Some Results from the New Zealand Church Life Survey 2007 and 2011

Barry McDonald

Executive summary

This report is based on the New Zealand Church Life Survey (CLSNZ, 2007 and 2011) and represents 459 different church congregations, and a total of 26910 individual respondents aged 15 or older. Most participants were from Catholic, Anglican, Presbyterian and Baptist churches but some were some from Union or Cooperating Churches and a few Methodist, Open Brethren or Wesleyan Methodist congregations. The majority of Catholic congregations were from large multi-congregation parishes in Auckland.

About 1-2% of church attenders were visitors who did not have a regular home congregation. For most denominations 10-20% of the congregation had attended for less than two years, while around 30-45% of the respondents had attended the same congregation for more than 20 years.

For around 10% of respondents this was their first congregation and they had never regularly attended any other. For Anglicans, only 51% had previously attended an Anglican church before coming to this one. Presbyterian figures were similar, while only 36% of Baptist attenders had previously attended a Baptist church, with 14% having come from a Pentecostal church.

Retirees attend more frequently (80-90% at least weekly) than 15-40 year olds (around 70-80% at least weekly). Actual Church attenders are noticeably older than Census adherence figures would suggest, and church adherents are older than the overall New Zealand age profile.

Church attenders are 2-3 times more likely to have a bachelor degree, and 2-8 times more likely to have a postgraduate qualification than the general population (2006 Census figures).

Over 90% of survey participants from Anglican, Presbyterian, Union/Cooperating and Open Brethren churches were European. This may reflect the congregations that were willing to participate, more than the actual ethnic breakdown of those denominations. Only a small minority of surveyed participants were Maori. Baptists had 9% Asian participants.

Participating Catholics were 52% European; 18% had a Pacific ethnicity (notably Samoan and Tongan) and 28% Asian (notably Filipino and Indian). Only 42% of attending Catholics in the Survey were born in New Zealand. This reflects that most participating Catholic congregations were in Auckland.

In services, Catholics most highly valued the Eucharist, followed by worship music and singing, with less interest in sermons or Bible teaching. For Baptists, Brethren and Wesleyan Methodists, sermons or Bible teaching was most valued; while Anglicans, Presbyterians and Methodists placed highest value on worship music and singing, but still placed more value on sermons than Catholics. Generally older respondents placed more value on the Eucharist /Communion.

In most denominations a strong majority of respondents indicated that traditional hymns were the most helpful musical style (especially among older members), though in Baptist and Open Brethren the first preference was for contemporary songs.

Most attenders (around 80%) said they had a strong and growing (or at least the same) sense of belonging in the congregation.

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Over 95% of respondents agreed the congregation was nearly always, usually or often resourcing their spiritual journey well. There were similar levels of positive response to the preaching/teaching at church; to the mix of activities (music, prayer, participation etc.) in services; to how often they felt encouraged by church; and to how often they felt the presence of God was evident in services. Sixty percent of Catholics stated God's presence was nearly always evident in the service, as compared with 51% of Anglicans, 45% of Presbyterians and 38% of Baptists. The quality of preaching and effectiveness of the mix made a difference especially for Protestants.

Most parents were satisfied or very satisfied with what was provided for children and teenagers.

Around 90% of respondents believed that they had grown in their Christian faith in the last year. For Baptists, 51% spent time in private devotional activities (e.g. prayer, Bible reading) every day or most days, which was the highest among the denominations. The percentage of attenders who have private devotions rises markedly with age, especially among Baptists. Only half as many young Catholics, Anglican and Presbyterians have daily private devotions compared to their elders, and only about one-third as many young Baptists have private devotions as their elders.

Nearly 40% of Baptists read the Bible every day on their own, as compared to 27% of Anglican and Presbyterian attenders and 12% of Catholics. Bible reading is less frequent among young attenders.

Younger Anglicans and Presbyterians were more likely to have an evangelical view of the Bible, compared to their elders. Liberal theological views of the Bible peaked in the 75-84 year age group. Older Baptists on the other hand were more likely to take a literal reading of scripture. Ten percent of Presbyterians, 7% of Anglicans and 21% of Methodists identified themselves as having a liberal approach to faith. Thirty-five percent of Anglicans and 32% of Presbyterians self-identified as Evangelical; more commonly in the 35-64 year age groups. Thirty-seven percent of Anglicans and 42% of Presbyterians identified themselves as Traditional, mainly among retirees.

Between 23-40% of attenders are involved in outside welfare groups, depending on the denomination. About 5-8% of attenders were only involved in social action, justice or lobby groups, and 4-9% of attenders were involved in both types of groups.

Catholics were the most likely to say they felt at ease talking about their faith and looking for opportunities to share it (22%). Baptists and Wesleyan Methodists were next most-prepared, at 18%. A majority of attenders in every denomination (52 -60%) said they were at ease to talk about their faith if it came up. Around 30% of attenders had invited a friend or relative to church in the last year.

Catholics mostly are not involved in any congregational groups. Over half of Baptists, Open Brethren and Wesleyan Methodists were involved in small groups for prayer, discussion, Bible study, etc.; as were over a third of Anglican and Presbyterian attenders. In most Protestant congregations around 22% of attenders felt greatly encouraged to use their gifts; and 40% somewhat encouraged to use them. The rate was less for Catholics. Males and females, and all age groups, felt encouraged to a similar degree.

Older people tend to give more of their income to the church; Protestants tend to give more than Catholics; and those who identify as having a traditional or evangelical approach to their faith tend to give more.

