

Attracting Millennials

Sarah Townsend Leach

July 30, 2019 | 1:00 p.m. ET

The Episcopal Church Foundation (ECF)

Independent, lay-led organization, founded in 1949

Empowers congregations through strategic visioning and planning, leadership development, and raising financial resources for ministry

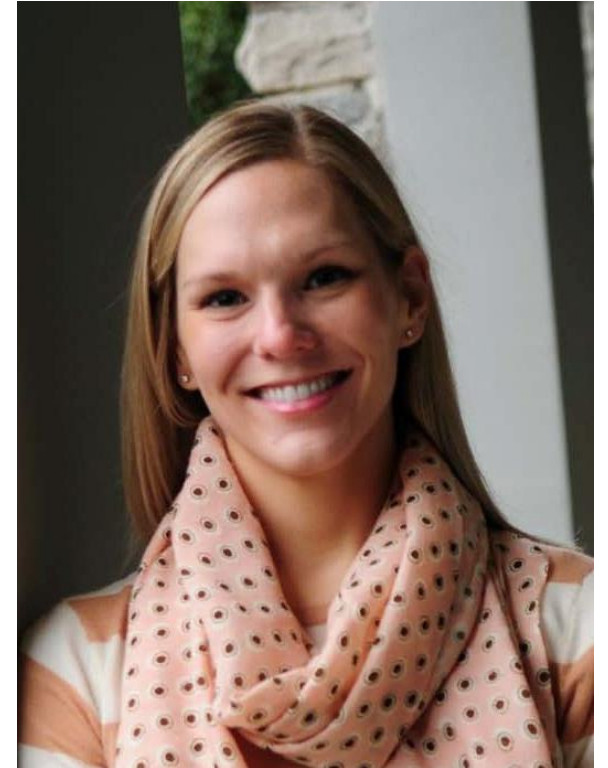
Through our programs, ECF is helping to build a Church characterized by:

- Lay and clergy leaders working together to transform the Church
- Healthy, vital, vibrant Episcopal communities of faith
- Meaningful opportunities for Christian stewardship and effective fundraising
- Innovative, mission-based ways to be the Church of the future



Meet your presenter: Sarah Townsend Leach

- ECF Consultant
- Life-long Episcopalian
- BA in English (Rhodes College)
- MPA in Nonprofit Management (Indiana Univ.)
- Twelve years in nonprofit sector
- Married to an Episcopal priest and rector
- Lives in Collierville, Tennessee (Memphis)



Agenda

- Intro (done!)
- Who are Millennials?
- What are “Feedback Loops”?
- What feedback loops might connect with Millennials?
- Final Q&A
- Closing

