



Seniors in Canada

 Seniors (those 65 and older) are the fastest growing age group

Approximately 5 million seniors according to 2011 census

• That number is expected to double in the next 20 years

• By 2050, it is estimated 1 out of every 4 Canadians will be 65 or older

Seniors Globally

• Canada's population remains one of the youngest among G8

• Japan, currently the world's oldest country, has more than 20% of its population over 65

- Projections show that within 25 years that number will have doubled to 40%
- It is estimated that by the year 2020, there will be approximately 1 billion people globally over 60



Baby Boomers in Canada

- Those born between 1946 to 1965
- More than 8 million babies were born in those 20 years
- According to the 2011 census, there are 9.6 million Boomers currently living in Canada
- Besides those born here during those years, this generation has benefited from immigration since the end of the 1980s
- The first Baby Boomers started turning 65 in 2011. More than 1,000 officially become seniors each and every day... a trend that will continue for the next 18 years

What Defines Baby Boomers?

Demographically, they form the single largest generational cohort

- Philosophically, they have redefined North American culture
- Sociologically, the connect through a unique generational identity bordered by dramatic historical events
- Economically, they are the wealthiest generation in North American history
- Spiritually, they seek authenticity, experience and personal truth

What Defines Baby Boomers?

• They are longing for relationships and a sense of community

- They just want to have some FUN!
- Ministry can involve developing opportunities through which Boomers can make new friends, share life and party!
- "Who am I and What am I doing here?" are pertinent questions for people in the second half of life

 They have a unique opportunity to re-examine and reassess their lives and determine a new direction for their remaining years

What Defines Baby Boomers?

• Significance is the new capital... It is not enough to have financial security at midlife. What they hunger for is to make a significant contribution to the world

• The church can be a gateway for increasing levels of significance in society

• This may be the time that Boomers fulfill the dreams of that Beatles' song, "They say we want a revolution, oh no, we just want to change the world...."

Baby Boomers and the Church

• It is estimated that about one-third of Baby Boomers in North America are Christians

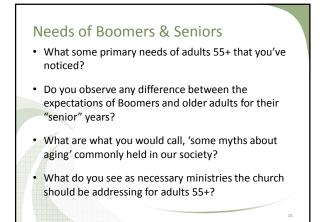
• That means, in Canada, there are around 6 million lost and unchurched Baby Boomers

• As this generation ages, we have but a few chances to reach them

Baby Boomers and the Church "Do you not say, 'There are still four months and then comes the harvest'? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest!" – John 4:35 (NKJV) Time is growing short and they are ripening quickly! The point of Jesus' words were to send workers into the harvest before it was too late.

What is your plan?





Myths of Aging (Houston & Parker)

- Myth # 1: To be old is to be sick.
- Myth # 2: You can't teach an old dog new tricks.
- Myth # 3: The horse is out of the barn.
- Myth # 4: The secret to successful aging is to choose your parent's wisely.
- Myth # 5: The lights may be on, but the voltage is low.
- Myth # 6: The elderly don't pull their own weight. – James M. Houston & Michael Parker, A Vision for the Aging Church: Renewing Ministry for and by Seniors (InterVarsity Press, 2011)

Needs of Boomers & Seniors

- What is the value of someone suffering from dementia?
- "... 'An incontinent, dependent, person suffering from late stage Alzheimer's disease provides the person's family and her church with one of life's most important lessons, an opportunity to learn how to love a person unconditionally, without any expectation of something in return." (32)
- The Christ-like "opportunity"... e.g. "Hair Pulling Time, or Lovingly Supported? Recognizing the Stress and Toll of Raising 'Special Needs' Children and Responding with Care

and Encouragement

Gifts Boomers & Seniors Bring . . .

- Perspective
- Maturity
- Wisdom it's not so much about 'aging' as, 'sageing'!
- History tradition value & worth
- Mentoring younger generations
- Prayer
- Note: The undermining effect of a technological & production-oriented society!





Ministry Future . . .

 What areas must the church address in the days and years to come to show genuine care for today's and future Boomers?



The Mission Statement for all Seniors

For you have been my hope, O Sovereign LORD,

- my confidence since my youth From birth I have relied on you....
- Even when I am old and gray,
- do not forsake me, O God,
- till I declare your power to the next generation,
- your might to all who are to come.

(Psalm 71:5-6,18)

BOOKS & RESOURCES FOR SENIOR ADULT MINISTRY:

- Bradshaw, Ron, ed. A Leader's Guide to Older Adult Ministry in Canada (Surrey, BC: Generational Ministries, 2012).
- Gallagher, David P., Senior Adult Ministry in the 21st Century: Step-By-Step Strategies for Reaching People Over 50 (Eugene: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2002).
- Gentzler, Richard H. Jr., Aging Ministry in the 21st Century: An Inquiry Approach (Nashville: Discipleship Resources, 2008).
- Houston, James M. and Michael Parker, A Vision for the Aging Church: Renewing Ministry for and by Seniors (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, InterVarsity Press, November 2011).

Starr, A. Timothy, *Aging Joyfully* (Belleville, ON: Guardian Books, 2012).