri-Reed, 2013a). Millennials are drawn to leadership that is willing to empower them and give them opportunities to exercise their gifts and talents to lead (Graham, 2014). Millennials are not attracted to dictatorial or command and control style leaders (Titleman, 2016). Millennials enjoy an organic style of leadership because they have grown up learning and working together as a group. Because of the numerous leadership scandals that Millennials have been exposed to in their lifetime, they are looking for honesty, authenticity, and transparency in those that lead them (Ferri-Reed, 2013b). According to Stetzer et al. (2009), there are several keys to leadership transparency. The first is the practice of self-awareness. Does the leader recognize his or her bad habits and are they open to receiving feedback from others to correct those habits? Are they aware of how others perceive them, and how they make others feel? The second key is a willingness to be vulnerable and relatable. The third key is a commitment to honesty, which builds trust. Can the leader admit their mistakes and sincerely offer apologies? The fourth key is a willingness to take time for people and express a genuine love and concern for them. The leader and the leadership style of a church is a key factor as to whether a church attracts or repels Millennials.

Congregational Portrait

Sahlin and Roozen (2011) examined data from the Faith Communities Today national survey in 2010. Sixty percent, or 6,394 churches of all sizes responded to the survey. Researchers took a systematic sampling of every ninth church after placing the responding churches in ascending order. This systematic sampling produced a sample group of 1,190 churches. After analyzing this data, Sahlin and Roozen reported that there

appeared to be a correlation between the following ten factors and increased Millennial participation in congregations.

The first factor they examined was the size of the congregation. What they discovered was that midsize congregations between 301 and 400 congregants experienced the most participation from Millennials. It should be noted that congregations of 500 or more were a close second. However, it should be noted that Wuthnow (2010) reported that the size of a congregation does not matter as much when it comes to attracting Millennials as does the vision and emphasis of the congregation.

The second factor was the number of full time staff. Churches that had two or more full time staff members experienced greater involvement from Millennials. The third factor was related to rate of growth. Churches that experienced rapid growth saw the most Millennial participation. Interestingly, churches experiencing rapid decline, saw the second greatest increase of Millennial participation. The fourth factor measured technology. Sahlin and Roozen (2011) reported that congregations that used technology experienced Millennial participation that was two times greater than churches that did not use technology. The fifth factor evaluated programming. Churches that offered a variety of programming, especially those offering ministries directed towards Millennials saw greater Millennial participation than congregations that had little programming and no ministry for Millennials. According to Salhin and Roozen, congregations that offered ministry to Millennials doubled the number of Millennials they attracted.

The sixth factor regarded gender. Congregations who had a greater population of men attracted more Millennials than did congregations who had a greater population of women. The seventh factor measured the age of the congregation. The data in this

category had one of the strongest correlations in the study. Churches that were newer, such as church plants, were three times more likely to attract Millennials than older congregations. It was also reported by Wuthnow, that Millennials were more likely to attend churches where 35% of the congregation is under the age of 35. The eighth factor Sahlin and Roozen (2011) examined was worship. Congregations who had changed their style of worship within the previous five years experienced greater Millennial participation than churches that did not. However, churches that indicated they had made no changes were not far behind in the results. What appeared to be a bigger attraction factor was whether or not churches utilized electric guitars, drums and projection screens. Churches that indicated they used those three items on a weekly basis attracted Millennials at twice the rate of those that never used electric guitars, drums, and projection screens.

The ninth category measured spiritual practices. Congregations that placed a heavy emphasis on basic spiritual practices such as prayer and Bible reading attracted twice the Millennial participation as those congregations that placed little emphasis on these spiritual practices. The tenth factor in this study measured spiritual vitality. Sahlin and Roozen (2011) reported a strong correlation between spiritual vitality and Millennial participation. Churches that were spiritually vibrant were three times more likely to attract Millennials than those who were not. Sahlin and Roozen concluded that there are multiple factors that appear to have a correlation to Millennial attraction. Regardless of church size, all churches can implement some of these factors to increase their ability to attract and involve Millennials.

Communication

It is important for ministry leaders to understand the learning style and preferred methods of communication of Millennials in order to facilitate effective ministry (Phillips & Trainor, 2014). Millennials love learning environments that are engaging, interactive, and experiential (Skiba, 2005). The talking head lecture style delivery method will not work with Millennials. Therefore, pastors need to adapt their messages to become more interactive, engaging, and experiential to attract Millennials. Sermons also need to be shortened, due to the short focus and attention span of Millennials (Bauman et al., 2014; Bucuta, 2015). Because Millennials are extremely visual, it is important to use graphics, video, and other forms of multi-media and technology as part of your presentation in order to keep their attention (Nikirk, 2012).

The following four-step process for teaching Millennials was offered by Parker (2012), which was based on Jesus' model of discipleship. Step one was to allow them to work in groups and develop a sense of community and trust. Step two was to involve them in serving and volunteering opportunities, which provide life-transforming experiences. The third step was to send them out to learn through real-life experiences. And the final step was to help students develop intellectual, moral, and civic character through intentional mentoring. Mentoring allows for the sharing of successes and failures as well as discussions about personal growth. Millennials like information that is delivered through narrative or stories (All, 2013). Storytelling is an excellent way to communicate truth to Millennials (Dyck, 2010; Jenkin & Martin, 2014). Millennials are also attracted to creativity and the arts. Churches that emphasized the arts experienced higher rates of Millennial attraction (Sahlin & Roozen, 2011).

According to Kinnaman (2011), contrary to what people think, Millennials want to be challenged. They do not like shallow content. Millennials want deep, thought provoking messages (Kinnaman). Surprisingly, many Millennials enjoy expository preaching, which has led to its resurgence in recent years (Stetzer et al., 2009). The desire for more meaningful content has led some Millennials to return to a liturgical style of worship because of its rich symbolism and meaning (Olmstead, 2014). Needless to say, churches that have attracted Millennials have changed their method of communicating in order to engage Millennials.

The churches that have attracted Millennials also have an understanding of the preferred delivery method for communicating with Millennials. While it is necessary to use all sorts of technology to connect with Millennials, the two most popular ways to communicate information to Millennials are texting and social media (Stetzer et al., 2009). It is important that churches understand that the cell phone is now the *first screen* for Millennials (Iredell, 2015), which means it is the one they spend the most time looking at. Websites are important as a first introduction to the church. Today, Millennials will visit a church's website before they visit the church. Therefore, it is imperative that a church's website convey the brand and image of the church accurately and effectively.

As was stated earlier, Millennials want things simple, functional, and convenient (Muk, 2013), and that holds true for websites and other technologies. High attraction churches used podcasting, livestreaming, and e-vites as well as other methods to communicate to Millennials. Some churches have launched Internet campuses in order to reach and attract Millennials (Stetzer et al., 2009). The ability to communicate with

Millennials in a way they can relate to is an important reason that some churches have attracted Millennials and others have not.

Marketing

Like each generation before them, Millennials have their own preferences when it comes to marketing. According to Bucuta (2015), companies who experienced success in marketing to Millennials were those “that succeeded in building a relationship with them” (p. 43). Churches need to understand that Millennial marketing rises and falls on relationship. They purchase items from companies they feel a relational connection with. Churches that have attracted Millennials understand this and market to engender relationship building and trust, rather than selling Millennials on the latest greatest activity going on in their church. Churches need to understand that Millennials take the recommendations they receive from their friends about a product very seriously (Bucuta). Churches that attract Millennials have tapped into the power of *word of mouth* advertising. They realize that friend recommendations carry a great deal of weight in a Millennials decision of what to buy or where to go. A third thing to keep in mind when marketing to Millennials is that they like excellence and style (Bucuta). Millennials are attracted to churches whose marketing literature is attractive and trendy. Many churches skimp when it comes to producing high quality literature, but Millennials see church literature as an extension of the quality they can expect to see in the church. According to Habibi, Laroche & Richard (2014), companies can develop a following among Millennials through the use of social media groups. High attraction churches have created online groups among the Millennials that attend their churches to foster community,

information sharing, and a social support system which provides an avenue to reach out to Millennials, enhance relationship, and engage them with your church.

Conclusion

Chang (2011) examined the data from a landmark study done between the Cooperative Congregational Studies Partnership and the 2010 Faith Communities Today (FACT) young adult study. Chang reviewed existing studies on young adult congregational involvement from over 40 researchers, analyzed the 2010 FACT survey data from over 11,000 congregations, and conducted more than a dozen case studies with churches. The criteria for high attraction churches was that at least 21% of the congregation was active young adults between the ages of 18 and 34. Chang reported the following observations.

First, in 30%, or 3,300 of the congregations that attracted a higher percentage of Millennials, those who led worship were in their twenties, and the lead pastors were under forty. Chang reported that the worship experience in high attraction churches was highly informal, innovative, experimental, and high quality. This research study found that high attraction churches utilized video and projection technology. High attraction congregations also used innovative technology to communicate with Millennials. These high attraction congregations were also seen as being accepting and tolerant versus judgmental. Chang found that high attraction churches were intentional in their efforts to connect with Millennials. The leadership in high attraction churches made room for the gifts of Millennials to be used, and took the time to invest in developing Millennials. Chang's research also noted that higher concentrations of Millennials were found in churches located in urban, suburban and high growth area locations.

There is a lot to process when it comes to attracting and engaging Millennials in the life of the church. In fact, the task can feel overwhelming. The FACTS Case Study on The Well in Scotch Plains, New Jersey by Walter (2011) and research done by Belzer et al. (2014), may help to relieve the feelings of disappointment leaders have experienced due to low turnout at gatherings they have held for Millennials. Their research revealed that the average attendance of Millennials at the ministry events of churches with attendance in the thousands was anywhere between 30 and 90, and yet those churches were considered highly effective in reaching Millennials.

The point is that successful ministry to Millennials is not about numbers; it is about building relationships one Millennial at a time. Walter (2011) reports that Millennials' lack of attendance is not because they don't care; it is because their schedules and lifestyle prevent them from attending many events. One way churches can minister to Millennials is to consistently be there for them and provide a place of love, acceptance, and stability whether they attend regularly or not. This mentality will foster trust and relationship with Millennials that will make effective ministry possible.

It has been reported that in the past, young adults had left the church during the college years only to return again once they married and had children (Powell, 2012; Stetzer, 2014a). Dyck (2010) believes that may not be true of the Millennial generation for the following reasons. The first reason is because of the alarming volume of Millennials who have dropped out of the church. According to Dyck 30-40% of Millennials ascribe to no religion at all, compared to just 5-10% a generation ago. Second, the *emerging adult* stage is considerably longer than it used to be, up to 12 years, which keeps Millennials out of church longer. Third, because Millennials are delaying

marriage and children, the amount of time they are away from the church has increased and has diminished the chance for a return.

Smith and Snell (2009) have written about the widely held *internal-without-external* theory of religion. This theory stated that although Millennials drop out of public expressions of faith, such as going to church, their internal religious faith and convictions remain strong in their lives. Smith determined this theory was a myth. He concluded,

Little evidence supports the idea that emerging adults who decline in regular external religious practice nevertheless retain over time high levels of subjectively important, privately committed, internal religious faith. Quite the contrary is indicated by our research. (p. 252)

What that statement means is those who stop going to church, for all intents and purposes stop practicing the faith.

Summary

The goal of the current research study was to provide ministry leaders with information about the characteristics most likely to predict Millennial church attraction and involvement so that Millennials residing in their communities can be reached and reconnected to Christ. An examination of the literature has provided valuable information regarding the characteristics, viewpoints, and preferences of Millennials found in previous studies conducted by researchers. The majority of the research that has been conducted has focused on the reasons why Millennials have left the church. In the following chapter, the researcher presents the methodology that was used to determine the characteristics most likely to predict Millennial church attraction and involvement.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

Much of the literature that has been written about the Millennial generation, which is comprised of individuals born between 1980 and the early 2000s (Waters & Bortree, 2012), has focused on why Millennials have left the church. According to the research literature, no group has experienced a greater decline in church attendance than Millennials between the ages of 18 and 30 (Chan et al., 2015; Desmond et al., 2010; van der Merwe et al., 2013). In comparison to the amount of research that has been conducted on the topic of why Millennials have left the church, much less research has been conducted to determine what churches can do to increase Millennial attendance and involvement in the church (van der Merwe et al.). The purpose of the current research study was to determine if there were differences between the characteristics of Assembly of God churches in the State of Illinois that had successfully attracted Millennials and those that did not.

