

Attracting Young People through EarthCare

In the past few years a number of Unity spiritual centers have closed and many more are experiencing a decline in attendance. But it's not just Unity. Church attendance is down nationwide, and indeed throughout the western world. So why is this? Studies have shown that religion simply isn't very important to many millennials and Gen Z's anymore. It's not that younger people hate religion but rather that they feel left behind by religious institutions. Catholic and mainline Protestant religions are too rigid for this mindset, and they are especially turned off by dogma. However, a survey by Vice Marketing and the [Insight Strategy Group](#) revealed that about 80 percent of millennials still believe in God or a universal spirit and are hungry for meaningful connection.¹

These days, many young people want to be a part of something larger. This can take many forms to create the beliefs and practices that make the most sense for their unique personalities and lifestyles. This may range from walking yoga, meditation and outward bound experiences in nature. Many also care for the larger world and want to tackle the big issues such as the environment and social justice.²

According to Tom Punch, chief creative and commercial officer for the youth-centric media company Virtue, *We now think religious brands should think more broadly about what their role is in society and how they can truly be a force for good in people's lives.*³

In a culture where many are hungry for connection there seems to be a lot of room to find ways to connect with young people on a spiritual level. With this in mind, I believe that Unity's non-dogmatic, inclusive and positive approach to life that seeks the good in all people and events should resonate with millennials and Gen Z cross generations are looking for these days. So why aren't more attending Unity? Something clearly is missing. **Is it possible that becoming more involved in social and environmental issues is part of the key to nurturing the soul and well-being of a broader range of people? Could an active environmental program through EarthCare be part of the solution? I believe so. Please visit our website at ww.unityworldwideministries.org/earthcare, or contact us, to learn more about the tools and resources we offer and how we may be of help.**

Sources:

1. Millennials Haven't Forgotten Spirituality, They're just looking for New Venues. PBS News Hour interview. <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/millennials-havent-forgotten-spirituality-theyre-just-looking-new-venues>.
2. [Judy Woodruff interview with ASPER TER KUILE, Harvard University.](#)
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4. Why Millennials Are Leaving Religion But Embracing Spirituality <https://news.virginia.edu/content/qa-why-millennials-are-leaving-religion-embracing-spirituality>, December 14, 2015, by Caroline Newman,
5. Want to Win Over Millennials and Gen Z? Vice's New Study Says Brands Should Get Spiritual. <https://www.adweek.com/brand-marketing/want-to-win-over-millennials-and-gen-z-vices-new-study-says-brands-should-get-spiritual/>