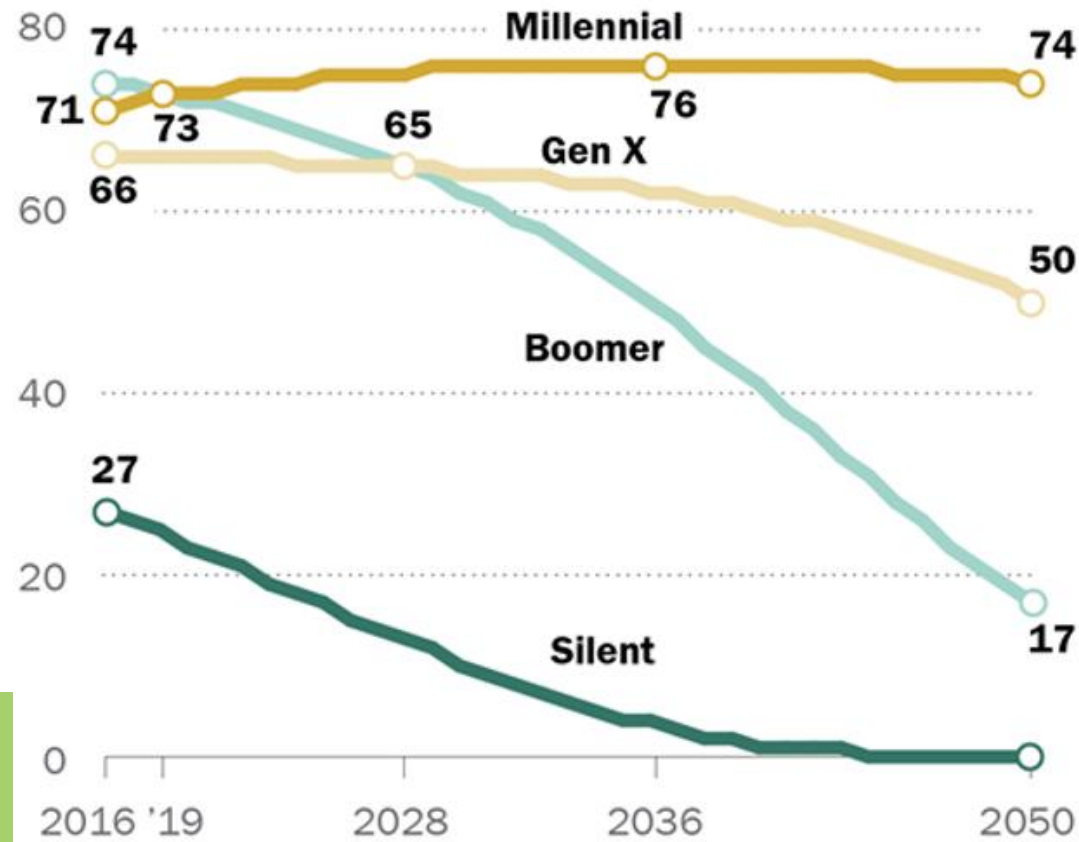
Who are Millennials?

- Born between around 1981-1996
- Ages: early 20's to late 30's
- Over 70 million people
- Shaped by major events in their youth: increased connectivity and increased uncertainty
- More educated, more debt, less potential for upward mobility than prior generations
- Later marriage and children (or no marriage and children)
- Care most about issues that are local and impact their daily lives
- Want to contribute with sweat-equity (“time” and “talent”)

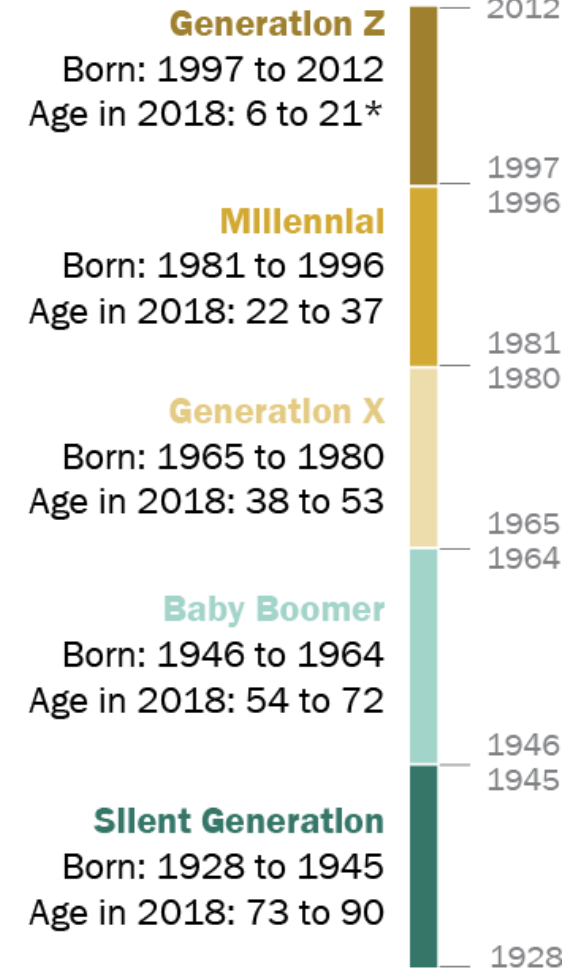
Who are Millennials?