In an effort to identify any differences in characteristics that existed between churches that were successful in attracting Millennials and those that were not, the researcher was guided by the following four research questions.

1. What characteristics are different in churches that have demonstrated an ability to attract Millennials versus those that have not?

2. What differences exist in the experiences of Millennials in churches that demonstrated an ability to attract Millennials versus those that did not?
3. What characteristics do Millennials prefer when choosing a church?
4. What church characteristics are most related to Millennial church attendance?

Research Design

The current study utilized an applied quantitative research design that addressed the problem of declining Millennial attendance and involvement in the church. According to Leedy and Ormrod (2013), research projects that “are intended to address issues that have immediate relevance to our society’s current practices, procedures, and policies” (p. 27), are referred to as applied research. A quantitative design was chosen by the researcher for two reasons. The first reason was because quantitative designs allow for the examination of a large number of variables in a numerical way, which allowed the researcher to determine patterns, frequencies, and relationships among respondents. The second reason for the selection of a quantitative design was the fact that the researcher did not have time to conduct qualitative research among the 54 churches being studied given the time constraints of the current doctoral program.

The research done in the current study was quasi-experimental in nature, because the researcher used pre-existing groups that had not been randomly assigned, also, the researcher did not control for any of the variables in the study (Salkind, 2012). The current research project involved gathering data from Pastors and Millennials in Assembly of God churches in Illinois using two separate descriptive survey instruments that were taken online via SurveyMonkey® (Gay et al., 2012; Leedy and Ormrod, 2013).

According to Salkind (2012), survey research is helpful in the attempt to “study directly the characteristics of populations” (p. 198), which was the main focus of the current study. Salkind identified survey instruments as a way to “examine the frequency and relationships between psychological and sociological variables” (p. 198), which included beliefs, attitudes, preferences, and opinions. Surveys were utilized by the researcher because they allowed data to be collected from a large population in a way that preserved the anonymity of the participants (Mitchell & Jolley, 2012; Perry, 2014).

The 35-question survey instrument given to Pastors in the current study was adapted by the researcher (see Appendix E) utilizing questions from two nationally distributed survey instruments that were used by permission from the respective organizations. The first instrument was the Assemblies of God version of the 2010 Faith Communities Today Survey (FACTS) (Houseal, 2010). The second instrument used was the United States Congregational Life Survey (Barnett, 2008). The Pastors survey was used to collect data to answer the first and fourth research questions in the current study.

The 38-question survey instrument given to Millennials was also adapted by the researcher (see Appendix F) utilizing questions from two nationally distributed survey instruments that were used by permission from the respective organizations. The first instrument was the Assemblies of God version of the 2010 Faith Communities Today Survey (Houseal, 2010). The second instrument was the Seventh Day Adventist Young Adult Survey (Barna, 2013). The data from the Millennial survey was used to answer research questions one through four.

Both surveys were formatted with the same six sections: about you, my congregation, worship service, mission and identity, programs, and leadership.

Participants were asked to respond using the following question formats: Five-point Likert scales, multiple choice, and fill-in-the-blanks. Likert scale questions were used for the majority of the survey because they provide a consistent manner of collecting responses from participants about their attitudes, beliefs, and opinions in a manner that was easy to understand and did not force participants to make either-or choices (Gee, 2016).

Because of the nature of the current research project, and the lack of specific survey instruments to answer the research questions proposed in this study, it was necessary for the researcher to adapt and expand existing survey instruments to be used for the current study. The researcher also conducted a pilot study of 14 Millennials and four Pastors, in order to provide face validity for the survey. Face validity, also called logical validity, means that the measurement instrument appears to measure what it is supposed to measure on the surface or at face value to those who have taken it, those who have reviewed it, and to the person or group that distributed it (Andale, 2015).

The researcher adapted questions from each of the two instruments by converting certain questions to fit a five-point Likert scale format in order to facilitate comparisons and allow for continuity in scoring the scales. The researcher adapted three questions from the United States Congregational Life Survey (Barnett, 2008), and two questions from the Faith Communities Today Survey (Houseal, 2010) in this manner. The adaptations to the questions from each survey were minimal. There were questions in the original measurement scales that were not used in order to reduce the size of the survey to minimize fatigue, or because they were not applicable. The following paragraphs outline

the methods and procedures that were used to answer each research question proposed in this study.

The first research question examined whether or not differences existed in the characteristics present in churches that experienced a higher rate of Millennial church attendance compared to churches that experienced a lower rate of Millennial church attendance. In order to answer this question, the researcher examined the data collected from Pastors and Millennials concerning the characteristics of the churches being studied to determine whether the characteristics found in high and low attraction churches were similar or different. The characteristics examined include church size, location, facility type, age of the Pastor, leadership style, congregational age and diversity, worship style, relationship, service length, sermon length, technology, programs/ministries, staff, and amount of resources devoted to reaching Millennials.

Research question two sought to examine whether or not there was a difference in the experiences Millennials had while attending high attraction churches versus low attraction churches. The answer to this research question was arrived at by examining the data from questions 26 through 29 of the Millennial survey which asked questions related to their experiences with the church they attended.

The third research question in the current study was designed to identify what church characteristics Millennials preferred when looking for a church to attend. The data to answer this question was mined from questions 14, 29-31, and 36-38 in the Millennial survey, which asked Millennials about their ideal church and what characteristics attracted them to their current church.

The final research question sought to determine what characteristics, if any, were most related to a church's ability to attract Millennial attendees. In order to answer this question, the researcher took the characteristics from research questions one and two that were identified as being statistically significant and performed a Hochberg correction for familywise error due to multiple comparisons. The characteristics that remained statistically significant after completing the Hochberg correction were deemed to be the characteristics that were most likely to be related to Millennial church attendance in high attraction Assembly of God churches in Illinois.

Participants

The population of interest in the current study were Millennials between the ages of 18 and 34 currently attending Assembly of God churches in the State of Illinois along with the Senior Pastors of those churches. The researcher used church statistical data that was collected from the Illinois Assembly of God Annual Church Ministries Report (ACMR), which was obtained by permission from the Illinois District of the Assemblies of God. Of the 362 Assembly of God churches, 162 reported data on Millennial attendance in their churches.

Based on the 2014 ACMR, Millennials comprised 18% of the average Sunday attendance in Illinois Assembly of God congregations. The standard deviation (SD) was calculated to be 8.96%. Using one standard deviation as the criteria, churches who reported an average Millennial attendance of one SD above the state average, which was 27% or higher, were categorized as high attraction churches by the researcher. Churches that reported an average Millennial attendance of one SD below the state average, which was 10% or lower, were categorized as low attraction churches. After the criteria of one

SD was applied, 27 high attraction churches and 27 low attraction churches remained as the population group for the current study.

The sample group for the current study was comprised of Senior Pastors and Millennials between the ages of 18 and 34 who participated in the online survey conducted by the researcher. A total of 118 Millennials and 27 Senior Pastors completed surveys from a total of 36 churches within the population group. The Millennial survey participants were comprised of 57%, or 67 males, and 43%, or 51 females, while the Senior Pastors who responded were 100% male. Of the Millennials who responded to the survey, 78%, or 92, were White; 9%, or 11, were Black; 7%, or eight, were Latino; and 1%, or two, were Asian.

The average age of the Senior Pastors who responded to the survey was 50. Of the Senior Pastors who responded 11%, or three, were under 40; 33%, or nine, were between 40 and 50; 33%, or nine, were between 50 and 60; and 22%, or six, were above 60. The average age of the Millennials who responded to the survey was 27. In the Millennial sample group 6%, or seven, were under 20; 33%, or 39, were between 20 and 25; 36%, or 43, were between 26 and 30; and 24%, or 29, were between 31 and 34 years old.

Of the Millennials who participated in the survey, 89%, or 106 had completed a high school, college, or graduate level education. The sample group of Millennials came from numerous geographic locations in Illinois. Millennial participants resided in urban, suburban, and rural settings in Illinois. Concerning their marital status, 50% or 60, had never been married; 41%, or 49, were in a first-time marriage; 2%, or three, were remarried; and 4%, or five, were currently living with someone. Sixty-One percent, or 72, of the Millennials in the current study had no children. Twenty-Nine percent, or 35, had

up to two children, and 7%, or nine, had more than two children at the time of the current study. The living situation of the Millennials who participated were as follows: 11%, or 14, lived alone; 30%, or 36, lived with their parents; 9%, or 11, lived with a roommate; 14%, or 17, were married; 30%, or 36, were married with children; and 2%, or three, were single and living alone. In terms of employment, 84%, or 100, of the Millennials were employed, while 15%, or 18, were unemployed.

Ninety-One percent, or 108, Millennials attended church services regularly each month. Regular church attendance was defined as attending at least twice per month, which is the national average for regular attenders according to Barna (2014). Only six percent, or eight, of the Millennials who participated indicated that they attended church very seldom. The median length of time Millennials in the current study attended their current churches was four years. The researcher chose to use the median, because of the presence of outliers, which skewed the average. The following is a breakout of the number of years Millennials attended their current church: 21%, or 25, attended one year or less; 16%, or 19, attended 1-2 years; 17%, or 21, attended 2-3 years; 15%, or 18, attended 3-4 years; 7%, or nine, attended 4-5 years; 8%, or 10, attended 5-6 years; 6%, or eight, attended 6-7 years; 8%, or 10, attended 7-8 years; 7%, or nine, attended 8-9 years; 6%, or eight, attended 9-10 years; and 21%, or 26, attended their current church for more than 10 years.

Data Collection

The data for this study was collected from Senior Pastors and Millennials age 18 to 34 whose churches met the criteria for the study. The criteria for the current study was that churches had to be one standard deviation above or below the Sunday Millennial

attendance average of Illinois Assembly of God churches. Based on the criteria, high attraction churches were those who averaged 27% or above in Millennial church attendance and low attraction churches were those who averaged 10% or below in Millennial church attendance.

The researcher identified 27 high attraction and 27 low attraction churches that were invited to participate in the current study. The Senior Pastors from each of these congregations was contacted via email, postal mail, and phone by the researcher and asked to participate in the study. Each Pastor was asked to use the SurveyMonkey® link provided by the researcher to take an online survey. Pastors were also asked to distribute the postcards provided by the researcher to Millennials in their congregation and to ask them to participate in the survey.

In order to incentivize Pastors, the researcher offered a free book of choice to participating Pastors, as well as a copy of the finished research study when completed in the Summer of 2018. In order to incentivize Millennials, those who took the survey were entered into a drawing for the chance to win their choice of either an iPad, or a laptop computer. Millennials were also given the opportunity to have a free copy of the research study sent to them when completed in the Summer of 2018.

The data collection period for the current research project lasted from August 2016 through November 2016. Once the collection of data was completed, the researcher downloaded the information from the SurveyMonkey® website and imported it into two separate Excel spreadsheets. One spreadsheet contained the data collected from Senior Pastors and the other contained the data collected from Millennials. The data was then

transferred from the Excel spreadsheets into the SPSS statistical software. The variables investigated using the online surveys were quantitative in nature.

The two surveys used in this research study were adapted by the researcher, utilizing three nationally distributed surveys that were used by permission. The researcher's rationale for developing a new survey, as opposed to using a pre-existing survey was that no pre-existing survey was available at the time which met the needs of the current study. Therefore, the researcher utilized the work of previous surveys to aid in the creation of a survey to collect the data needed to examine the variables in the current study.

The three surveys that were used in the creation of the researcher's survey were the Assemblies of God version of the Faith Communities Today Survey (FACTS) (Houseal, 2010), the United States Congregational Life Study (Barnett, 2008), and the Seventh Day Adventist Young Adult Survey (Barna, 2013). The FACTS survey and the United States Congregational Life survey were used to develop the survey for Senior Pastors. The FACTS survey, and the Seventh Day Adventist survey were used to develop the survey for Millennials. While no official information was available concerning the reliability and validity of these three studies, the researcher contacted each organization to obtain information on the steps taken by these nationally recognized institutions to insure the reliability and validity of their survey instruments.

The first survey used was the FACTS 2010 survey (Houseal, 2010). The Hartford Institute for Religion and Research was contacted and informed the researcher that four approaches were used for reliability and validity (Roozen, personal communication, April 10, 2017). First, the questions in the original FACT 2000 survey were tested with a

group of 12 congregations in Dayton, Ohio. The congregations completed the questionnaire and then in a workshop setting, researchers asked the pilot group of lay and clergy leaders in each congregation how accurately they felt the survey results represented their congregation. All congregations were comfortable with the representativeness of the survey results. Second, since the group that conducted the FACT survey was made up of numerous denominations, the research professionals representing each denomination assessed the face validity of each denominational FACT questionnaire.