Catholics, Anglicans, and Presbyterians indicated their leaders' main role was conducting worship and administering the sacraments. Baptist, Open Brethren and Wesleyan Methodists more commonly thought of their leader in the role of teaching people about the Christian faith, and for other denominations this was the second-top role. Baptists, Brethren and Wesleyan Methodists placed a high emphasis on the leader developing a vision and goals for the future.

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Introduction

The New Zealand Church Life Survey (CLSNZ) is an interdenominational survey that took place in 1996, 2001, 2007 and 2011. The first two were administered in collaboration with NCLS in Australia. The last two were run entirely in New Zealand, with the opportunity for data entry by churches, and immediate access to summary results and comparisons to one's own denomination. This report summarizes results from the 2007 and 2011 survey, and is written with the cooperation and permission of the CLSNZ organising committee, as a part of its research activities. However the comments are those of the author, and not necessarily those of other members of the committee.

Overview of Participation

The data in this report comes from 459 different church congregations, and a total of 26910 individual respondents. Of these, 292 congregations answered the 2011 survey, and 196 answered the 2007 survey. (In addition there were 29 congregations that participated twice but for simplicity only their 2011 results are reported here). Survey respondents were church attenders aged 15 or older, although a few (24) respondents aged 14 years are also included.

Participants, and how long have they been coming

Table 1 shows the majority of participants were attending Catholic, Anglican, Presbyterian and Baptist churches, and they will be the main focus of this report. There were 45 Union or Cooperating Church, which are joint congregations of Presbyterians, Anglicans and/or Methodists; and a few Methodist, Open Brethren or Wesleyan Methodist congregations. There was also one Congregational church, one Salvation Army corps, one Independent congregation, and a church school, whose results will not be reported here. The majority of Catholic congregations were from large multi-congregation parishes in Auckland. Other churches were scattered around New Zealand, and some congregations did not survey everyone in the congregation but just a representative sample.

About 1% of respondents in Protestant churches were visitors who did not have a regular home congregation, while 1-3% of Protestant respondents were visiting but did have a home congregation elsewhere. Visitor numbers are higher for Catholics but this probably reflects multi-congregation parishes. For most denominations 10-20% of the congregation had attended for less than two years, while around 30-45% of the respondents had attended the same congregation for more than 20 years. Baptists and Wesleyans had over 20% new attenders (<2 years) however a smaller number (19.5%) stayed with the Baptists over 20 years. It is sometimes commented that Kiwi Protestants (especially Evangelicals and Pentecostals) often switch congregations (irrespective of denomination) like shoppers in a "religious supermarket" (P. Lineham), and Baptists seem to be the most affected by this phenomenon among the churches listed here. The Wesleyan Methodist church was only inaugurated in 2000, but some respondents counted themselves as attending over 20 years because of their past service in the Methodist Church of NZ.

Table 2 shows which denomination, if any, the respondent had regularly attended before coming to this congregation. For around 10% of respondents this was their first congregation and they had never regularly attended any other. Less than 1% of respondents had regularly attended a service for any non-Christian religion; in other words the rate of conversion from other religions is minimal. Most (80% of) Catholics had previously attended another Catholic congregation, but about half of all Protestants had previously attended a different

denomination. For Anglicans, 51% had previously attended an Anglican church, with about 8% from a Presbyterian church and, interestingly, similar numbers from Baptist (6%) or Pentecostal (7.5%) churches. (Note these figures do not depend on how many Baptists etc. were in the sample). Forty-nine percent of Presbyterians previously attended a Presbyterian church. Only 36% of Baptist attenders were from a previous Baptist church, with 14% from a Pentecostal church and around 9% from Presbyterian or other churches: thus Baptists have a big 'front door' and a big 'back door'. (This is not a criticism but reflects the particular position of Baptist churches on the denominational spectrum.) Some 36 % of attenders at Union/Cooperating churches are from a Presbyterian background, while only a third of Wesleyan Methodists came directly from a congregation of the Methodist Church of New Zealand.

Table 1 Survey participants, visitors, and duration of attending this congregation

	Congre-gations	Partic-ipants	Percent of respondents (%)							
			Visitor Not Going Else-where	Visitor from Another Congreg-ation	< 1 Year	1-2 Years	3-5 Years	6-10 Years	11-20 Years	Over 20 Years
Catholic	69	7230	2	8	7	8	13	16	17	29
Anglican	78	2928	1	3	8	9	16	17	16	31
Presbyterian	130	7642	1	2	6	8	13	16	20	34
Baptist	115	6684	1	3	8	11	18	18	22	20
Union/ Cooperating	45	1671	1	1	5	5	10	14	18	45
Methodist	5	150	0	1	5	10	10	16	26	33
Open Brethren	3	181	1	2	4	11	18	12	16	38
Wesleyan Methodist	7	249	2	2	12	19	18	22	17	9

Table 2 Church or gathering previously attended

	No Prev-ious Church	Other Relig-ious Gath-ering	Cath-olic	Angl -ican	Presbyt-erian	Bapt-ist	Union/ Cooper-ating	Meth-odist	Wes-leyan Meth-odist	Open Breth-ren	Pente-costal	Oth-er
Catholic	11	0	**80**	2	1	1	0	1	0	0	1	2
Anglican	11	0	2	**51**	8	6	2	3	0	1	8	5
Presbyt-erian	11	0	1	6	**49**	8	3	4	1	2	6	7
Baptist	11	0	2	7	9	**36**	1	3	0	6	14	10
Union/Co operating	10	0	1	12	36	5	**8**	16	2	1	2	6
Methodis t	10	0	1	6	8	4	5	**51**	**4**	2	2	5
Wesleya n	9	2	1	6	5	5	2	**34**	**11**	1	7	17

Table 3 shows how often respondents attend the congregational services. For all denominations, older respondents are more likely to attend weekly than younger respondents. Catholics over the age of 40, or over 65, are more likely to attend more than once a week than younger Catholics, and attend much more frequently than Protestants in the same older age groups. Conversely for most Protestant denominations it is the younger ones (15-39 year olds) who are more likely to attend more than once a week.

