

New Church Initiative

For many years now, churches across Massachusetts, and nationally as well, have noted, with increasing concern, that church attendance, including weekly worship and Sunday School attendance has been steadily declining. For many years, we seemed to be immune to that trend, but in the past 2-3 years our attendance has also been in decline. You may have noticed it yourself as you've looked around on a Sunday morning. National data reported by the Pew Research Center validate these observations. Congregations are aging and shrinking. As board members who loves Jesus and loves this Church, we aren't satisfied with these trends and we're betting that you aren't either!

Last fall, a book called, "Growing Young – 6 Essential Strategies to Help Young People Discover and Love Your Church," was published. This book spells-out the core commitments, or operating principles, of churches that are not aging or shrinking but are actually growing in all kinds of ways.

Growing Young research studied congregations that were really good at reaching young people. What they found, in a nutshell was that "Growing churches reach young people, and young people make churches healthier."

"The good news is that when we bridge generation gaps, everyone grows. Cross-generational discipleship is beneficial not only for young people, but also for older generations who need the vitality of the young to inspire their faith just as the young need wise leaders to ground theirs. Faith, after all, is not just passed down, it's passed around."
– Growing Young

In the fall of this year and again in the spring of 2018, a team from UCC Medfield will travel to Fuller Seminary to participate in a Growing Young seminar, where they will come together to learn about how to shape and apply these strategies to our own congregation. We will be led by faculty/experts from Fuller and have the benefit of the questions, thoughts and ideas of other groups from other congregations engaged in the same process of learning to apply these strategies. It is a fantastic learning opportunity.

The Board would ask you join us to pray for God's leading and wisdom, for this team, for this congregation and for this important work as we begin the exciting process of helping our congregation to "grow young."

To date – the team that will travel to Fuller include:

Pastor Phil, Pastor Karen, Liz Lisciandra, Tim O'Loughlin, Jen Carlson and Wendy Ludwig

If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to the staff or the Church Board with any questions.

Blessings,
Wendy Ludwig