Third, an extensive analysis of several of the survey items was completed in order to verify that the respective items had predictive, concurrent validity. And finally, on two different occasions, after-the-fact, phone interviews were conducted with the congregations that were surveyed giving the research interviewers confidence that the accounts presented in the interviews matched the congregation's survey responses. According to Faith Communities Today, the survey had a +/- 4% sampling error rate at a 95% confidence level.

The second survey the researcher used was the United States Congregational Life Survey (Barnett, 2008). This national study compiled religious data from a random sample of over 5,000 church congregations throughout the United States from various denominations in two waves. The first wave occurred in 2001 and the second wave was surveyed from the Fall of 2008 through the Spring of 2009. According to Chavez, Konieczny, Beyerlein, and Barman (1999) the Cronbach's Alpha reliability of the United States Congregational Life Survey was listed as $\alpha = .7$.

The third survey utilized by the researcher was the Seventh Day Adventist Young Adult Study (Barna, 2013). The principal researcher of the Seventh Day Adventist Young Adult survey was Dr. Clint Jenkin. According to Dr. Jenkin and the Barna Group this survey had a +/- 4.3% sampling error with a 95% confidence level. Questions of question-design bias and question-order bias concerning the survey were taken into account when calculating the error and confidence levels of the survey. The researcher attempted to reach Dr. Jenkin for further information but was unable to contact him because he was no longer employed by the Barna Group. Permission to use these surveys for the current study as well as copies of each of the surveys has been provided in Appendices B, C, and D.

Analytical Methods

Because of the nature of the questions in the survey, it was necessary to utilize a variety of statistical methods to interpret the data that was collected and answer the four research questions proposed in the current study. The researcher used descriptive statistics to calculate frequencies, means, and modes to analyze the demographic information and preferences of the participants regarding characteristics within the churches. According to Salkind (2012), descriptive statistics are used to describe and explore the general characteristics of data that has been collected.

The researcher used inferential statistics in order to determine whether or not any relationship existed between the variables being examined in each of the four research questions. Inferential statistics are used to determine whether the data collected from the sample group can be generalized to the larger population (Salkind, 2012). Because the majority of data collected was nominal and ordinal in nature, it was necessary for the

researcher to use non-parametric statistics. Non-parametric statistics are used when data is ordinal or nominal in nature, or when a sample size is small or abnormal in distribution (Leedy & Ormrod, 2013). On the interval-ratio data collected, the researcher used parametric statistics such as *t*-tests and Pearson correlations to analyze the relationship between the variable data. However, the majority of the statistical analysis in the current research study used non-parametric statistical tests such as, chi-square, Mann-Whitney U, and Spearman-Rho correlations to analyze the relationship between the variable data that was collected.

The researcher used *t*-tests, Pearson correlations, chi-square tests, Mann-Whitney U tests, and Spearman-Rho correlations to answer the first three research questions in the current study. The significant relationships that were found while examining the first two research questions provided the basis for answering the final research question, which examined whether or not any of the church characteristics studied were related to Millennial church attendance.

Because multiple comparisons were done when analyzing the data, it was necessary to use corrective statistics to insure the integrity of the results. The researcher chose to use the Hochberg error correction procedure to prevent any type I statistical errors. This procedure was chosen because it allowed the researcher to rank church characteristics by *p*-value, or level of significance and probability. This enabled the researcher to create a continuum of characteristics that could be evaluated to determine whether or not they were related to Millennial church attendance.

To answer research question four, the researcher used the results of the Hochberg correctional procedure to identify whether the significant characteristics that were found

in research questions one and two remained statistically significant, and therefore, were considered to be related to Millennial church attendance.

Limitations

There were a number of limitations with the current study. First, the amount of time allotted to complete data collection limited the potential for data collection. Greater insight may have been added to the current study had the researcher had the time and resources to add an in-depth qualitative component in order to determine if the results obtained through the survey instrument were consistent with data obtained through the qualitative method of interviewing participants. The second limitation was related to the size and distribution of the sample groups. The response rate of the Senior Pastors was lower than expected by the researcher, with only 27 of the 54 Senior Pastors who were contacted willing to participate. While the Millennial response rate of 118 was acceptable, it would have improved the study to have had a response rate of 300-400 participants. It should also be noted that among the 118 Millennials who participated in the study, 41%, or 49, were from one church in Illinois whose Senior Pastor heavily promoted the study. It is possible that having a large number of responses from one church could have skewed the results of the current study.

The low response rate of participants created a third limitation with the current study in two ways. First, it is possible that the number of Senior Pastors and Millennials who participated in the study was limited due to the fact that the survey could only be taken online, and some may not have had internet access. Second, because the sample size was lower than expected, there was not enough power present for the number of variables the researcher attempted to compare. Therefore, variables that may have been

statistically significant were not able to be identified once the statistical corrections had been made. A larger sample group of Millennials and Senior Pastors would have added a greater amount of power to the study, which would have increased the chances of finding statistically significant characteristics.

The fifth limitation of the current study was that only Assembly of God churches in Illinois were studied, therefore, the scope of this study was not generalizable to the greater population of churches in other denominations in Illinois or the United States. The current study was only generalizable to Assembly of God churches within Illinois. The sixth limitation was that out of 362 Assembly of God churches in Illinois, only 162 churches reported data on Millennial attendance when filling out the Annual Church Ministries Report. With less than half of the Illinois Assembly of God churches reporting Millennial data, the initial assumptions used by the researcher regarding the average percentage of Millennials attending Assembly of God churches could have been inaccurate.

The seventh limitation of the current study was that Senior Pastors and Millennials were incentivized to participate in the study by being offered a free gift, which potentially influenced their motivation for participating in the current study. A ninth limitation was that since the name of the researcher was associated with the emails and letters sent to Senior Pastors it is possible that Pastors responded because of their association with the researcher, which could have potentially skewed or influenced the results.

Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to describe the methods and procedures that were used by the researcher in the current research study to answer the research questions that were posed. The researcher utilized the SPSS statistical software program to calculate and analyze the data that was collected pertaining to each of the research questions.

The final chapter will provide the reader with an interpretation of the findings of the current study, which seeks to answer the question, what, if any, church characteristics were most related to Millennial church attendance.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine what, if any, church characteristics were most related to Millennial church attendance in Assembly of God churches in Illinois. In this study, the term Millennial encompassed individuals 18 to 34 years of age (Pew Research Center, 2010; Waters & Bortree, 2012). According to the existing body of research, Millennials have experienced a greater decline in church attendance and involvement than any other age group (Chan et al., 2015; Desmond, et al., 2010; van der Merwe, et al. 2013). Researchers have reported that the level of religious affiliation among Millennials is less than among previous generations (Kinnaman, 2007; Guldalian, 2013; Pew Research Center, 2010). Burke (2015) reported that 36% of Millennials identified themselves as *Nones*, or individuals who did not affiliate with any religion. This number represented a 10% increase since 2007, which was the largest increase among any age group. The percentages of *Nones* in previous generations were: Silent Generation (1928 – 1945), 11%; Baby Boomers (1946-1964), 17%; and Generation X (1965 – 1980), 23%.

Based on the review of the literature, there are several reasons the church has experienced a decline in Millennial attendance and involvement. A primary reason was

Millennial skepticism concerning the institutional church (Kinnaman, 2007; Dyck, 2010). Millennials have been turned off by what they perceive as intolerance, judgmentalism, hypocrisy, elitism, and archaic views of the church (Jenkin & Martin, 2014; Kinnaman, 2007). A second reason for the lack of Millennial engagement has been the rise of postmodernism, which is the predominant philosophy of Millennials (Hall & Delport, 2013; Horell, 2004; van der Merwe et al., 2013). A third contributing factor to the decline of Millennial church attendance has been the secularization of Sunday (Mohler, 2014), which refers to the replacement of church attendance with secular activities that leave no time for church.

A fourth reason that Millennials have absented themselves from the church is because they do not feel church leadership values their presence (Loskota et al., 2007). According to Belzer et al. (2006), and Setran and Kiesling (2013), Millennials do not feel they are an integral part of the church, instead, they feel ignored. A fifth reason that has caused Millennials to drop out of the church is a lack of relational connection (Rainer & Rainer, 2011). A sixth reason for the decline in church attendance is that Millennials believe that the church has done a poor job of meeting the needs of society and being involved in social justice issues (Rainer & Rainer, 2008; Stetzer et al., 2009; Winston, 2014).

It is important to note that while much of the literature that has been written has focused on the problem of declining Millennial church attendance and involvement, there is much evidence that Millennials have an interest in spirituality. According to Smith and Snell (2009), and Winograd and Hais (2011), most Millennials still believe in God and remain open spiritually. Millennials often refer to themselves as being *spiritual but not*

religious (Scott, 2014; Stetzer et al., 2009). According to Myers (2015), Millennials possess a number of characteristics and traits that the church and society should be excited about. Millennials are passionate about relationships, especially with their family and friends (Smith & Snell, 2009). Because of this emphasis on relationships, Millennials value the appropriate work-life balance in their lives (Ferri-Reed, 2013a). Millennials are motivated by meaningful causes to devote their time and energy to, and they are willing to live sacrificial lives in order to change the world (Safer, 2007; Winograd & Hais, 2011). Millennials are also creative, entrepreneurial, and adapt well to change (Myers, 2015).

Despite the decline in Millennial church attendance, there are churches that have succeeded in attracting and involving Millennials in their congregations. Compared to the amount of research conducted on why Millennials have left the church, there has been much less research devoted to what churches can do to increase Millennial church attendance and involvement (van der Merwe et al., 2013). The aim of the current research was to survey pastors and Millennials of Assembly of God churches in Illinois to determine if there were differences between the characteristics of the churches that had successfully attracted Millennials and those that had not.

The current study used an applied descriptive quantitative methodology (Gay et al., 2012; Leedy & Ormrod, 2013) and was guided by the following research questions:

1. What characteristics are different in churches that have demonstrated an ability to attract Millennials versus those that have not?
2. What differences exist in the experiences of Millennials in churches that demonstrated an ability to attract Millennials versus those that did not?

3. What characteristics do Millennials prefer when choosing a church?
4. What church characteristics are most likely to be related to Millennial church attendance?

In this final chapter, the findings from the survey data are described and summarized, along with an analysis of the data. Each of the four research questions in the current study are addressed and conclusions, implications, and recommendations are offered by the researcher.

Findings

Research Question One

The first research question asked in the current study was *what characteristics are different in churches that have demonstrated an ability to attract Millennials versus those that have not?* In order to answer research question one, the researcher conducted *t*-tests, chi-square tests, and Mann-Whitney *U* tests to analyze the nominal, ordinal, and interval-ratio data from questions 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, 11, 15, 18, 25, 26, 29, 32, 33, and 35 of the survey given to pastors, and questions 2, 14, 22, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 33, and 36 of the survey given to Millennials. Upon analyzing the data, four statistically significant results were found after the researcher applied a Hochberg correction for familywise error. The statistically significant results pertained to discipleship, Millennial ministry, sermon focus, and technology.

A Mann-Whitney *U* test was conducted on question 29 of the pastor's survey to test whether there was a difference between high and low attraction churches in regard to the importance of the ministries within their churches. The researcher found a statistically significant difference between high and low attraction churches when using a five-point

Liker scale to determine the presence of a discipleship ministry. The mean rank of the high and low attraction churches were 15.97 and 7.94 respectively; $U = 27.50$, $Z = -2.724$, $p < .006$, $r = .534$. The effect size for this analysis was found to be within the range generally considered to be large for a Mann-Whitney U test effect size, indicating that there was a large difference between high and low attraction churches in regard to the pastors who reported having strong discipleship ministries. Churches that had strong discipleship ministries attracted more Millennials than those who did not.

A Mann-Whitney U test was also conducted to compare the two groups of Millennials in question 30 of the Millennial survey, which asked the same question regarding the importance of ministries within the churches they attended. The researcher found a statistically significant difference between high and low attraction churches in regard to the presence of a discipleship ministry. The mean rank of the high and low attraction churches, which indicated which group ranked higher, were 67.98 and 53.03 respectively; $U = 819.500$, $Z = -2.135$, $p < .033$, $r = .201$. The effect size for this analysis was within the range generally considered to be small for the Mann-Whitney U test effect size, however, the result demonstrated that Millennials, like the pastors, prioritized a strong discipleship ministry in their answers as an important church characteristic.

