Growing Young

Want to reverse the effects of aging? Need more energy in your life? Sick of fine lines and wrinkles? Check out Growing Young! What is Growing Young? It is a movement in NEPA and throughout the greater ELCA and beyond that is based on a book of the same name which studied churches of all sizes, denominations and locations throughout the country who are maintaining and attracting youth and young adults in their congregations.

The authors of Growing Young have identified 6 key strategies that these congregations have and that others congregations can utilize to help youth and young people discover and love the church. They are: Unlocking keychain leadership, Empathizing with today’s young people, Taking Jesus’ message seriously, Fuel a warm
community, Prioritize young people everywhere, and Be the best neighbors. These are not just strategies to help you attract young people, but are also 6 great strategies for great ministry, regardless if another young person ever walks through the doors of your church building or logs onto your worship service.

Growing Young cannot help you personally look or feel younger; it will not get rid of your wrinkles. But these strategies can help your congregation feel and be younger by reigniting energy in your members and attracting new younger worshipers that will reverse the effects of aging within our congregations.

For more information about Growing Young, read the book “Growing Young: Six Essential Strategies to Help Young People Discover and Love Your Church” by Kara Powell, Jake Mulder and Brad M. Griffin from Fuller Youth Institute.

Join the "Growing Young" BOOK STUDY hosted by Sammy Kelly and YoYoFa

The first, third, and fifth Wednesdays of the month starting March 3rd at 12 p.m. (March 3, 17, 31, April 7, 21, May 5, 19). All at 12 p.m. and all via Zoom.

For more information or to sign up contact sammyenepsynod.org or sign up for the "Youth" emails for updates and links, which can be accessed through our Synod website.

Meet Deacon Travis Woodfield, Director of Congregational Legacy

Hello! I have been fortunate to have a colorful adventure of a life, so, here’s a little of my story. I studied Philosophy from the Franciscan University of Steubenville, and Franciscan Studies from St. Bonaventure University. I’ve been fortunate to have life experience ranging from a fishmonger, admissions counselor, Franciscan friar, hospital chaplain, and Campus Minister. I also have a MDiv from Wake Forest University. Studying at Wake allowed me the chance to intern and work with the Center For Congregational Health. While I was working there, I found a vocation that combined many of the things I was interested in. When I was a hospital chaplain, I loved getting to walk alongside people when they were making meaning of changes in their life. I am honored that I get to do the same with churches in their meaning-making work, whether that be launching to a new vision, reconsidering what ministry the church is called to, or even considering what end-of-life care and legacy-making might look like.

Rachael, my wife, and I have been married 7 years. We have one cat who runs the house. In my spare time I love to play video games, cooking dinner, and playing guitar. I am also an amateur magician. When I get the pleasure of meeting you ask me if I have a deck of cards and I’ll show you something!