Projected population by generation

In millions



The generations defined

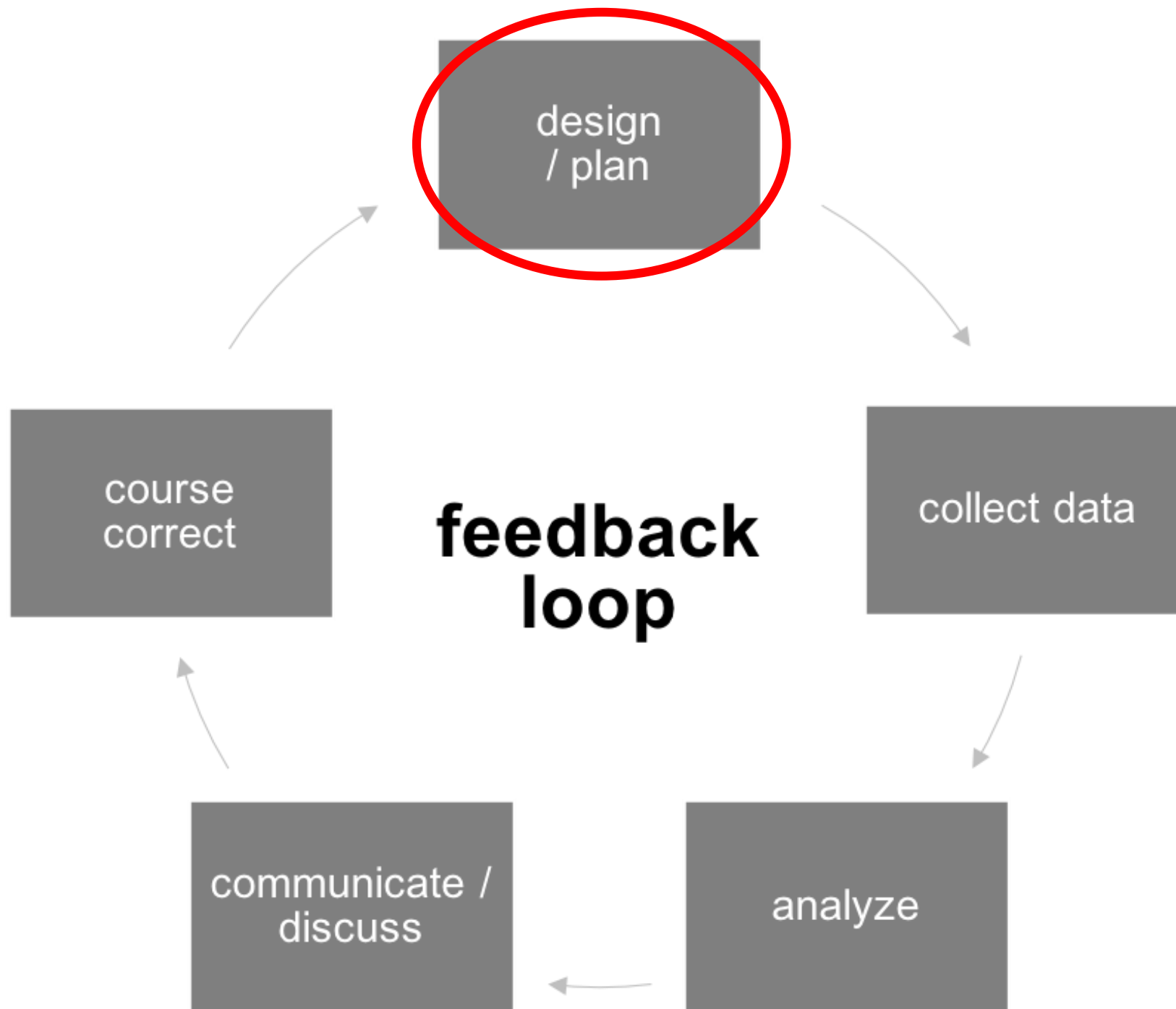


What are “Feedback Loops”?

- Start with a goal
- Measure success toward that goal
- Analyze results
- Discuss options
- Adapt strategies as needed

What are “Feedback Loops”?