The second statistically significant difference that the researcher found between high and low attraction churches was in regard to their emphasis on ministry to Millennials. The mean rank of the high and low attraction churches, which indicated which group ranked higher, were 16.09 and 6.44 respectively; $U = 15.500$, $Z = -3.170$, $p < .002$, $r = .621$. The effect size for this analysis was within the range generally considered to be large for a Mann-Whitney U test effect size, indicating that there was a

large difference between high and low attraction churches in regard to ministry to Millennials. Millennials ranked ministry to Millennials third in order of importance, and community service second, while pastors ranked ministry to Millennials second in order of importance, and community service third. The results for the remainder of the ministries analyzed produced results that were non-significant. (See Tables 1 and 2).

Table 1

Importance of Ministries - Pastor Survey

Ministry	N	Mean Rank		U	p	r
		High	Low			
Discipleship	26	15.97	7.94	27.500	.006*	.534 ^a
Ministry to Millennials	26	16.09	6.44	15.500	.002*	.621 ^b
Community Service	26	14.53	11.19	53.500	.277	.213
Small Groups	26	13.35	12.25	62.000	.704	.074
Marriage Ministry	26	14.69	10.81	50.500	.216	.242
Prayer Ministry	26	13.72	13.00	68.000	.804	.048
Bible Study	26	13.89	12.63	65.000	.648	.089
Children's Ministry	26	13.61	13.25	70.000	.879	.029

* = $p < .01$

^aEffect Size $p = .534$

^bEffect Size $p = .621$

Table 2

Importance of Ministries - Millennial Survey

Ministry	<i>N</i>	Mean Rank		<i>U</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>r</i>
		High	Low			
Discipleship	112	53.03	67.98	819.500	.033*	.201 ^a
Community Service	112	55.12	61.08	999.000	.386	.081
Ministry to Millennials	112	55.94	56.19	1100.000	.970	.003
Small Groups	112	53.66	62.58	969.000	.248	.109
Marriage Ministry	112	58.65	49.40	933.500	.190	.123
Prayer Ministry	112	55.82	58.75	1059.500	.651	.042
Bible Study	112	56.86	55.31	1087.000	.817	.021
Children's Ministry	112	56.22	57.44	1093.500	.840	.018

* = $p < .05$ ^aEffect Size $p = .201$

A third statistically significant difference between high and low attraction churches was in regard to the focus of the weekly sermon. The researcher found that there was a greater emphasis in high attraction churches on sermons that focused on relationship and evangelism/outreach compared to low attraction churches. For sermons focused on relationship the mean rank between the high and low attraction churches were 15.72 and 8.50 respectively; $U = 32.000$, $Z = -2.453$, $p < .014$, $r = .481$. The effect size for this analysis was within the range generally considered to be moderate for a Mann-Whitney U test effect size, indicating that there was a moderate difference between high and low attraction churches in regard to sermons that focused on relationship.

For sermons focused on evangelism/outreach the mean rank, which indicated which group ranked higher between the high and low attraction churches were 15.28 and

9.50 respectively; $U = 40.000$, $Z = -2.194$, $p < .028$, $r = .430$. The effect size for this analysis was within the range generally considered to be moderate for a Mann-Whitney U test effect size, indicating that there was a moderate difference between high and low attraction churches in regard to sermons that focused on evangelism/outreach (see Table 3).

Table 3

Sermon Focus - Pastor Survey

Ministry	N	Mean Rank		U	p	R
		High	Low			
Relationship	26	15.72	8.50	32.000	.014*	.481 ^a
Evangelism/Outreach	26	15.28	9.50	40.000	.028*	.430 ^b
Grace	26	14.78	10.63	49.000	.083	.340
Hot Topics	26	14.44	11.38	55.000	.295	.205
Social Justice	26	15.03	10.06	44.500	.105	.317
Practical Issues	26	13.58	13.31	70.500	.910	.022
Doctrine	26	14.39	11.50	56.000	.333	.189

* = $p < .05$

^aEffect Size $p = .481$

^bEffect Size $p = .430$

In the survey taken by Millennials, the only significant difference between high and low attraction churches regarding sermon focus was on the topic of relationship. The mean rank of the high and low attraction churches in which relationship was the focus of the sermon were 61.79 and 48.16 respectively; $U = 942.500$, $Z = -1.984$, $p < .047$, $r = .184$. The effect size for this analysis was within the range generally considered to be small for a Mann-Whitney U test effect size, indicating that there was a small difference

between high and low attraction churches in regard to sermons that focused on relationship (see Table 4). It should be noted that while the topic of relationship was important to both pastors and Millennials, the importance of the other sermon topics varied between the two groups.

Table 4

Sermon Focus - Millennial Survey

Ministry	N	Mean Rank		U	p	R
		High	Low			
Relationship	116	61.79	48.16	942.500	.047*	.184 ^a
Evangelism/Outreach	116	57.35	62.13	1130.500	.478	.065
Grace	116	58.16	59.57	1202.000	.828	.020
Hot Topics	116	56.22	65.68	1031.000	.167	.128
Social Justice	116	58.76	57.70	1209.500	.877	.014
Practical Issues	116	60.22	53.09	1080.500	.290	.098
Doctrine	116	55.83	66.89	997.000	.110	.010

* = $p < .05$

^aEffect Size $p = .184$

The final statistically significant difference between high and low attraction churches was related to the presence of technology. Because the data for question 11 on the Pastor's survey was nominal, a chi-square test was conducted. The chi-square test revealed that there was a statistically significant difference between high and low attraction churches in regard to the presence of technology, ($X^2 (1, N = 26) = 7.043, p = .008$). The Cramer's V effect size for this analysis ($V = .520$) was found to be within the range generally considered to be large for the results of a chi-square test, which indicated that there was a large difference between high and low attraction churches when it came

to the presence of technology. The researcher found that 95%, or 17 high attraction churches used technology versus only 50%, or 4 of the low attraction churches.

Research Question Two

The second research question in the current study asked, *what differences exist in the experiences of Millennials in churches that demonstrated an ability to attract Millennials and those that did not?* In order to answer this research question, the researcher conducted Mann-Whitney *U* tests on questions 15-26 as well as question 29 from the Millennial survey. Each of these questions utilized a 5-point Likert scale and were ordinal in nature. The researcher used Spearman Rho correlations to analyze question 27, which asked about the style of service in the church they attended, question 32, which asked about their involvement level, question 33, which asked about the leadership style of their Pastor, and question 35, which asked if they felt empowered by their church. The researcher found no significant results from questions 27, 32, 33, and 35 (see Table 5).

Table 5

Non-Statistically Significant Millennial Experiences in High vs Low Attraction Churches

Category	<i>N</i>	<i>r_s</i>	<i>p</i>
Leadership Style	111	.084	.383
Involvement	112	.118	.216
Empowerment	110	.007	.939
Style of Service	116	.083	.375

In question 29, Millennials were asked to rate their experience concerning the mission and identity of the church they attended. The researcher found a statistically significant difference between the experiences of Millennials in high and low attraction churches when it came to welcoming innovation. The mean rank of the high and low attraction churches in regard to innovation were 61.86 and 43.46 respectively; $U = 795.500$, $Z = -2.711$, $p < .007$, $r = .252$. The effect size for this analysis was within the range generally considered to be small for a Mann-Whitney U effect size test, which indicated that there was a small difference between high and low attraction churches for the category *welcomes innovation* (see Table 6).

Table 6

Mission and Identity in High vs Low Attraction Churches

Ministry	<i>N</i>	Mean Rank		<i>U</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>r</i>
		High	Low			
Welcomes Innovation	114	61.86	43.46	795.000	.007*	.252 ^a
Close Knit Family	114	56.84	59.61	1117.500	.687	.037
Mission/Purpose	114	58.34	52.74	1046.000	.384	.081
Pastor Listens	114	54.95	65.70	953.000	.115	.146
Congregational Diversity	114	58.24	55.11	1110.000	.642	.043
Reaching Millennials	114	57.48	57.57	1172.500	.989	.001
Serves Community	114	60.49	49.87	968.500	.113	.147

* = $p < .05$ ^aEffect Size $p = .252$

In questions 15-26, Millennials were asked to rate their experiences in the churches they attended. The researcher found a statistically significant difference between the experiences of Millennials in high and low attraction churches when it came to the ability to *be themselves* without being judged. The mean rank of the high and low attraction churches were 62.76 and 47.04 respectively; $U = 911.000$, $Z = -2.368$, $p < .018$, $r = .218$. The effect size for this analysis was within the range generally considered to be small for a Mann-Whitney U effect size test, which indicated that there was a small difference between high and low attraction churches when it came to the ability for Millennials to *be themselves* (see Table 7).

Table 7

Congregational Experience in High vs Low Attraction Churches

Ministry	N	Mean Rank		U	p	r
		High	Low			
Can Be Myself	117	62.76	47.04	911.000	.018*	.218 ^a
Show Compassion	117	59.49	57.45	1202.500	.750	.029
Relevant Teaching	117	60.66	53.73	1098.500	.277	.100
Tolerant	117	59.26	58.18	1223.000	.879	.014
Have Close Friends	117	58.06	62.00	1162.000	.576	.051
Church Empowers Me	117	60.93	52.86	1074.000	.159	.130
Sense of Belonging	117	60.52	54.18	1111.000	.362	.084
Like the Pastor	117	59.93	56.04	1162.00	.556	.054

* = $p < .05$ ^aEffect Size $p = .218$

Research Question Three

The third research question posed in the current study was, *what characteristics do Millennials prefer when choosing a church?* To answer this research question, responses from questions 14, 30, 31, 36, 37, and 38 on the Millennial survey were used. Because these questions did not compare groups, the researcher used frequency counts of the items Millennials were asked to rate to obtain results for this research question. In survey question 14, Millennials were asked to choose from one of eight options indicating the primary reason they attended their current church. The bar graph (See Figure.1), indicates that 42% of the Millennials surveyed chose their current church because it was close to home. Twenty-two percent of the Millennials chose the church they attended because of the presence of small groups.

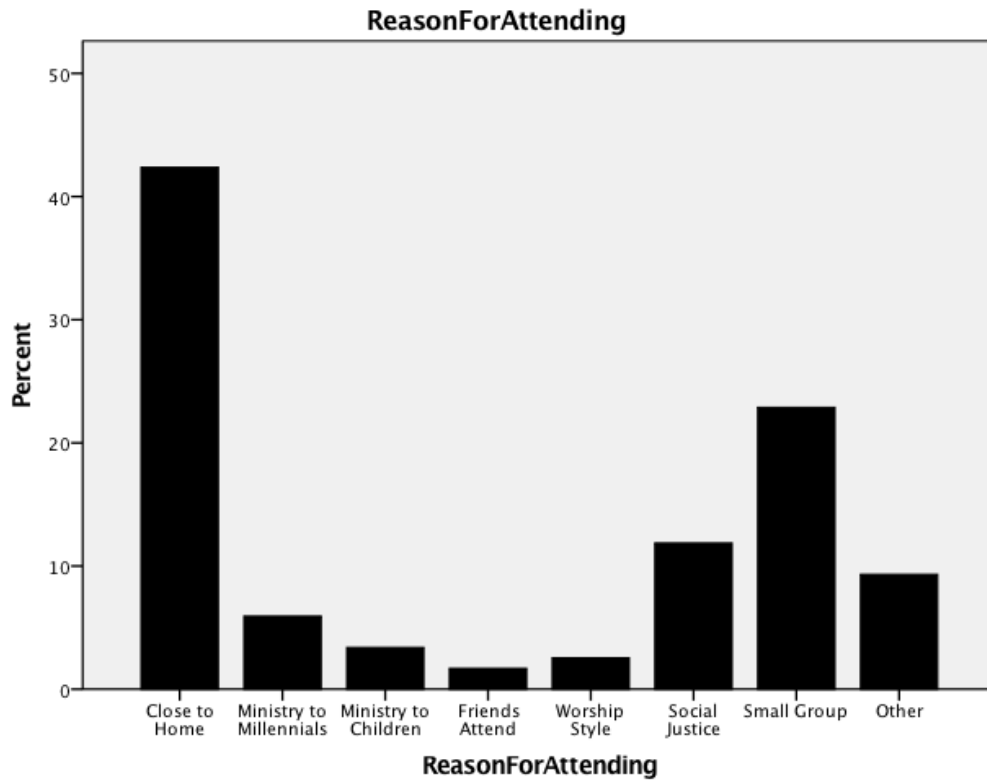


Figure 1. Reasons Millennials Attended Their Current Church

In survey question 31, Millennials were asked to indicate the importance of 11 items in relation to why they first decided to attend their current church. Millennials were asked to respond to each item using a 4-point Likert scale ranging from not important to very important. Responses that scored 80% or better in the combined category of very important/important from the list of options were arbitrarily identified as being meaningful by the researcher (see Table 8).