Table 3 Frequency of attendance

		Frequency of Attendance (% of respondents)				
Age	Denomination	More than once a week	Every week	2 or 3 times a month	Once a month	Less often or first time
15-39 years	Catholic	8	65	12	3	6
	Anglican	8	58	20	4	5
	Presbyterian	12	60	14	3	5
	Baptist	14	67	12	2	3
	Union/Cooperating	4	55	16	4	10
	Methodist	13	56	31	0	0
	Open Brethren	5	68	15	3	5
	Wesleyan Methodist	32	56	6	1	3
40-64 years	Catholic	16	65	10	3	3
	Anglican	10	62	18	4	3
	Presbyterian	7	70	16	3	2
	Baptist	9	74	13	1	2
	Union/Cooperating	5	64	22	3	3
	Methodist	8	53	23	8	5
	Open Brethren	1	83	16	0	0
	Wesleyan Methodist	19	76	1	1	1
65 + years	Catholic	31	61	3	1	2
	Anglican	10	70	14	3	2
	Presbyterian	4	79	13	2	1
	Baptist	13	81	5	0	1
	Union/Cooperating	3	77	15	2	1
	Methodist	3	77	14	3	1
	Open Brethren	14	84	2	0	0
	Wesleyan Methodist	4	91	4	2	0

Age, sex and marital status, education and work

Figure 1 shows the age and sex structure for each denomination. Anglicans, Presbyterians, Union/Cooperating and Methodist attenders tend to be older, with the median age over 60 years old. All denominations and almost all agegroups have a female majority.

Figure 1 Age and sex of respondents

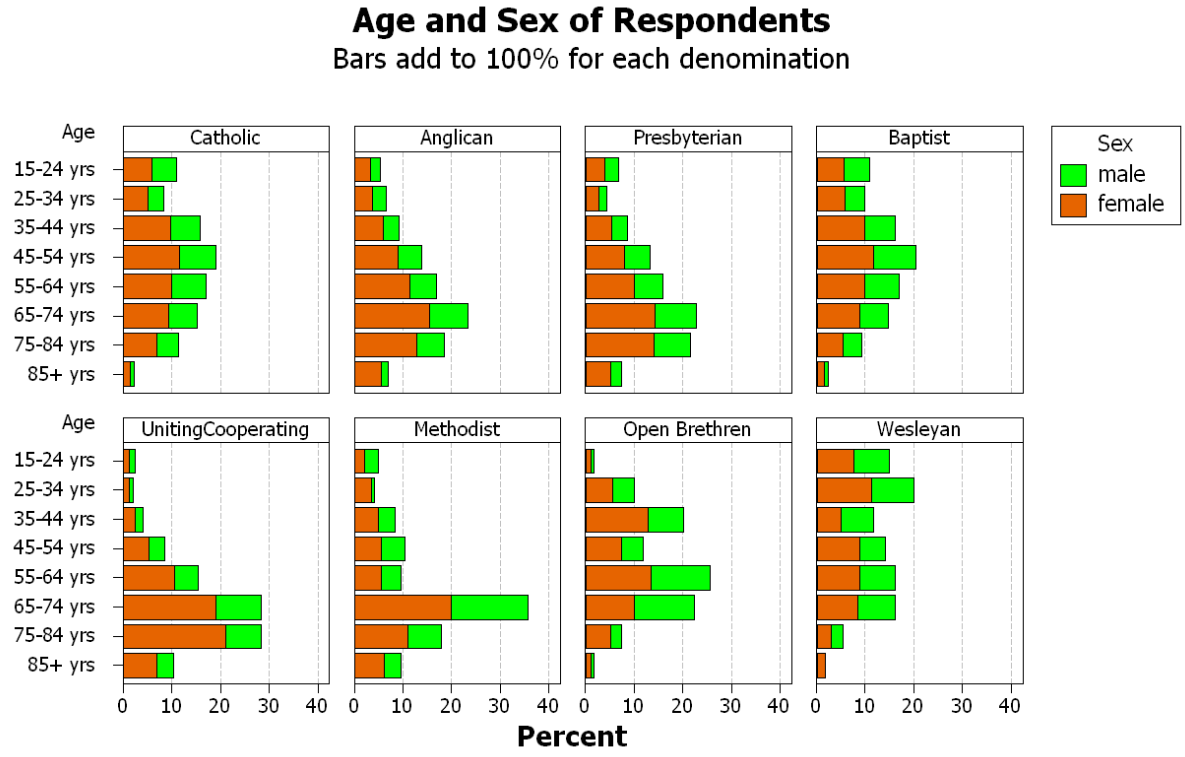


Table 4 Sex and age of attenders compared to census adherents

		Sex		Percent within agegroup, out of those aged over 15		
		% female	%male	15-30 years	30-64 years	65+ years
Catholic	CLSNZ	60	40	15	57	29
	2006Census			23	60	17
Anglican	CLSNZ	67	33	8	43	49
	2006Census			12	59	29
Presbyterian	CLSNZ	63	37	9	40	52
Presbyterian,Congreg.,Reformed	*2006Census*			13	59	28
Baptist	CLSNZ	58	42	15	59	26
	2006Census			23	59	18
Total People, Christian Religions	*2006Census*			18	59	23
Total People who answered the religion question	*2006Census*	51	49	25	59	16

