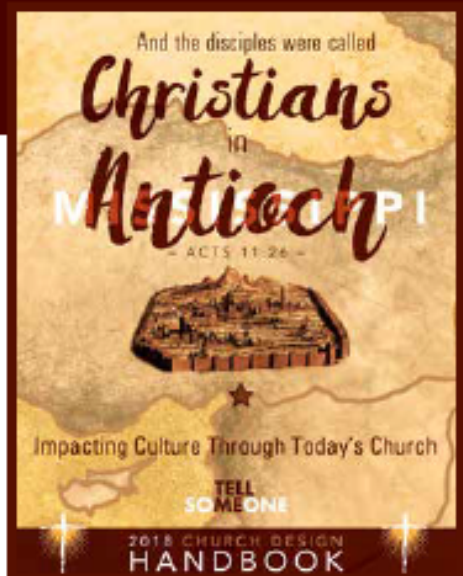


IMPACTING CULTURE... ...THROUGH TODAY'S CHURCH



2018 PLANNING GUIDE

The Mississippi Baptist Convention Board exists to serve and to work with our associations and churches to "Help Bring Mississippi and the World to Jesus". Each year the MBCB plans a THEME to guide our efforts to serve you. Our goal is to provide ideas and resources to help reach the community you serve for Christ. As we prepare for 2018, our theme comes from Acts 11:26, **AND THE DISCIPLES WERE CALLED CHRISTIANS IN ANTIOCH**. To make that scripture more personal we want to bring the precept to Mississippi-**AND THE DISCIPLES WERE CALLED CHRISTIANS IN MISSISSIPPI** (see inside cover-Dr. Futral's letter). As disciples, God has called us to reach our community culture where we reside just like Paul and Barnabas did

in Antioch. It is vitally important that we have a working definition of culture. One definition is:

"A way of life of a group of people—the behaviors, beliefs, values and symbols that they accept, generally without thinking about them and that are passed along by communication and imitation from one generation to the next."

Never before have we been in a culture where five generations exist at one time. We must not only understand our own generation but we must also have a working knowledge of the other four generations. The generational groups are: **Traditionalists** (Born before 1945); **Baby Boomers** (Born 1946-1964); **Generation X** (Born 1965-1980); **Millennials** (born 1981-2001) and **Generation Z or New Generation** (Children of the second half of Gen Xers and the first half of the Millennials) (From *Generational IQ* by Haydn Shaw, 2015).

The 2018 Church Design Handbook includes a feature article each month. Articles for January-December 2018 examine today's culture by addressing four (4) powerful questions:

1. Does culture matter to a Christian? (January-March)
2. How can Christians read culture? (April-June)
3. What tools are available for churches to impact culture? (July-September)
4. How do you contextualize the Gospel in culture without compromising it? (October-December)

Mississippi is the most churched state (per capita) in the nation, yet one-half of the Mississippi population has no religious affiliation at all. We must find an effective way to impact our culture with the gospel.

10 IDEAS TO IMPACT CULTURE IN YOUR COMMUNITY

1. Teach the book *Generational IQ* by Haydn Shaw on Wednesday or Sunday evenings.
2. Develop a panel composed of the five (5) generations and dialogue about how to reach specific generations. Allow the congregation to submit questions or ask questions of the panelists.
3. Find ways to build relationships with someone who is not in your generation and who is not part of your Sunday morning relationships.
4. Provide five (5) fellowships throughout the year with two generational groups serving the other three.
5. Create a **Cultural Context Team** that will study the different generations and cultural trends and periodically keep the pastor and staff informed of ways to impact each generational group with the Gospel.
6. Plan an ongoing **3-1-5-1 Evangelistic Challenge** (released in 2017) under the title **Tell Me/Tell Someone What Jesus has done for you!** Contact our Sunday School/Small Group office to discover ways to begin or continue this strategy. The **3** represents three lost people I can pray for. The **1** denotes one spiritual conversation I can learn. The **5** signifies five people I can invite to my church, Sunday School or Small Group ministry. The last **1** symbolizes one person I will share the gospel with during the challenge. Read articles September-December 2017 in the 2018 Church Design Handbook for additional information.
7. Do a detailed demographic study of your community. The MBCB has a new tool called **MissionInsite**. The study gives a comprehensive analysis of trends found in your community. This tool is now available to each of our churches and associations. We have trained ten Ministry Assistants across the state who can assist you with this tool. In addition, we can provide names and addresses of different generational groups in your community and help you plan a strategy to impact lost-ness in your community.
8. Conduct a **Vision Day** or take the **Transformational Church Assessment Tool (TCAT)** to plan a strategy for impacting your culture. See pages 38-39 for more information about this process.
9. Contact the MBCB where we can provide on-line training for this year's theme. Dates for the on-line training will be announced in the Fall of 2017. We can accommodate 1-100 people in one of these meetings.
10. Work with your Associational Missions Director (AMD) to discover how to impact your culture. They are a great resource to serve your church.