Table 8

Reasons Millennials First Attended the Churches They Attended

Item	Sample Size	Very Important Freq.	Very Important %	Important Freq.	Important %	Total
Spiritual Experience	112	77	65% (73)	27	23% (25)	88% (98)
Common Values/Beliefs	112	81	68% (76)	22	18% (20)	86% (96)
Pastor's Teaching	111	86	73% (81)	13	11% (12)	84% (93)
Relationship	112	53	45% (50)	32	27% (33)	80% (89)
Worship Style	110	54	45% (49)	36	30% (33)	75% (82)
Pastor	112	55	46% (51)	33	27% (30)	73% (81)
Music	112	48	40% (44)	37	31% (35)	71% (79)
Ministry to Millennials	112	35	29% (32)	30	25% (28)	54% (60)
Community Outreach	111	32	27% (30)	42	25% (27)	52% (57)
Facility	111	16	13% (14)	14	12% (13)	25% (27)
Children's Ministry	112	0	0% (0)	22	18% (20)	18% (20)

Note. % > 80% considered meaningful by the researcher

In survey question 30, Millennials were asked to rate the importance of 13 ministries found in the church. Any ministry that received a score of 80% or better when the categories designated very important/important were combined was arbitrarily identified as being meaningful by the researcher (see Table 9).

Table 9

Importance of Programs/Ministries in Churches Millennials Attended

Ministry	Sample Size	Very Important		Important		Total
		Freq.	%	Freq.	%	
Prayer	112	63	53% (59)	34	29% (32)	82% (92)
Children's Ministry	112	74	62% (69)	21	18% (20)	80% (89)
Bible Study	112	51	43% (48)	41	34% (38)	77% (86)
Worship Ministry	110	56	47% (51)	29	24% (26)	75% (82)
Millennial Activities	111	52	44% (49)	32	27% (30)	71% (79)
Community Outreach	112	40	34% (38)	43	36% (40)	70% (78)
Small Groups	112	49	41% (46)	31	26% (29)	67% (75)
Discipleship	112	40	33% (37)	31	26% (29)	59% (66)
Marriage Class	112	35	29% (32)	30	25% (28)	54% (60)
Support Groups	112	29	24% (27)	29	24% (27)	48% (54)
Financial Counseling	110	20	16% (17)	30	25% (27)	41% (45)
Parenting Class	112	20	17% (19)	29	24% (27)	41% (45)
Social Activities	111	15	12% (13)	33	28% (31)	40% (44)

Note. % > 80% considered meaningful by the researcher

In survey question 36, Millennials were given a list of 24 church characteristics and asked to indicate the importance of each church characteristic in relationship to their ideal church. Since this was not a comparison between groups, the researcher used frequency counts to determine which characteristics Millennials preferred. If a characteristic received a score of 80% or better when the categories designated very

important/important were combined, it was arbitrarily deemed meaningful by the researcher as a characteristic that Millennials preferred in an ideal church (see Table 10).

Table 10

Characteristics Millennials Preferred in their Ideal Church

Item	Sample Size	Very Important		Important		Total
		Freq.	%	Freq.	%	
Spiritual Growth	107	83	70% (75)	22	18% (19)	88% (94)
Sense of Belonging	106	86	73% (77)	17	14% (14)	87% (92)
Relationship	106	82	69% (73)	20	17% (18)	86% (91)
Relevant Sermons	107	79	67% (71)	20	17% (18)	84% (89)
Encounter w/Holy Spirit	106	84	71% (75)	16	13% (14)	84% (89)
Leadership Style	107	62	52% (55)	38	32% (34)	84% (89)
Vision and Values	107	74	62% (66)	25	21% (22)	83% (88)
Evangelistic	107	55	46% (49)	42	35% (37)	81% (86)
Prayer	107	74	62% (66)	23	19% (20)	81% (86)
Opport. for Involvement	107	66	56% (60)	30	25% (26)	81% (86)
Community Outreach	107	61	51% (54)	34	29% (31)	80% (85)
Non-Judgmental	106	71	60% (63)	24	20% (21)	80% (85)
Hypocrisy Free	106	71	60% (63)	22	18% (19)	78% (82)
Small Groups	107	53	45% (48)	38	32% (34)	77% (82)
Bible Study	107	50	42% (44)	40	34% (36)	76% (81)
Children's Ministry	107	71	60% (64)	17	14% (15)	74% (79)
Worship Style	107	39	33% (35)	47	40% (42)	73% (46)
Millennial Ministry	107	53	45% (48)	33	28% (30)	73% (78)
Diversity	107	45	38% (40)	34	29% (31)	66% (70)
Social Action	107	43	36% (38)	34	29% (31)	65% (69)
Social Activities	107	30	25% (26)	40	34% (36)	59% (63)
Social Justice	106	23	19% (20)	35	29% (30)	49% (52)
Technology	107	21	17% (18)	36	30% (32)	47% (50)
Facility	105	11	9% (9)	32	27% (28)	36% (37)

Note. % > 80% considered meaningful by the researcher

In survey question 37, Millennials were asked to identify three characteristics that attracted them to the church they attended. The researcher created a frequency count of the responses and ranked the top three characteristics that attracted Millennials to their churches. The top two characteristics identified by the Millennials who participated in the survey were the atmosphere of the church and the Pastor's teaching. The third characteristic was a tie between knowing someone who attended, and programs the church offered (see Table 11).

Table 11

Top Three Characteristics that Attracted Millennials to the Church

Reason	Sample Size	Result
Atmosphere of the Church	100	26% (26)
Pastor's Teaching	100	22% (22)
Knew Someone/Programs Offered	100	8% (8)

In survey question 38, Millennials were asked to identify three characteristics that caused them to remain at their current church. The researcher created a frequency count of the responses and ranked the top three characteristics that caused Millennials to remain in their churches. The top three characteristics identified by the 118 Millennials who participated in the survey were the Pastor's teaching, relationships, and the atmosphere of the church (see Table 12).

Table 12

Top Three Characteristics that Caused Millennials to Remain in the Church

Reason	Sample Size	Result
Pastor's Teaching	98	31% (31)
Relationships	98	26% (26)
Atmosphere of the Church	98	13% (13)

Research Question Four

Research question four in the current study asked, *what characteristics are most likely to be related to Millennial church attendance?* To answer the question, the researcher listed the statistically significant findings from the first two research questions and subjected them to the Hochberg correction procedure. This was done to correct for familywise errors due to multiple comparisons. Once the Hochberg procedure was completed, the researcher was able to determine if any of the characteristics remained statistically significant and could therefore be considered to be related to Millennial church attendance and unlikely to have occurred due to chance as a result of multiple comparisons. The researcher ranked the p -values and applied the results of the Hochberg threshold to each statistically significant result found in research questions one and two.

There were four statistically significant findings for research question one, which asked *what characteristics can be found in churches that have demonstrated an ability to attract Millennials versus those who did not?* The researcher found that there were differences between high and low attraction churches in regard to discipleship ministry ($p = .011$), ministry to Millennials ($p = .002$), technology ($p = .008$), sermons focused on relationship ($p = .014$), and sermons focused on evangelism/outreach ($p = .028$). After the

Hochberg threshold was applied to the category of ministry to Millennials in the Pastor's survey, the result remained statistically significant at the $p = < .00625$ level. After the Hochberg threshold was applied to the category of discipleship ministry in the Pastor's survey, the result remained statistically significant at the $p = < .00714$ level (see Table 13). However, when the Hochberg threshold was applied to the results of the Millennial survey, the difference between high and low attraction churches concerning the importance of discipleship ministry was no longer statistically significant at the $p = < .00625$ level (see Table 14).

Table 13

Hochberg Procedure – Importance of Ministries – Pastor's Survey

Ministry	p	Hochberg Threshold
Ministry to Millennials	.002*	.05/8 = .00625
Discipleship	.006**	.05/7 = .00714
Community Service	.028	.05/6 = .00833
Marriage Ministry	.216	.05/5 = .01
Bible Study	.648	.05/4 = .0125
Small Groups	.704	.05/3 = .01667
Prayer Ministry	.804	.05/2 = .025
Children's Ministry	.879	.05/1 = .05

* = $p < .000625$

** = $p < .00714$

Table 14

Hochberg Procedure – Importance of Ministries – Millennial Survey

Ministry	<i>p</i>	<i>Hochberg Threshold</i>
Discipleship	.033	.05/8 = .00625
Marriage Ministry	.190	.05/7 = .00714
Small Groups	.248	.05/6 = .00833
Community Service	.386	.05/5 = .01
Prayer Ministry	.651	.05/4 = .0125
Bible Study	.817	.05/3 = .01667
Children's Ministry	.840	.05/2 = .025
Ministry to Millennials	.970	.05/1 = .05

The presence of technology in high versus low attraction churches remained statistically significant ($p = .008$) because multiple comparisons were not utilized in the original analysis.

The final significant finding of research question one was that high and low attraction churches differed in emphasis on sermons that focused on relationship ($p = .014$ in pastors survey and $p = .047$ in Millennial survey) and evangelism/outreach ($p = .028$ in Pastor's survey). Once the Hochberg correction was applied, the results in each of these categories were no longer statistically significant at the $p < .00714$ and $p < .0833$ level respectively (see Tables 15 and 16). The sermon focus on relationship in the Millennial survey was no longer significant when the Hochberg correction was applied at the $p < .00714$ level.

Table 15

Hochberg Procedure - Sermon Focus – Pastor Survey

Ministry	<i>p</i>	<i>Hochberg Threshold</i>
Relationship	.014	.05/7 = .00714
Evangelism/Outreach	.028	.05/6 = .00833
Grace	.083	.05/5 = .01
Social Justice	.105	.05/4 = .0125
Hot Topics	.295	.05/3 = .01667
Doctrine	.333	.05/2 = .025
Practical Issues	.910	.05/1 = .05

Table 16

Hochberg Procedure - Sermon Focus - Millennial Survey

Sermon Focus	<i>p</i>	<i>Hochberg Threshold</i>
Relationship	.047	.05/7 = .00714
Doctrine	.110	.05/6 = .00833
Hot Topics	.167	.05/5 = .01
Practical Issues	.290	.05/4 = .0125
Evangelism/Outreach	.478	.05/3 = .01667
Grace	.828	.05/2 = .025
Social Justice	.877	.05/1 = .05

The researcher found two statistically significant findings for research question two, which asked, *what differences exist in the experiences of Millennials in churches*

that demonstrated an ability to attract Millennials and those that did not? The researcher found that high attraction churches welcomed innovation ($p = .007$) and were places Millennials felt they could be themselves ($p = .018$). When the Hochberg correction was applied to the characteristic of welcoming innovation, the results remained statistically significant at the $p < .00714$ level (see Table 17). However, when the same procedure was applied to the characteristic that Millennials felt they could be themselves, the result was no longer statistically significant at the $p < .00625$ level (see Appendix Table 1).

Table 17

Hochberg Procedure - Mission and Identity in High vs Low Attraction Churches

Ministry	p	<i>Hochberg Threshold</i>
Welcomes Innovation	.007*	.05/7 = .00714
Serves Community	.113	.05/6 = .00833
Close Knit Family	.687	.05/5 = .01
Pastor Listens	.115	.05/4 = .0125
Mission/Purpose	.384	.05/3 = .01667
Congregational Diversity	.642	.05/2 = .025
Reaching Millennials	.989	.05/1 = .05

* = $p < .00714$

The third research question asked, *what characteristics do Millennials prefer when choosing a church?* The researcher utilized frequency counts on questions 14, 30, 31, 36, 37, and 38 to determine meaningful findings. The researcher set a standard score of 80% as the threshold for an item response to be deemed meaningful. Since simple

frequency counts were used, there were no p -values associated with the data, therefore, Hochberg corrections were not used on the results of this research question.