Table 4 compares the ages of survey respondents to the 2006 Census data, which gave limited age information on religious adherents (and nothing about their sex). At the time of writing 2013 census data has not been cross-classified by age.) For all churches, their actual attenders tend to be older than Census suggests, especially for Anglican and Presbyterians. Of course part of the difference is because older attenders go more often (cf Table 3) so they are more likely to have been counted in the survey. Adjusting for the frequency of attendance (calculation not shown) shows that this only accounts for about 1% of the difference between the survey and the Census for 15-30 year olds, and 3-4% of the difference between survey and Census for those aged 65 or more. In short, whatever the Census says about the age of adherents, the age of actual attending adherents will be older. This is in addition to the fact the census tells us adherents to Christian religions tend to be older than the total NZ population.

Table 5 shows the marital status of attenders for the bigger denominations, by age group. Compared to the 2006 census, fewer Catholics and Presbyterians aged 15-39 years are married or partnered than in the general population. However the vast bulk of these are married, as opposed to 57% married vs 43% de facto or civil union in the Census. Putting it another way, between 50-57% of respondents in aged 15-39 years are currently single, as compared to between 16-23% of those 40-64 years old, and between 33-41% currently single in the over65s, depending on the denomination. Baptists had the highest rate of marriage among the four denominations reported here. In all age groups the percentage of respondents who were divorced and not remarried was about the same as in the general population. Among Protestant church attenders, about 8% of 40-64 year olds were remarried after divorce (4-6% for those aged over 65.) Catholic attenders were less likely to be remarried after divorce (as one might expect since they are excluded from the Mass). The higher rate of de facto/civil union among Catholics may be an unintended consequence of the prohibition on remarriage.

Table 6 shows that church attenders are much more likely to be highly educated than the general population. At the time of writing the 2013 census education breakdown by age is not available, but the 2006 census suggests church attenders are 2-3 times more likely to have a bachelor degree, and 2-8 times more likely to have a postgraduate qualification than the general population. Conversely the rate of having no qualifications is about half that of the general population. Even though the levels of education have changed in the community over the decades, the tendency for church attenders to be more educated has continued. Open Brethren have consistently had the highest proportion with postgraduate qualifications. With the exception of under-40 Methodists and over-65 Brethren (of which there are few) church attenders are less likely to be in full time work than the general population. Part of that will be due to more being students, and part due to more stay-at-home mums and those caring for home and relatives. Brethren, Baptist and Union/Cooperating church attenders were more likely to be engaged full-time in home duties.

Table 5 Marital status by age for Catholics, Anglicans, Presbyterians and Baptists

Age	%	Currently married or partnered						Currently single			
		Total married/ part-nered	De facto or civil union	Married	First Marr-iage	Re-married after Divorce	Remarri -ed after death of Spouse	Never Married and not partner-ed	Separ -ated	Divorc-ed and not Remarr-ied	Widow ed and not Re-married
15 - 39 years	Catholic	43	4	39	38	1	0	55	1	1	0
	Anglican	49	1	48	47	1	0	49	1	1	0
	Presbyterian	44	2	42	40	1	0	54	1	1	0
	Baptist	49	1	48	46	1	0	49	1	1	0
	Census 2006	48	21	27	0	0	0	49	2	1	0
40 - 64 years	Catholic	81	2	79	73	5	1	9	3	4	3
	Anglican	77	2	75	66	8	1	9	3	9	3
	Presbyterian	82	1	81	71	8	1	7	3	5	3
	Baptist	84	1	83	74	9	1	6	3	5	2
	Census 2006	76	12	64	0	0	0	10	4	8	2
65 years or more	Catholic	61	1	60	55	3	2	9	2	5	24
	Anglican	59	1	58	49	6	4	5	1	5	30
	Presbyterian	63	0	62	55	4	3	5	1	4	28
	Baptist	67	0	67	56	6	5	5	1	7	20
	Census 2006	60	4	56	0	0	0	6	2	6	26
Total	Catholic	65	2	63	59	3	1	21	2	4	8
	Anglican	64	1	63	55	6	2	14	2	5	16
	Presbyterian	66	1	66	58	5	2	13	1	4	15
	Baptist	70	1	69	62	6	2	18	2	5	6
	Census 2006	61	15	47	0	0	0	26	3	5	5
	Census 2013	63	16	47	0	0	0	25	3	5	5

Table 6 Education and full-time work or home duties by age group and denomination