- **Listen to those who are affected/targeted by the goal**
- Start with a goal
- Measure success toward that goal
- Analyze results
- Discuss options
- Adapt strategies as needed



Using feedback loops to engage Millennials

- Listen – Use data-collection tools to inform your goal.
- Set Goal – Set one SMART goal for Millennial engagement.
- Measure – Use data-collection tools to assess your progress.
- Analyze – Spend time digesting what was said.
- Discuss – Take results and recommendations to the appropriate clergy/staff person, committee, or the Vestry.
- Adapt – Revise plans as needed and take action.

Listen: SWOT Analysis

- Strengths
- Weaknesses
- Opportunities
- Threats

Listen: SWOT Analysis

- Strengths: What do we already do well?
- Weaknesses: What could we do better?
- Opportunities: What unique needs could we be meeting?
- Threats: Is there anything else going on in the community we should be aware of?

Listen: Sample questions

- Why do you attend [church name]?
- How connected do you feel to the life of our church?
- What could we do to improve your response to the question above?
- What are a few new things we could offer or do that would make you excited to become more deeply connected?
- What other ideas or suggestions do you have?

Set Goal: use SMART goal format

- **S**pecific
- **M**easurable
- **A**ttainable (or Assigned to)
- **R**elevant
- **T**ime-Sensitive

Set Goal: use SMART goal format

- Specific: What do you want to do? Think about the 5 W's.
- Measurable: How will you know you have accomplished it?
- Attainable: Is it “pie-in-the-sky” or realistic?
- Relevant: Is it realistic and appropriate for your church? Does it relate to your mission, vision, and identity?
- Time-Sensitive: Is there a deadline?

Set Goal: use SMART goal format

Examples:

- Increase our Millennial worship attendance by 10% in 2020
- Involve at least one Millennial in each active ministry team by June
- Create one new ministry by Fall 2020 that is conceived and led by Millennials

Using feedback loops to engage Millennials

- ~~Listen~~
- ~~Set Goal~~
- Measure
- Analyze
- Discuss
- Adapt

Measure: Ideas for tools to listen to Millennials

- High Tech – all free!
 - Facebook polls or posts
 - Google Forms
 - Survey Monkey surveys
 - Instagram Story polls
- Low Tech – also free!
 - Interviews/conversations
 - Paper forms

We asked...



Episcopal Church Foundation ✓

July 11 at 9:02 AM · 🌐



How are you gathering feedback and listening to millennials in your congregation as you plan programs, services, and ministry offerings each year? Share your story in the comments for a chance to be featured in an upcoming webinar!



You, Sandra T. Montes, Nick Sollog and 54 others 9 Comments 2 Shares

You said...