After applying the Hochberg procedure to the statistically significant results from research questions one and two, there were four characteristics that remained statistically significant. In answer to research question four, the following characteristics appeared most likely to be related to Millennial church attendance: the presence of a discipleship ministry, the presence of an intentional ministry geared towards Millennials, the presence of technology, and an openness to innovation and change.

Conclusions

The results of this study have provided data in regard to the preferences of Millennials, and the characteristics that attracted them to Assembly of God churches in Illinois, which were categorized as high attraction churches by the researcher. The following conclusions can be drawn from the findings related to the four research questions proposed in the current study.

Research Question One

Research question one asked, *what differences can be found in churches that have demonstrated an ability to attract Millennials versus those that have not?* After the Hochberg correction procedure was applied to the results to correct for familywise errors, the researcher concluded that there were three statistically significant differences found between the high and low attraction churches that participated in the study. The first difference between high and low attraction churches was the presence of a discipleship ministry. The researcher found a large statistically significant difference between high and low attraction churches in regard to this characteristic.

Why would the presence of a strong discipleship ministry play such an important role in the life of church-going Millennials? According to the literature, one of the hurdles that Millennials have had to wrestle with is living in a world that is filled with uncertainty and transition (Smith & Snell 2009; Wuthnow, 2010; Yerbury, 2010). It is one of the reasons they are living at home longer, delaying marriage, and having children later in life (Donegan, 2013). Research done by Ferri-Reed (2013b), reported that Millennials have suffered from high levels of stress and depression as the result of economic instability, which has affected their ability to find employment and enjoy the same standard of living that previous generations have enjoyed.

High on the priority list for Millennials is relationship and community. Chang-Ho and Tameifuna (2011) reported that the presence of relationship, not programming, is what kept young adults involved in the church. Millennials are looking for a place where they can experience a sense of belonging and value (Chang, 2010; Loskota et al., 2007; Stetzer et al., 2009). In the current study, the researcher found that 87%, or 92 Millennials surveyed indicated that a sense of belonging was an important characteristic in their ideal church. According to Taylor and Keeter (2010), many Millennials have grown up in broken or dysfunctional homes. This has caused a longing for relational connections that are authentic and transparent (Kinnaman, 2011). The presence of a strong discipleship ministry provides the opportunity for churches to role model what healthy and authentic marriage and family relationships look like to Millennials.

Studies have shown that Millennials are open to feedback and learning from the mistakes and experiences of previous generations through mentoring (Arnett, 2012; Stetzer et al., 2009; Thompson & Gregory, 2012;). According to Glassford and Barger-

Elliot (2011), churches that promoted transgenerational ministry had higher rates of Millennial attendance and involvement. Reverse mentoring, which is mentoring that promotes two-way dialogue, is the preferred form of mentoring among Millennials (Powell, 2013).

Taking these factors into account, churches with a strong discipleship ministry are more likely to attract Millennials. Traditionally, the process of Christian discipleship has provided an emphasis on relationship, community, belonging, learning, discussion, and encouragement. According to Arnett (2012), discipleship and mentoring provides Millennials with a sense of stability and security. Loskota et al. (2007), reported that Millennials were attracted to churches that found ways to connect with them relationally. Discipleship is a process that not only teaches individuals the Word of God, but connects them relationally with others in the church. Walter (2011) noted that one of the most effective ways a church can minister to Millennials is by providing a place of love, acceptance, and stability.

Sahlin and Roozen (2011) reported that churches that emphasized the spiritual practices that are taught through discipleship were twice as likely to attract Millennials as churches that placed little to no emphasis on spiritual practices. According to Parker (2012) the four-step discipleship model used by Jesus, which was outlined in the literature review of the current study, offers an avenue for connecting with the core values and needs of Millennials. The encouraging news is that size doesn't matter when it comes to discipleship ministry. Any church, regardless of size can provide a quality discipleship ministry.

The second difference between high and low attraction churches that can be seen in the data produced by research question one pertained to the emphasis that high attraction churches placed on ministry to Millennials. High attraction churches emphasized and were more intentional in their efforts to provide specific ministry to Millennials. The presence of intentional efforts designed to minister to Millennials was an important factor that contributed to their choice of which church to attend. The researcher discovered that there was a large statistically significant difference between high and low attraction churches in regard to the emphasis that they placed on intentional ministry to Millennials. The FACTS Case Studies Report (Chang, 2011) identified a similar finding in their study. Chang reported that a characteristic of high attraction churches was that they were intentional in their efforts to connect with Millennials. In his research study, Briggs (2013) stated that a characteristic of high attraction churches was a heavy emphasis on ministry to Millennials using a team approach.

Because attitudes and behaviors of Millennials are radically different from previous generations, people have been fearful and uncertain about how to engage Millennials (Graham, 2014; Mercadante, 2007; Setran & Kiesling, 2013). Church leaders will need to push past that fear in order to engage a Millennial population that holds religious and moral views that differ from those of previous generations. Differing Millennial viewpoints include pluralism, which posits that all opinions possess the same value; moral relativism, which is the belief that there are no absolutes; and an acceptance of alternative lifestyles (Bucuta, 2015; Hulse, 2007; Taylor & Keeter, 2010). One strategy for overcoming fear is for church leaders to seek to understand the values and priorities that undergird Millennial attitudes and behaviors.

The benefit of emphasizing specific ministry to Millennials is that it makes them feel that their presence is valued in the church (Loskota et al., 2007). According to the results of this study, churches that emphasized ministry to the Millennial population were much more likely to increase the percentage of Millennial church attendance and involvement than churches who did not. Sahlin and Roozen (2011) reported that churches who provided ministries specifically directed towards Millennials doubled the number of Millennials they attracted versus churches that did not provide specific ministry to Millennials. Sahlin and Roozen stated that the size of a church is not as important in attracting Millennials as is the emphasis the church places on ministry to Millennials. That is encouraging news for smaller churches.

The third difference between high and low attraction churches that emerged from research question one concerned technology. Churches with a strong technological presence demonstrated a greater ability to attract Millennials than churches who had little to no technological presence. There was a large statistically significant difference between high and low attraction churches for this characteristic.

According to research done by Stetzer et al., (2009), churches that had a high rate of attracting Millennials used podcasting, livestreaming, social media, e-vites, texting, graphics, and other forms of multi-media on a regular basis. Thumma (2011) reported that Millennials viewed churches without a strong technological presence as being *out of sync* with the world. Sahlin and Roozen (2011) revealed that the participation level of Millennials was two times greater in churches that used technology than in churches that did not. Millennials are digital natives, which means technology is their first language.

Therefore, technology is their preferred choice for how they do things, and has become their lifeblood (DeMaria, 2013).

Church leaders need to realize that technology is here to stay, and therefore must have a strong technological presence if they hope to attract Millennials to their churches. In an effort to expand their reach to those outside the walls of the church, many churches have started internet campuses. These campuses are comprised of a livestream broadcast of the service, as well as a pastor who is assigned to answer questions from viewers during the service (Caston, 2014). Some churches have hired pastoral staff whose portfolio is to shepherd their online flock.

High attraction churches understand that the preferred method for communicating with Millennials is through technology (Phillips & Trainor, 2014). Muk (2013), reported that Millennials will visit the website of a church before deciding to physically visit the church. If the website is non-existent or poorly done, they will not visit the church. Therefore, in order to engage Millennials, churches will need to evaluate how they are utilizing technology and be willing to update and expand their efforts in this area.

It should be noted that initially there were two other characteristics that were statistically significant in research question one. Those two characteristics had to do with the emphasis and focus of the sermon in high versus low attraction churches. The initial research indicated that there was a difference in the emphasis and focus of the sermons preached in high and low attraction churches. High attraction church sermons emphasized and focused on relationship and evangelism to a greater extent than did low attraction churches. However, once the Hochberg correctional procedure was applied by the researcher neither remained statistically significant.

Research Question Two

Research question two asked, *what differences exist in the experiences of Millennials in churches that demonstrated an ability to attract Millennials versus those that did not?* There was one statistically significant finding supported by the data from this research question. The difference between the experiences of Millennials in high versus low attraction churches was that high attraction churches were more open to innovation and change than low attraction churches.

Churches that were willing to innovate were more likely to attract Millennials than churches that were satisfied with maintaining the status quo. While the effect size for this result was smaller than the other results, the literature review corroborates this finding. Millennials have grown up in a world that has experienced rapid change, which has effected every segment of society, intellectually, technologically, socially, economically, culturally, and religiously (Tickle, 2012). In the midst of this whirlwind, Myers (2015), found two characteristics that defined Millennials: creativity and adaptability. According to Donegan (2013) and Smith and Snell (2009), change and transition have been a recurring theme in the lives of Millennials. Because change has been a part of their lives, Millennials are not afraid of it, and have developed the ability to adapt in a constantly changing world.

Ferri-Reed (2010), found that in order to retain Millennial employees, employers had to create work environments that were creative, collaborative, innovative, and challenging for Millennials. Twenge (2006) reported that Millennials desire to be unique and different. Therefore, Millennials are attracted to churches and organizations that desire to keep things fresh and different through change and innovation. Waters and

Bortree (2012), identified the inability of the church to adapt and change in order to meet the needs of Millennials as one reason why Millennials no longer attended church.

One example of how innovation and change has impacted the church is in the area of worship. According to Sahlin and Roozen (2011), churches that changed their worship experience to include electric guitars, drums, and projection screens attracted twice the number of Millennials than churches that did not incorporate modern instrumentation and technology. In his research, Chang (2011) reported that one difference he found between high and low attraction churches was that high attraction churches were willing to create worship experiences that were innovative and experimental.

Research Question Three

Research question three asked, *what characteristics do Millennials prefer when choosing a church?* The researcher was unable to produce any statistically significant results for this question because there was no group comparison. Instead, the researcher used frequency counts to identify any meaningful items that Millennials were asked to rate in order to obtain results for this research question. Although, the results of this question do not fall under the category of statistical significance, there were several meaningful results that provide further corroboration for the four statistically significant findings revealed in the current study. The researcher designated any item that received an 80% or higher response from Millennials to be *meaningful*.

The following characteristics received an 80% or higher rating by Millennials: a spiritual experience and encounter with the Holy Spirit, values and beliefs that were similar to their own; spiritual growth opportunities; relationship and a sense of belonging; non-judgmental; relevant sermons; provided opportunities for involvement; evangelistic

and involved in reaching the community; clear vision and values; collaborative leadership style; strong prayer emphasis; and provided ministry to children. Each of the characteristics that Millennials preferred in this research question were in keeping with the research findings found in the literature review.

Research Question Four

Research question four asked, *what church characteristics are most related to Millennial church attendance?* This question was the impetus for this study. For this question, the researcher applied the Hochberg correctional procedure to each statistically significant result from research questions one and two to determine what characteristics were most likely related to Millennial church attendance after a familywise correction was applied. The researcher concluded that the following four characteristics were most related to Millennial church attendance in Assembly of God churches in Illinois: the presence of a discipleship ministry; the presence of an intentional ministry geared towards Millennials; the presence of technology; and an openness to innovation and change. The research has already elaborated on the literature that supports the validity of each of these four characteristics.

Implications and Recommendations

The first implication of the current study is that in order for churches to attract Millennials, they must take the time to study and familiarize themselves with the characteristics that are most related to Millennial church attendance and involvement (Hall & Delport, 2013). The literature is very clear that Millennials are not pounding down the doors of the church, which leads to a second implication from the current study. The burden lies with church leaders to create intentional avenues of ministry to reach out

to the Millennial population (Chan et al., 2015; Desmond et al., 2010; van der Merwe et al., 2013). While it may be tempting for the church to give up on Millennials out of frustration and a lack of understanding, there are qualities that Millennials possess, such as their passion for relationships, social justice, and technology that are needed by the church to help fulfill its mandate from Christ. A third implication of the current study is that churches must open the door through discipleship to involve, empower, and utilize the skills and talents of Millennials because they want relationship, and they want to be used in the church (Rainer & Rainer, 2008). According to Demaria (2013), “Millennials will have a unique and transformational impact on the world” (p. 1654). The unique and transformational impact DeMaria predicted Millennials would have is something that could occur in the church that would help the church fulfill its mission to bring hope to a hurting world.