		No Qualif-ication	School Cert./ NCEA1	UE/6FC/Burs/ NCEA2or3/ Overseas Schoool Qual	Certifi-cate or Diploma Level 4-6	Bachelor Degree	Post-graduate	Full time work	Full time home duties/ child care
<40 years	Catholic	12	12	23	12	29	13	43	7
	Anglican	9	6	19	12	31	22	43	8
	Presbyterian	10	10	25	13	27	16	35	8
	Baptist	9	9	23	15	28	16	40	10
	Union/ Cooperating	15	12	30	15	21	8	27	17
	Methodist	0	6	13	13	38	31	73	7
	Open Brethren	3	0	11	25	25	36	41	29
	Wesleyan Methodist	11	9	14	22	30	15	39	10
	Census2006	23	14	28	18	12	5	49	
40 - 64 years	Catholic	16	10	10	14	30	21	56	8
	Anglican	10	10	13	20	23	24	44	6
	Presbyterian	12	9	12	22	21	24	46	8
	Baptist	12	9	12	26	22	20	47	9
	Union/ Cooperating	17	13	11	23	18	19	40	8
	Methodist	8	11	16	19	29	18	46	3
	Open Brethren	13	5	8	20	26	28	55	2
	Wesleyan Methodist	13	9	5	24	28	22	48	8
	Census2006	26	14	20	24	11	6	62	
65 years or more	Catholic	37	17	13	12	10	11	8	2
	Anglican	32	16	12	16	13	11	4	3
	Presbyterian	35	15	11	16	11	12	4	2
	Baptist	40	15	11	17	9	9	6	1
	Union/ Cooperating	38	16	13	16	10	8	4	1
	Methodist	28	14	13	21	15	10	3	1
	Open Brethren	18	11	6	33	13	20	11	0
	Wesleyan Methodist	22	11	20	28	9	9	7	5
	Census2006	44	11	18	19	5	2	8	

Attitudes to church

Table 7 shows the percentage of attenders that, forced to pick no more than three aspects of church they most highly value, choose the particular aspect mentioned. Catholics most highly valued the Eucharist, followed by worship music and singing, with less interest in sermons or Bible teaching. For Baptists, Brethren and Wesleyan Methodists, sermons or Bible teaching was most valued, while the other Protestant denominations placed highest value on worship music and singing, but still placed more on sermons than Catholics. Almost equally among the denominations, around 20% of all respondents chose a community care/social justice emphasis as one of their most highly valued aspects (Wesleyan Methodists were an lower exception). More Protestants than Catholics chose "Practical care for one another in times of need". Catholics and Methodists placed more value on "Openness to social diversity".

Figure 2 shows the same data split by age group for the bigger denominations. Overall, attitudes are quite similar across age groups within the same church. However there is a strong trend for older respondents to place more value on the Eucharist /Communion and practical care for one another. Younger (15-30 year old) respondents had more interest in sermons/Bible teaching, community care/social justice, openness to social diversity and ministry to children and youth. The younger Baptists and Presbyterians saw church as a way of meeting people and doing social activities.

Table 7 Aspect of church most highly valued by respondent (up to three choices)

Percent (%)	Cath-olic	Angli-can	Presby-terian	Bap-tist	Union/ Coop-erating	Meth-odist	Open Breth-ren	Wesleyan Methodist
Community care /social justice emphasis	24	20	23	21	22	23	22	11
Outreach to non-attenders	7	10	10	15	7	3	16	20
Worship music and singing	44	52	58	47	62	72	51	45
Communion / Eucharist / Lord's supper	61	49	27	17	40	39	24	16
Social activities and meeting people	14	19	20	19	24	17	23	17
Sermons, preaching or Bible teaching	22	43	42	50	31	37	53	68
Bible study /discussion or prayer groups	5	19	17	26	14	14	31	17
Ministry to children and youth	8	10	16	20	8	6	14	35
Prayer for one another	6	13	9	12	9	10	6	11
Practical care for one another	12	19	23	22	26	23	20	21
Openness to social diversity	13	8	8	7	7	11	10	9
Presence of church school or pre-school	9	1	2	2	2	2	2	1

