



## 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

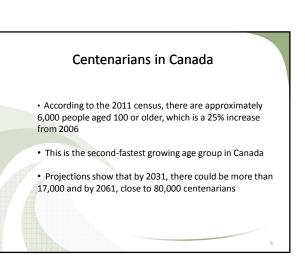
• By 2050, it is estimated 1 out of every 4 Canadians will be 65 or older

#### 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

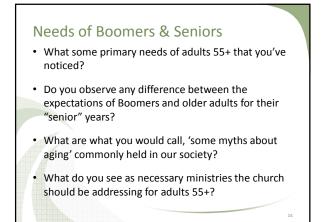
• That means, in Canada, there are around 6 million lost and unchurched Baby Boomers

• 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 21<sup>st</sup> 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).