A fourth implication from the current study is that it is possible for the church to attract and engage Millennials, despite the bleak picture painted by the literature (Chan et al., 2015; Desmond et al., 2010; van der Merwe et al., 2013; Uecker et al., 2007). In order to attract Millennials, the church will have to embrace change, innovation, and technology because the Millennial generation is different from the generations that preceded it (Wuthnow, 2010). The current study has offered insight into the values, background, attitudes, beliefs, practices, and preferences of the Millennial generation. It is the hope of the researcher that the findings from the current study as well as the literature review will be a valuable tool for churches who desire to increase Millennial attendance and involvement.

Because the current research was limited to Assembly of God churches in Illinois the first recommendation is that future studies branch out to include churches of all denominations within Illinois and beyond to determine whether the results of the current study represent the views of Assembly of God Millennials, or are representative of Millennials as a whole. By expanding the scope of the current study, future researchers could also determine whether the characteristics that were most related to Millennial church attendance are the same or different across denominational lines.

A second recommendation for future researchers is that a qualitative component be added to the study. Time constraints did not allow the researcher to conduct interviews and focus groups with Millennials who participated in the survey. Including a qualitative component would provide a richer and deeper understanding of Millennial views and feelings concerning the characteristics they preferred in a church.

The final recommendation is for church leaders. While the current study is not generalizable beyond Assembly of God churches in Illinois, the four conclusions that were reached based on the results of the current study provide a good starting point for church leaders who wish to begin the journey of attracting and involving Millennials in their churches.

If “the future of American religion is in the hands of adults now in their twenties and thirties” (Wuthnow, 2010, p.2), then it is the responsibility of church leaders to do everything within their power to overcome the barriers to understanding and reaching the Millennial generation.

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Appendix A

Hochberg Procedure – Congregational Experience

Table A1

Hochberg Procedure - Congregational Experience

Ministry	<i>p</i>	Hochberg Threshold
Can Be Myself	.018	.05/8 = .00625
Church Empowers Me	.159	.05/7 = .00714
Relevant Teaching	.277	.05/6 = .00833
Sense of Belonging	.362	.05/5 = .01
Like the Pastor	.556	.05/4 = .0125
Have Close Friends	.576	.05/3 = .01667
Show Compassion	.750	.05/2 = .025
Tolerant	.879	.05/1 = .05

Appendix B

Permission Letter from the Illinois District Assemblies of God



17280 Lakeside Drive • PO Box 620 • Carlinville, IL 62626
Phone 217.854.4600 • Fax 217.854.4610

March 11, 2016

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

I am writing on behalf of one of our credentialed ministers, Kenneth J. Hansen.

The Illinois District of the Assemblies of God has granted permission for Kenneth J. Hansen to use data from the Annual Church Ministries Report (ACMR) for his dissertation research at Olivet Nazarene University.

Should you have any questions, or need further information, please do not hesitate to call our office.

Sincerely,

Gary J. Blanchard
Assistant Superintendent/Executive Secretary

GJB/tlt

We build Pentecostal leaders to grow Pentecostal churches

Appendix C

Permission Letter from the Faith Communities Today Survey



THE GENERAL COUNCIL OF THE ASSEMBLIES OF GOD
1445 NORTH BOONVILLE AVENUE † SPRINGFIELD, MISSOURI 65802-1894

SHERRI L. DOTY
OFFICE OF THE GENERAL SECRETARY
STATISTICS

417-862-2781 PHONE
417-862-0133 FAX

March 30, 2016

To Whom It May Concern:

Permission has been granted by The General Council of the Assemblies of God, and Scott Thumma of Hartford Seminary, for Pastor Ken Hansen to use the 2010 and 2015 FACT (FAith Communities Today) surveys for his dissertation research.

Sincerely,

Sherri L. Doty
Statistics Supervisor

Appendix D

Permission Letter from the Seventh Day Adventist Survey

March 23, 2016

Elder Hansen,

Thank you for your kind inquiry about the Adventist Millennial Study; it has come to me as I served the NAD as the lead research facilitator for the division while the research was being conducted by the Barna Group. Let me offer a response to your question:

I am in the process of identifying viable survey instruments that I can use as part of my research and would like to know if the Seventh-day Adventist Church would grant permission for me to use their Young Adult Study (research conducted by the Barna Group, Copyright 2013) as one of my source survey instruments.

The answer is yes and thank you! We are very interested in seeing the study replicated and contextualized to further solidify the validity and reliability of the measure as well as the relevance of the findings. If it is helpful, please email me under separate cover, and I would be happy to share with you the survey measure structure for your perusal.

Please don't hesitate to contact me should I be of further support. Of course it is our assumption that your annotations/references would cite the original work, and we do have peer-reviewed articles that summarize the findings that you can utilize even for the IRB review or dissertation proposal process. In other words, let me know should I be of further assistance.

Again thanks for your interest, I eagerly look forward to your findings.

A. Allan Martin, PhD

Teaching Pastor

The Vibrant Young Adult Ministry of the Arlington Seventh-Day Adventist Church
4409 Pleasantview Drive, Arlington, TX 76017-1427
817.483.4837.ext 113
YGchurch.com

Appendix E
Pastoral Survey

PASTOR'S SURVEY

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. Your response is very important and will be used to help understand what Millennials prefer when choosing a church to attend. Your assistance will help church leaders determine the most effective strategies for reaching Millennials. Please be assured that your responses are completely confidential and that your name will never be linked to your responses.

CHURCH HISTORY, LOCATION & BUILDING

1. How many years has your congregation been in existence? _____
2. In what CITY is the church that you pastor located? _____
3. How would you describe the Location of your place of worship? (check one)
 - ☐ *Rural area or open country*
 - ☐ *Village or Town* with a population of less than 10,000
 - ☐ *Small city or large town* with a population of 10,000 to 50,000
 - ☐ *Downtown* or central area of a **large city** with a population of 50,000 or more
 - ☐ *Older residential area* of a **large city** with a population of 50,000 or more
 - ☐ *Older suburb* around a **large city** with a population of 50,000 or more
 - ☐ *Newer suburb* around a **large city** with a population of 50,000 or more
4. How many years have you been the pastor of this church? _____
5. Your Current Age: _____
6. Gender: ☐ 1 Male ☐ 2 Female
7. What is your Employment Status? (check one):
 - ☐ Full-time paid
 - ☐ Full-time unpaid
 - ☐ Part-time paid
 - ☐ Part-time unpaid

CONGREGATION

Participants

8. How many persons (including children) regularly participate in worship or other religious activities in your congregation? _____

9. Of your regular participants (the figure given above), estimate the percent who are:

<input type="text"/>	%	American Indian / Alaska Native
<input type="text"/>	%	Asian
<input type="text"/>	%	Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander
<input type="text"/>	%	Black or African American
<input type="text"/>	%	Hispanic or Latino/a
<input type="text"/>	%	White
100%		Total

10. Of your regular participants, estimate the percent who are:

<input type="text"/>	%	Senior Adults, age 65 or older
<input type="text"/>	%	Adults, age 50-64
<input type="text"/>	%	Adults, age 35-49
<input type="text"/>	%	Young Adults, age 18-34
<input type="text"/>	%	Children and youth, age 0-17
100%		Total

11. How often does your congregation use the following technologies?

	1 Never	2 Rarely	3 Sometimes	4 Often	5 Always
Email:	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Website:	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Blogs:	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Facebook or other Social Media:	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Podcasts:	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Other: _____	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

12. How well does each of the following statements describe your congregation? (check one on each line)

	1 Never	2 Rarely	3 Sometimes	4 Often	5 Always
A. Our congregation feels like a close-knit family.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B. Our congregation is spiritually vital and alive.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C. Our congregation is working for social justice.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
D. Our congregation helps members deepen their relationships with God.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
E. Our congregation welcomes innovation and change.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
F. Members are excited about the future of our congregation.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
G. New people are easily incorporated into the life of our congregation.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
H. Our congregation has a clear sense of mission and purpose.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I. Our congregation's worship services are spiritually uplifting and inspirational.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
J. Our congregation's programs and activities strengthen personal relationships among participants.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
K. Our congregation is focused on serving our community by trying to help those in need.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
L. Our congregation is willing to change to meet new challenges.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
M. Our congregation holds strong beliefs and values.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
N. Our congregation wants to be racially and culturally diverse.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
O. Our congregation is intentional about reaching young adults.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

13. Does your congregation emphasize church membership? _____ YES _____ NO

14. Many congregations offer small groups as a way to foster spiritual growth and community. Which of the following best describes your congregation? (Mark all that apply)

- ☐ We do not have small groups
- ☐ We have groups on Sunday morning, such as Sunday School or Bible Study
- ☐ We have small groups that meet during the week
- ☐ We have both Sunday School and small groups

WORSHIP SERVICES

15. How many worship services do you offer on a typical weekend? _____

16. How would you describe your church's style of worship?

(check one response for each line)

	1 Strongly Disagree	2 Somewhat Disagree	3 Neutral / Unsure	4 Somewhat Agree	5 Strongly Agree
Traditional.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Contemporary.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Liturgical.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Blended: Traditional/Contemporary.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Blended: Traditional/Liturgical.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Blended: Contemporary/Liturgical.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

17. If you offer multiple services, are they...(check box that applies)

☐ Identical

☐ Different

18. Is this congregation's primary worship service held in a church, or some other kind of building?

(mark only one.)

☐ A church

☐ A school building

☐ A community center

☐ A retail site

☐ A hotel, theatre, or shopping center

☐ Other

19. Does this congregation hold services in more than one location (such as satellite locations)?

☐ Yes

☐ No

20. During the past 5 years, has your congregation changed the style of any of its weekend worship services or added a new service with a different style of worship?

☐ No change in style

☐ Changed style a little

☐ Changed style a lot

☐ Added a new service with a different style of worship

21. How often are the following a part of your congregation's regular weekend worship services?

(check one on each line)

	1 Always	2 Often	3 Sometimes	4 Seldom	5 Never
Choir.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Organ.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Drums or other percussion instruments.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Electric guitar or bass.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Video Elements.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Use of Moving or LED Lights.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Drama.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Spoken Word/Poetry.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dance.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Communion.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Scripture Reading.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Baptism	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Invitation to Accept Christ.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

22. How often do you observe communion? (check one)

☐ Weekly

☐ Monthly

23. How many times each year are baptismal services held? _____

24. How well do the following describe the weekend service millennials attend the most?

	1 Strongly Disagree	2 Somewhat Disagree	3 Neutral / Unsure	4 Somewhat Agree	5 Strongly Agree
Traditional.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Contemporary.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Liturgical.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Blended: Traditional/Contemporary.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Blended: Traditional/Liturgical.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Blended: Contemporary/Liturgical.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

25. How often does the sermon in your worship service focus on: (check one on each line)

	1 Never	2 Seldom	3 Sometimes	4 Often	5 Always
Grace/Love.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hot Topics (i.e. homosexuality, abortion, etc.).....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social Justice Issues.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Personal Spiritual Growth.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Practical Life Issues.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Evangelism/Outreach.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Relationship.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Doctrine.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please answer questions 28-30 based on the worship service with the largest attendance.

26. How long does the worship service generally last?

- ☐ Less than 1 hour
☐ At least 1 hour but less than 1.5 hours
☐ At least 1.5 hours but less than 2 hours
☐ 2 hours or more

27. How long does the sermon usually last?

- ☐ 10 to 20 minutes
☐ 20 to 30 minutes
☐ 30 to 60 minutes
☐ More than an hour

28. Which of the following types of music are used regularly in this service? (Mark all that apply.)

	1 Never	2 Seldom	3 Sometimes	4 Often	5 Always
Traditional hymns.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Praise music or choruses.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Contemporary hymns.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Contemporary Praise and Worship Songs.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Music from other cultures.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Contemplative chants (Taize, Iona).....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gospel music.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Singing in tongues.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

PROGRAMS

29. How important are the following ministries in your congregation? (Check “Not Offered” if a ministry is not offered at your church.)

	Not Offered	1 Not Important	2 Somewhat Important	3 Neutral	4 Important	5 Very Important
Sunday School.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prayer Ministry.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bible studies (other than Sunday school).....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social Activities (i.e. outings, trips, etc.).....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Discipleship Classes.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Spiritual Retreats.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Support Groups (bereavement, job loss, 12-step)....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Community Service Activities.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Food Pantry.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parenting Classes/Activities.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Marriage Enrichment Classes.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Young Adult Activities or Programs.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Children’s Ministry.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Team Sports, Fitness Activities, Exercise Classes...	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Small Groups.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Drama.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Choir.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Worship Team.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dance.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tutoring Program.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Financial Counseling.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Voter Education/Registration.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Programs for Immigrants.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Job Training/Education.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pre-school.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

30. During the past 12 months, indicate which activities your congregation has engaged in to attract new people or make your congregation better known in the community? (Check all that apply.)

