



Embracing Millennials

By Pastor Brady Arneson | Waikiki Beach Gathering | Honolulu, HI

This year millennials are turning 39 to 24 years old. They are no longer the future generation. They are full-on adults with kids, a house, and advancing in their careers. I think some of our churches are really having trouble reaching millennials. They don't always feel comfortable in traditional AFLC churches.

I think the solution is church planting and revitalization. Let's start churches that young adults want to go to. If the AFLC is going to thrive, not just survive, we must embrace this millennial generation. As a 27-year-old millennial pastor I don't know everything, but here are three things I've learned from planting a church for millennials.

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1. Millennials want you to be real.

Young adults value deep authentic relationships. They don't want you to pretend you are perfect, they'd rather know you are not. Have you ever shared your testimony in detail to a millennial, including the ugly parts that are hard to talk about? Young adults value confession, and love to follow leaders who are relatable rather than at a level that is unattainable.

The Apostle Paul had a thorn in his flesh and God told him "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness". Because of this Paul boasted in his weaknesses – he knew that when he was weak, he was strong in Christ, and it's the same for us. Be open and honest. C.S. Lewis said "to love at all is to be vulnerable." Millennials love-language is vulnerability. They love sharing testimonies and hearing about Jesus' personal love for them.



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Let's start churches that value real authentic community because. We are all in this together.

2. Millennials want you to be passionate.

Young adults want to be a part of something bigger than themselves and value making a difference in the world. Jesus has given us the mission of loving Jesus, loving others, and making disciples through the Great Commandment and the Great Commission. This is the purpose of life and the purpose of the church.

Your church may have a mission statement, but Millennials will ask, "Are we living missionally? Are you passionate about saving all the lost souls in our community?" Millennials are drawn to outward focused churches that will do whatever it takes to reach people with the gospel. Church is not a time, a place, or person. The church is the people of God living missionally every day through the power of the Holy Spirit.

3. Millennials want you to take more risks.

Church planting is an adventure and young adults want to be a part of those risk-taking experiences. When I first told friends God was calling me to start a church in Hawaii, people questioned my motivation. They doubted it would happen. It was risky sending a 23-year-old northern Minnesotan to become a surfer dude across the ocean by himself to start a church. But AFLC Home Missions boldly took the chance. If we're going to reach people we've never reached before we have to do things we've never done before.

When Jesus called Peter to walk on water it was a major risk, but it was exactly where God wanted him to be, where all He could do was trust in Him. Do you believe God has big plans for your life and your church? Millennials are drawn to churches that are passionately pursuing a vision from God, taking big risks to fulfill the vision instead of playing it safe.

Millennials have arrived.

They are no longer the future of the church; they are the church. Let's embrace this millennial generation. Church planting is the most exciting thing I've ever done. I love following Jesus Christ on this adventure. I want to do this the rest of my life. I encourage you all to be a part of church planting in some way. We can do this together.



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