



Life Chats

Church members everywhere, no matter the age, are seeking belonging and connection. Sometimes connection grows in small ways—an elder who takes an interest in a young person or a young person who takes interest in an elder. Chatting makes all the difference. Start a “Life Chat” and ask a few simple questions to help young and old know they are a valuable part of the congregation.

A Life Chat is designed to be an intergenerational visit that may include some interview questions, a meal, an activity or more. The purpose is to have youth spend time with older members of the church to learn lessons and form appropriate bonds. It is also a time for senior members to share about their lives and ask questions to get to know the youth.

Suggested ways to set up and conduct a Life Chat:

1. Designate someone in your church to organize Life Chats. They can ask members to participate, and then pair up children or youth with a senior member of the church.
2. If you don't have someone to organize your whole church, or if you have a small church, you can call a senior member of the church and ask if they would like a visit. Explain that the purpose of this is to help all members find stronger connection.
3. For the youth, be sure to receive permission from their parent or guardian.
4. Look through the suggested questions and pick some you would like to ask. Also, write a few of your own, remembering to be sensitive and keep questions appropriate.
5. Set a date, time, and place to visit.
6. Set a time limit ahead of time. One hour or less is suggested for a first visit. You may set up a time to come back and visit again.
7. Bring a little gift like flowers, a homemade card, some food, or a game to play. You may even ask if they need any help. Depending what kind of help is needed, you may be able to assist them at the time of your visit, or you may need to set up a time to come back.
8. Manage your time. Leave some time to play a short game or eat a treat together.
9. If you would like to record an audio or video of the interview, be sure to ask permission ahead of time. You may decide to listen and learn on this first visit; then come back another time to record something special to share with the church.
10. Be sure to use your manners. Greet them, make eye contact, shake hands, hug, and be sure to smile!
11. Be mindful of the time and/or other situations you may notice, like they are tired or not feeling well.
12. Begin with some questions designed to simply get to know him or her and move toward some of the questions that engage his or her faith.
13. Be sure to project your voice so they can hear and understand what you are saying.
14. Before you leave, pray for them.
15. Whatever you ask, it will probably be the start of a great conversation, and it might even awaken love for the church in the next generation.

Get to Know Your Elders:

1. What is something you like to do for fun?
2. What is your favorite food? Is there anything you don't like to eat?
3. Do you have a favorite color?
4. Do you have any pets? What are their names?
5. Which invention from your lifetime are you most amazed by? What was life like before? (Their generation witnessed the invention of color TV, personal computers, the Internet, and more.)
6. What was your first job? How about your favorite?
7. What did you and your siblings do for fun?
8. (Be sure they are or were married before asking this question.) How did you meet your spouse?
9. When did you first give your life to Christ, and how old were you when you were baptized?
10. What are the most important lessons you've learned in your life? Do you have stories to share?
11. Who has influenced you the most? (parent, grandparent, aunt, uncle, friend, boss, co-worker, teacher, pastor)
12. I am _____ years old. What was life like when you were my age?
13. What is something that our church doesn't really know about you, but that you would be willing to share?
14. What makes a person a good friend?
15. What is your favorite hymn or other song to sing at church? Why?
16. What is your favorite Bible text? Why?
17. Who is your favorite Bible character? Why?
18. What is one way God has helped you?
19. What life advice would you pass along?
20. How can I pray for you?

Get to Know Kids:

1. What's your name? (Be sure to say your name, too.)
2. How old are you?
3. What treat would you like to eat on your birthday? (Kids are always planning their next birthday.)
4. What's your favorite ____? (animal, sport, color, candy, etc.)
5. Who do you like to play with? What do you play with him/her?
6. What makes that person a good friend?
7. What's something that made you laugh today?
8. What's something that made you feel disappointed today?
9. What's something you know how to do really well?
10. What's something you'd like to learn how to do?
11. What's your favorite song that we sing in church?
12. Why do you especially like that one?
13. What's your favorite Bible story?
14. What's the best part of that story?
15. What's something you know about Jesus?
16. What's something you are curious about Jesus?
17. What's something that makes you worried?
18. Who do you talk to when you have a problem? How does that person help?
19. What's one way God has helped you?
20. How can I pray for you?