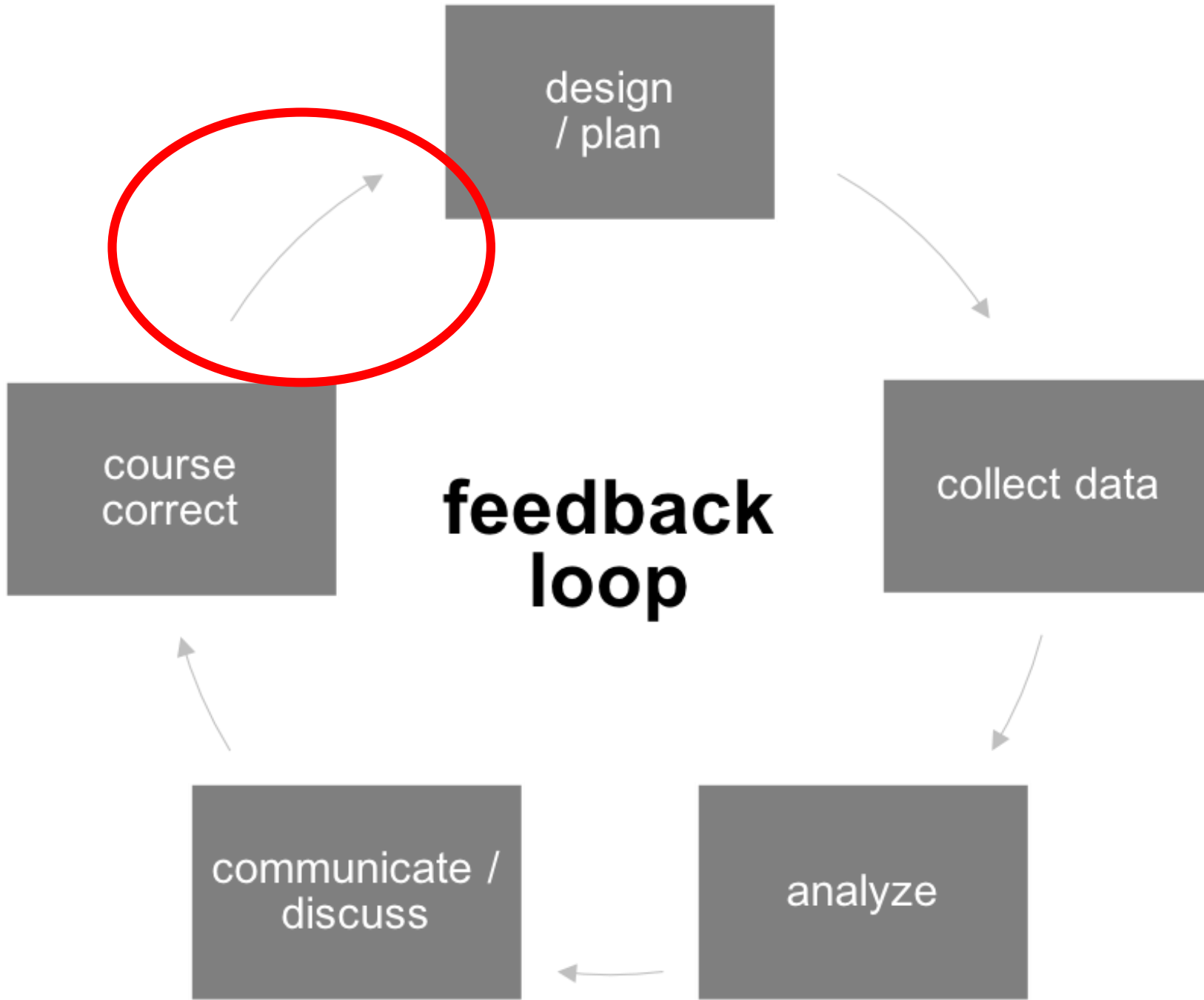
Monty Howard We are gathering feedback and listening to millennials in our congregation as we plan programs, services, and ministry offerings each year?:
We hired one! Actually 2 - long story - and engaged them and updated music and format and loved the process! ❤️



Ingrid Andersen I meet with my millennial parishioners. I listen to their concerns and their spiritual needs, and I ask them what they would like to learn, and how they would like to learn it. Following their guidance, I no longer offer courses or Bible study on a week night, as they are exhausted during the week. We now have intergenerational classes on Sundays after the service, following John Roberto's model of a meal together, and the same content taught at different levels in break-away groups. Discussion is held together, with input from all groups. More use is made of apps and online material. We live-stream from time to time. Most of all, my millennial parishioners want to learn to be Christians who make a difference in the world. They are concerned about our society and its injustice. They are committed to saving the planet. They want to learn to go deeper in their spiritual practices, and be authentic.

Using feedback loops to engage Millennials

- ~~Listen~~
- ~~Set Goal~~
- ~~Measure~~
- Analyze
- Discuss
- Adapt



Additional Reading

- “The Power of Feedback Loops and How to Use Them”
<https://get2growth.com/feedback-loops/>
- “Engaging Millennials”
<https://www.ecfvp.org/vestry-papers/article/760/engaging-millennials>
- “Calling Kids to Communications”
<https://www.ecfvp.org/blogs/3655/calling-kids-to-communications>

Final Q&A

- Any additional questions or comments?

Contact us

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