Figure 2 Most valued aspect of church

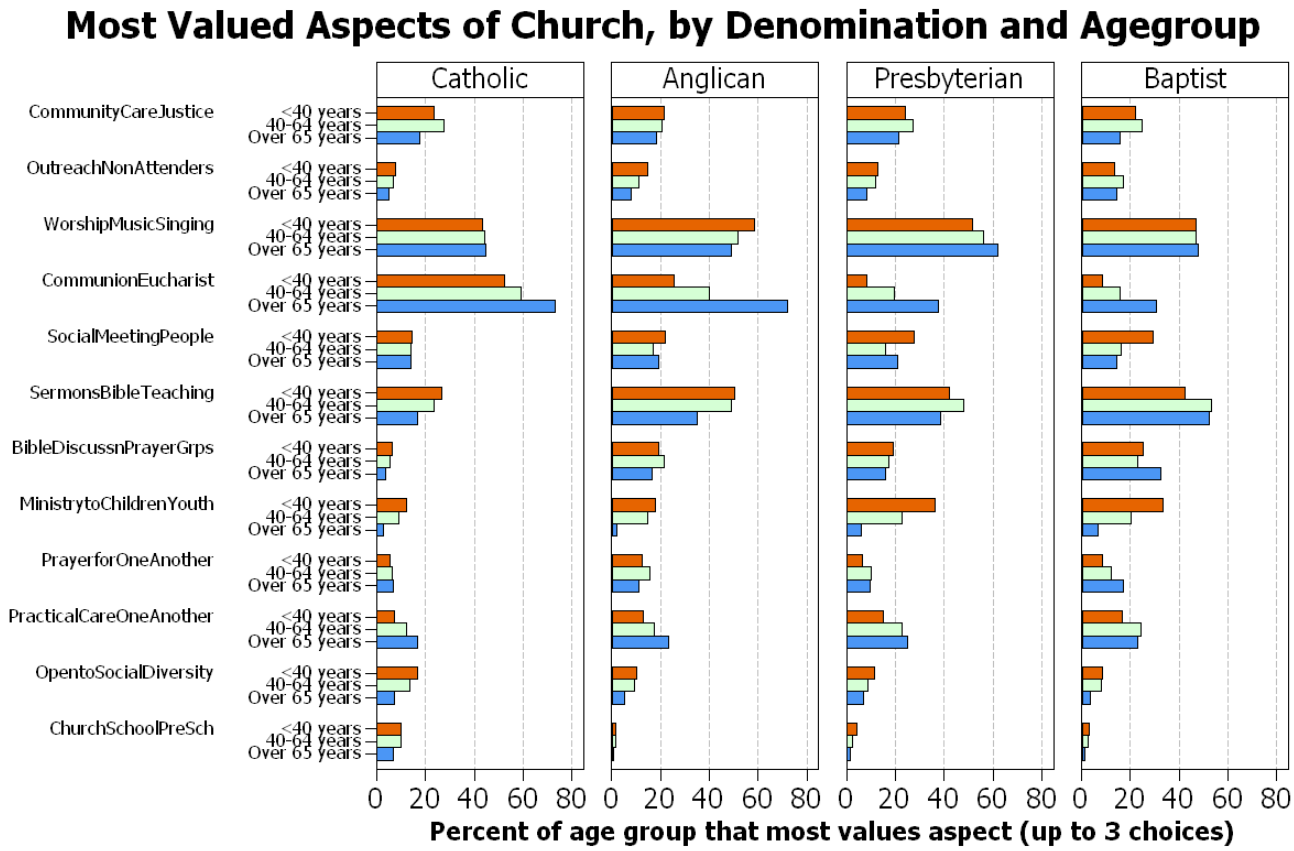


Table 8 Most helpful style of music to you in congregational worship (up to two choices)

	Catholic	Anglican	Presbyt-erian	Baptist	Union / Cooper-ating	Methodist	Open Brethren	Wesleyan Methodist
Traditional hymns	58	53	64	41	77	77	43	52
Sung responsorial Psalms	14	5	2	2	2	4	2	2
Contemporary hymns	22	32	33	29	38	43	45	25
Contemporary songs	12	41	34	50	20	17	60	50
Christian rock	7	10	8	15	3	4	11	15
Music from variety of cultures	18	5	7	7	7	8	2	6
Contemplative chants	3	4	2	2	2	3	1	0
Gospel music	17	12	13	21	14	13	15	21
Classical music or chorals	7	7	7	3	6	4	2	4
No music or songs	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	0
Don't know	4	3	2	3	1	1	1	4

Respondents were asked: *"While you may value many different styles of music, which of the following do you feel would be most helpful to you in congregational worship (mark up to TWO)."* Table 8 shows that in most denominations a strong majority of respondents indicated that traditional hymns were most helpful, though in Baptist and Open Brethren the first preference was for contemporary songs. Catholics and Methodists preferred contemporary hymns to contemporary songs, but for most denominations songs were preferred to contemporary hymns. Between 12-21% of respondents liked gospel music, while Catholics were about three times more interested in music/songs from a variety of cultures than Protestants were.

Figure 3 shows similar information split by age, for the bigger denominations. Protestants had a very clear generational divide, with more young respondents preferring contemporary songs. Catholic tastes did not vary quite so much with age.

