



The Federated Church of Hyannis

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Reverend Derek L. White, Pastor

Weekly Message From the Pastor and Sermon Notes for August 29, 2021

There are two important items that, as Pastor, I would like to share with you. The first is the upcoming Stewardship Campaign. There is no greater time than after this past year to relaunch the church. It is vital that we look to the future and continue to grow as a community of faith that supports the wider community. The second is encouragement. There is a big hill to get over, but if we have faith like the little engine that could, we will make it. "I think I can, I think I can, I think I can." With God all things are possible (Matthew 19:26)

Because of the storm last week, Mr. Hugh Findlay was not able to deliver his excellent message in church. His message will be shared on September 12th.

Rev. Derek L. White

Sermon: Faith Through the Generations, Part III

Scripture: 1st Thessalonians 4:9-12

Silent generation characteristics (Born 1928-1945)

- Traditional values. Cultural and social forces emphasized values such as hard work, loyalty, and thriftiness during the time when the silent generation was coming of age.
- Financial prudence.
- Interpersonal respect.
- Determination.
- Resilience.
- Work ethic.
- Analog sensibilities.
- Self-sacrifice.

We continue our series on Faith Through the Generations. In week one we looked at Generation X and the changing of the American Family and Faith in America. In week two we looked at Millennials and the rise of Contemporary Worship. This week we will

look at the Silent Generation. As this series continues it is important to remember that methods of the Church change, but the message of Christ remains the same from generation to generation.

The rapid growth of the American church in the 1950s is directly related to the work of the Silent Generation. For many years it was commonly thought that the church historically was always like the church of the 1950s in America. The 1950s was the time of the fastest and largest growth of the church in the history of America, and there are several reasons for this.

The first reason was the challenges the Silent Generation faced. The World was at war, and everybody felt the responsibility to do their part. It required self-sacrifice, dedication to something larger than oneself, loyalty to a cause, and trust in authoritarian leadership to navigate through the chaos. The war brought everyone together. Everyone stepped up. The church became **THE Center** of the Community where everyone gathered to pray for the troops.

The second reason for the rapid growth of the church in America during the 1950s was that during the Silent Generation women's rights grew in America. Women have always made up the majority of most churches. With more women in the workforce, more money went to the church to pay for expansions of churches in America in the 1950s. Families with dual incomes helped America gain greater prosperity.

The third reason is the work ethic of the Silent Generation. Everyone worked hard, without complaining, and gave their best to provide the best. Volunteerism soared in America during the 1950s because of the Silent Generation. clubs, organizations, societies, and churches all grew because of the Silent Generation. Short of another World War, churches in America will most likely never be like the churches of the 1950s built by the Silent Generation. The growth of the 1950s churches statistically was a phenomenon based on historical trends of church growth.

We cannot compare today's church to the churches of the 1950s in America. If we look at the membership of groups like the Elks, Masons, VFWs, and Rotary in comparison to the churches; all have experienced decline since the 1950s. The work ethic and community identity in today's passage of 1st Thessalonians 4:9-13 matches the cultural traits of the Silent Generation. The World Wars shifted the thinking of many away from self-interests to the needs of the greater community.

Every generation has a way of doing things a little differently. The methods of the church meet the needs of each generation a little differently. But the message of the Gospel does not change. From the first generation of the church to today, the Gospel is steadfast and true to every generation.