- ☐ Newspaper advertisements or articles
- ☐ Radio or television advertisements or coverage
- ☐ Direct mail promotions to area residents
- ☐ A growth or evangelistic campaign/program
- ☐ Efforts to identify and contact people who have recently moved into your congregation's area
- ☐ Stressing in your congregation's preaching and teaching the importance of witnessing to others about one's faith
- ☐ Special worship services intended to attract the unchurched or non-members (e.g. "Bring a friend" services, seeker services, revivals, etc.)
- ☐ Special programs (e.g. parenting classes, young single nights, art festivals, street ministries) especially intended to attract unchurched persons or non-members in your community
- ☐ Phone calls or personal visits by your pastoral staff
- ☐ Phone calls or personal visits by laity
- ☐ Concerts, plays, meals, seminars, fairs

31. In the past 12 months, has this congregation sent people or groups to provide assistance to people in need? (Mark all that apply.)

- ☐ In another part of the United States
- ☐ In another country
- ☐ Neither

LEADERSHIP & ORGANIZATION

32. Please indicate which of the following staff are a part of the church. (Mark all that apply)

- ☐ Senior Pastor
- ☐ Young Adult Pastor
- ☐ Associate Pastor
- ☐ Executive Pastor
- ☐ Children's Pastor
- ☐ Youth Pastor
- ☐ Music Pastor
- ☐ Small Groups Pastor
- ☐ Outreach Pastor
- ☐ Media Pastor
- ☐ Pastoral Care Pastor

33. Choose the closest description of your leadership style from the following options listed:

- ☐ Commanding (Do what I tell you)
- ☐ Pacesetting (Do as I do)
- ☐ Democratic (Let's decide what to do together)
- ☐ Affiliative (Let's do what is best for everyone)
- ☐ Visionary (Do what will help us reach our goals)
- ☐ Coaching (How can I help you do it better)

34. How would you describe your congregation's current financial health?

- ☐ Excellent
- ☐ Good
- ☐ Satisfactory
- ☐ Poor
- ☐ Bad

35. How much of your overall resources (staff, volunteers, finances, etc.) are being used to reach young adults between the ages of 18 and 34?

- ☐ A Lot
- ☐ Some
- ☐ Average
- ☐ Very Little
- ☐ Not Much

Thank You for Completing This Survey!

To receive the book of your choice listed below, please send your mailing address to:
hansen.survey2016@gmail.com.

Please choose one book title from the following list and indicate your choice in your email:

All In by Mark Batterson

Who Moved My Pulpit: Leading Change in the Church by Tom Rainer

Holman Illustrated Bible Handbook

Making a Good Church Great: Becoming a Community God Calls Home by Steve Sjogren

How Successful People Think by John Maxwell

If you would also like a copy of this study when it is completed in the Summer of 2018,
please indicate that in your email as well.

Appendix F
Millennial Survey

MILLENNIAL SURVEY

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. Your response is very important and will be used to help church leaders better understand the needs and preferences of Millennials when choosing a church to attend. Your assistance will help church leaders create an atmosphere in the church that will be inviting to the Millennial generation. Please be assured that your responses are completely confidential and that your name will never be linked to your responses.

ABOUT YOU

1. What is your current age? _____
2. Are you : ☐ Female ☐ Male
3. What is your current employment status? _____
4. What is the highest educational level you have completed?
 - ☐ Some high school
 - ☐ Completed high school
 - ☐ Trade certificate
 - ☐ Associate degree
 - ☐ Bachelors degree from a university or college
 - ☐ Masters, Doctorate, or other graduate degree
5. What is your present marital status?
 - ☐ Never married
 - ☐ In first marriage
 - ☐ Remarried after divorce
 - ☐ Living in a committed relationship
 - ☐ Separated
 - ☐ Divorced
 - ☐ Widowed
6. What is your race or origin?
 - ☐ Asian or Pacific Islander
 - ☐ Black or African American
 - ☐ Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin
 - ☐ Indian (American) or Alaskan Native
 - ☐ White or Caucasian
 - ☐ Some other race (please specify): _____

7. Which statement best describes your current living situation?

- ☐ I live alone
- ☐ I live with a parent/parents
- ☐ I live with a roommate
- ☐ A couple without children
- ☐ A couple with child/children
- ☐ One adult with child/children

8. How many children of any age do you have, whether they live at home or elsewhere? (Please write the number.) _____

9. In what city is the church that you attend? _____

10. How many times a month do you attend church? _____

11. How many years have you attended this church? (if only a few months, please specify) _____

12. Which of the following statements are true? (Select one.)

- ☐ I've attended here most/all my life
- ☐ Before attending here I had not attended church for several years
- ☐ Before attending here I had never attended church
- ☐ Immediately before attending here, I was attending another church

13. Are you currently a member of this congregation? (Choose one below.)

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No, but I am in the process of becoming a member
- ☐ No, but I regularly participate here
- ☐ No
- ☐ We don't emphasize membership

14. What is your primary reason for attending this church?

- ☐ It is close to my home
- ☐ I like its ministry to Millennials
- ☐ I like its ministry to children
- ☐ My friends go here
- ☐ I like the worship style
- ☐ I like the emphasis on justice and compassion
- ☐ I like my pastor
- ☐ I am involved in a Small Group or Sunday School class
- ☐ Other (please specify) _____

MY CONGREGATION

For numbers 15-26, please check one box for each question.

	1 Strongly Disagree	2 Somewhat Disagree	3 Neutral / Unsure	4 Somewhat Agree	5 Strongly Agree
15. I feel like I can “be myself” at church.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. The church empowers me to live out my faith.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17. The people at church show compassion towards those less fortunate..	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18. The church teachings and activities are relevant for my life.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19. The people at church are authentic rather than hypocritical.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20. The people at church are tolerant of those with different opinions.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
21. I have close friends in this congregation.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
22. I have a strong sense of belonging to this congregation.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
23. I have some friends in this congregation, but my closest friends are not involved here.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
24. My spiritual needs are being met in this church.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
25. I come to this church because I like the pastor.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
26. I would feel comfortable inviting my friends to this church.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

WORSHIP SERVICE

27. How would you describe the style of your weekend service ?

(check one response for each line)

	1 Strongly Disagree	2 Somewhat Disagree	3 Neutral / Unsure	4 Somewhat Agree	5 Strongly Agree
Traditional.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Contemporary.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Blended: Traditional/Contemporary.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

28. How often does the sermon in your worship service focus on: (check one on each line)

	1 Never	2 Seldom	3 Sometimes	4 Often	5 Always
Grace/Love.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hot Topics (i.e. homosexuality, abortion, etc.).....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social Justice Issues.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Personal Spiritual Growth.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Practical Life Issues.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Evangelism/Outreach.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Relationships.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Doctrine.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

MISSION & IDENTITY

29. How well do each of the following statements describe your congregation?

	1 Never	2 Rarely	3 Sometimes	4 Often	5 Always
A. Our congregation feels like a close-knit family.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B. Our congregation is spiritually vital and alive.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C. Our congregation is working for social justice.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
D. Our congregation helps members deepen their relationships with God...	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
E. My pastor takes time to know me.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
F. Our congregation welcomes innovation and change.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
G. Members are excited about the future of our congregation.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
H. New people are easily incorporated into the life of our congregation....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I. Our congregation has a clear sense of mission and purpose.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
J. Our congregation's worship services are spiritually uplifting and inspirational.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
K. Our congregation's programs and activities strengthen personal relationships among participants.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
L. My pastor listens to input from the congregation.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
M. My pastor is not afraid to talk about tough topics.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
N. Our congregation is willing to change to meet new challenges.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
O. Our congregation holds strong beliefs and values.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P. Our congregation wants to be racially and culturally diverse.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q. Our congregation believes ministry to children is important.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
R. Our congregation is intentional about reaching young adults.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
S. Our church is focused on serving the community (i.e. food, clothing, education, counsel, etc).....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T. The Leadership of the church encourages me to find and use my gifts/skills.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

PROGRAMS

30. How important are the following ministries to you? (Check "Not Offered" if a ministry is not offered at your church.)

	Not Offered	1 Not Important	2 Less Important	3 Neutral	4 Somewhat Important	5 Very Important
Sunday School.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prayer Ministry.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bible studies (other than Sunday school).....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social Activities (i.e. outings, trips, etc.).....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Discipleship Classes.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Spiritual Retreats.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Support Groups (bereavement, job loss, 12-step)....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Community Service Activities.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Food Pantry.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parenting Classes/Activities.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Marriage Enrichment Classes.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Young Adult Activities or Programs.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Children's Ministry.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Team Sports, Fitness Activities, Exercise Classes...	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Small Groups.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Drama.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Choir.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Worship Team.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dance.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tutoring Program.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Financial Counseling.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Voter Education/Registration.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Programs for Immigrants.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Job Training/Education.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pre-school.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

31. Indicate the importance of each item as to why you FIRST attended this church:

	1 Not Important	2 Somewhat Important	3 Important	4 Very Important
<input type="checkbox"/> Pastor's Teaching.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Facility Layout / Appeal.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Common Values / Beliefs.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Children's Ministry.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Choir.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Community / Relationship.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Family.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Intellectual Stimulation.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Minister.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Music.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Social Action / Service Activities / Community Outreach....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Spiritual Growth / Experience.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Worship. Style.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Young Adult Group.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify):	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

32. I would rate my level of involvement in this church as:

- ☐ Not at all engaged
☐ Somewhat engaged
☐ Engaged
☐ Very Engaged

LEADERSHIP

33. Choose the closest description of the Senior Pastor's leadership style:

- ☐ Commanding (Do what I tell you)
☐ Pacesetter (Do as I do)
☐ Democratic (Let's decide what to do together)
☐ Affiliative (Let's do what is best for everyone)
☐ Visionary (Do what will help us reach our goals)
☐ Coaching (How can I help you do it better)
☐ I don't know my pastor's leadership style

34. Do you currently serve in any of the following roles listed? (Mark all that apply.)

- ☐ Ministry Leader (i.e. youth leader, etc.)
- ☐ Member of a congregational committee or task force
- ☐ Work in community ministry (i.e. social justice, food pantry, etc.)
- ☐ Elder, Deacon, leader of men's, women's, or youth ministry
- ☐ Worship team or choir member
- ☐ Sunday school teacher
- ☐ Small group leader
- ☐ Small group member
- ☐ None

35. Which best describes your involvement in the making of important decisions in this congregation?

- ☐ I have been given the opportunity and often participate in decision-making
- ☐ I have been given the opportunity and occasionally get involved in decision-making
- ☐ I have been given the opportunity but don't usually get involved in decision-making
- ☐ I have **not** been given the opportunity to be involved in decision-making and this is fine with me
- ☐ I have **not** been given the opportunity to be involved in decision-making and I am not happy about this

PREFERENCES

36. Please describe the importance of each of the following when thinking of your IDEAL church.

(Check one on each line.)

	1 Not Important	2 Less Important	3 Neutral	4 Somewhat Important	5 Very Important
Social justice emphasis.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Evangelism.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Style of worship	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Building relationships.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sharing in holy communion or the Lord's supper.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social activities (i.e. outings, trips, etc.).....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Relevant and practical sermons.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hypocrisy-free atmosphere.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Children's ministry.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prayer ministry	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Practical caring for others in times of need.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Diversity.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sunday school, bible study or discipleship classes.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Common vision / values.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Small groups.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sense of belonging.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Support and encouragement for social action.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Encounter with the Holy Spirit.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Young Adult ministry.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Non-judgmental, Caring, supportive environment.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Leadership style of pastor.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Opportunities for spiritual growth.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Community Outreach.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Technology.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Layout of facility.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Opportunities for involvement.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

37. What are the primary characteristics that attracted you to this church? (Please list three)

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

38. What are the primary reasons you stay at this church? (Please list three)

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING THIS SURVEY!

To be entered into the drawing to win your choice of either an iPad or Laptop computer in January of 2017, please send your request to:

hansen.survey2016@gmail.com

If you would like a copy of the study when it is completed in the Summer of 2018, please indicate that in your email and provide your mailing address.