Figure 3 Most helpful style of music, by age group

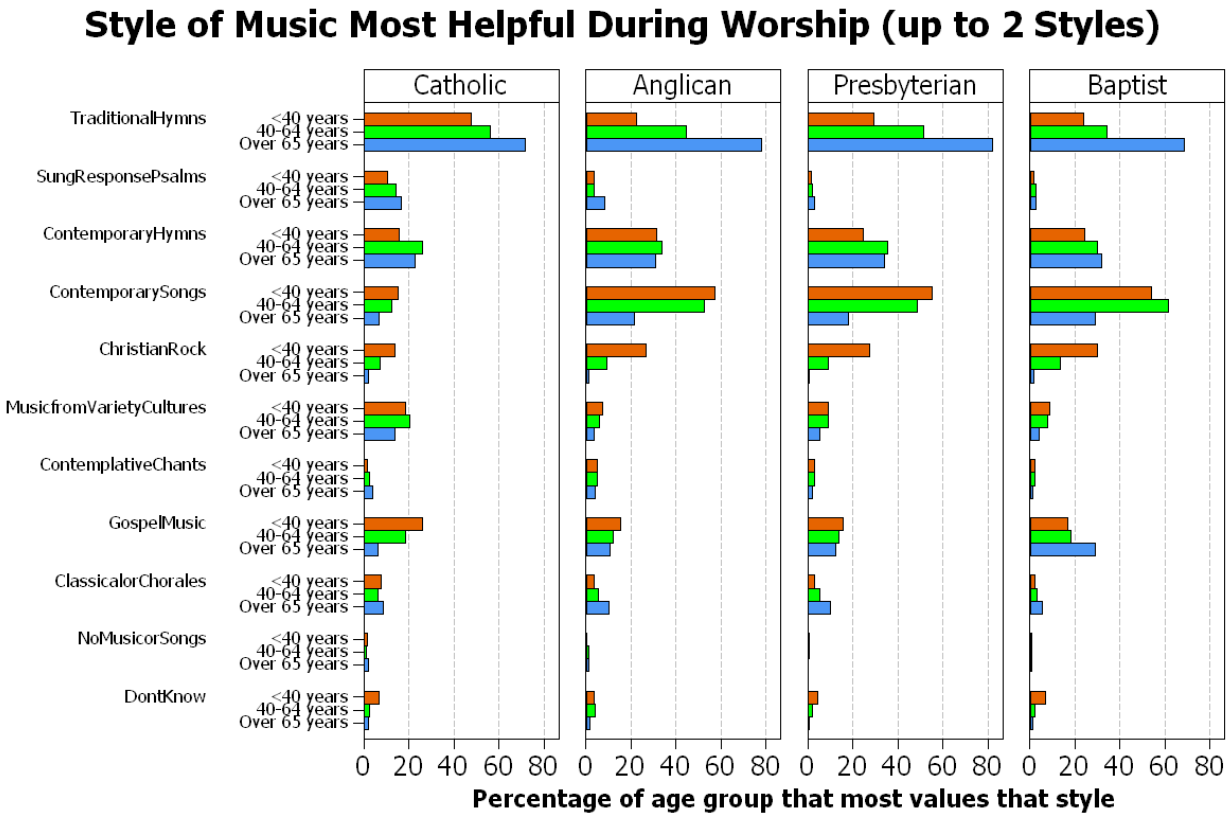


Table 9 looks at the question "Do you have a strong sense of belonging to this congregation/parish?" Around 50% of respondents said they had a strong and growing sense of belonging, while most of the remainder said their sense of belonging was strong and about the same as last year. Around 8% said their sense of belonging was not as strong as in the past – an indication they might be on the way out the congregational back door. This percentage was higher for Baptists and Open Brethren, which Table 2 showed had a smaller proportion of respondents who had previously attended a church from the same denomination.

Table 9 Do you have a strong sense of belonging to this congregation/parish?

%	Belonging strong & growing	Belonging strong & same	Belonging not as strong	No, but growing belonging	No sense of belonging	Not Applicable
Catholic	51	24	8	8	3	5
Anglican	53	28	8	7	2	2
Presbyterian	50	33	9	6	1	2
Baptist	50	26	11	8	3	2
Union/Cooperating	52	34	8	4	1	1
Methodist	47	36	9	3	3	2
Open Brethren	39	37	15	5	2	1
Wesleyan Methodist	64	24	7	2	0	2

Table10 looks at whether the church is resourcing your spiritual journey well. Over 95% of respondents agreed "nearly always", "usually" or "often", which is a very high level of satisfaction.

Table 10. Do you agree or disagree: 'This church/ parish is resourcing my spiritual journey well'?

%	Nearly Always	Usually	Often	Sometimes	Almost Never
Catholic	32	51	15	2	1
Anglican	26	58	13	2	1
Presbyterian	26	57	14	2	0
Baptist	27	53	16	4	0
Union/Cooperating	25	60	13	2	0
Methodist	28	56	13	1	3
Open Brethren	19	58	18	4	1
Wesleyan Methodist	37	53	9	0	0

Table 11 concerns "how often do you feel encouraged after a service?" Anglicans and Wesleyan Methodists had a higher rate of nearly always feeling encouraged. In this survey Open Brethren had a lower rate of feeling encouraged, but it should be reiterated that this is based on a small sample and may not be representative.

Table 11. How often do you feel encouraged after a worship service?

%	Nearly Always	Usually	Often	Sometimes	Almost Never
Catholic	37	39	16	7	2
Anglican	43	38	13	4	1
Presbyterian	38	41	15	5	1
Baptist	37	37	18	6	2
Union/Cooperating	36	43	14	6	1
Methodist	33	41	18	6	2
Open Brethren	26	44	18	11	1
Wesleyan Methodist	41	43	12	3	1

Table 12 shows that for every denomination more than 90% of attenders felt the mix of activities was nearly always, usually or often effective. Indeed over half of Wesleyan Methodists, Anglicans, Presbyterians and Union/Cooperating Church attenders felt the mix of activities in the church service was nearly always effective. Figure 4, for the larger denominations, shows that older attenders were more likely to feel that the service had an effective mix, compared to the younger attenders.

Table 12 How often do our church services contain an effective mix of music, prayer, participation, etc.?

%	Nearly Always	Usually	Often	Sometimes	Almost Never
Catholic	37	41	14	7	1
Anglican	50	39	8	3	0
Presbyterian	50	38	8	3	0
Baptist	40	43	12	4	1
Union/Cooperating	52	38	7	2	0
Methodist	36	45	13	4	1
Open Brethren	40	42	15	3	0
Wesleyan Methodist	60	34	4	2	0

Figure 4. Relationship between effective mix and age

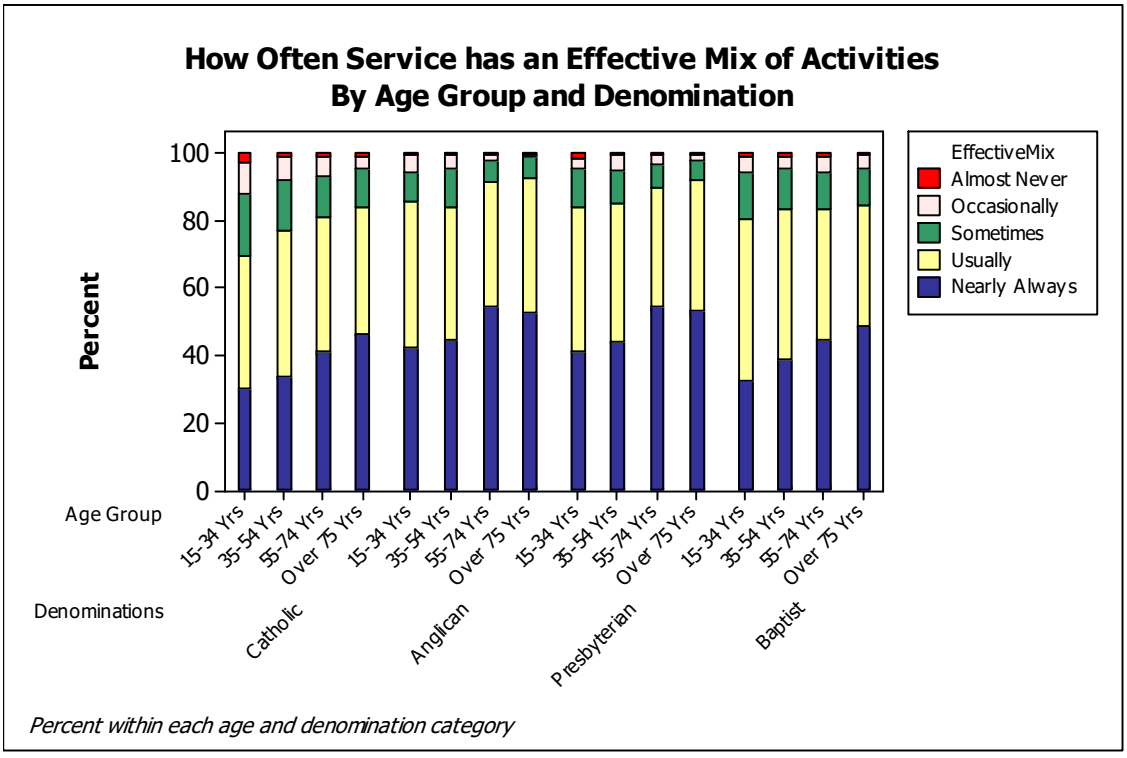


Table 13 shows that over 90% of attenders felt the preaching/teaching at church was nearly always, usually or often helpful for everyday life. Satisfaction with preaching was slightly less among Catholics than most Protestants, with only 36% of Catholics saying the preaching was nearly always helpful.

Table 13 How often is the preaching / teaching helpful for everyday life?

%	Nearly Always	Usually	Often	Sometimes	Almost Never
Catholic	36	38	18	7	2
Anglican	41	40	14	4	1
Presbyterian	43	39	13	4	1
Baptist	44	38	13	4	1
Union/Cooperating	40	41	14	4	1
Methodist	37	42	16	3	2
Open Brethren	30	48	17	4	0
Wesleyan Methodist	52	39	8	1	0

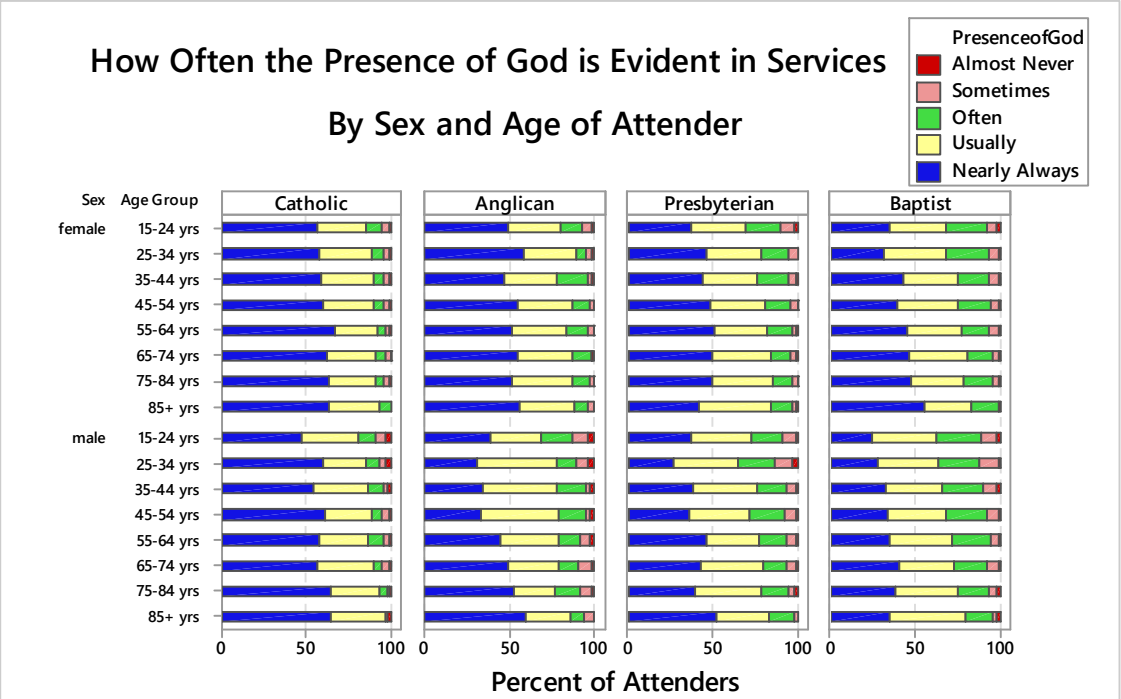
Table 14 shows that over 90% of attenders felt the presence of God was nearly always, usually or often evident in the church services. The most positive response was among Catholics, with 60% saying the God's presence was nearly always evident, as contrasted with 38% of Baptists and 29% of Open Brethren. There may be denominational differences in how people interpret the phrase "the presence of God evident", but nevertheless this is an interesting finding.

Table 14 How often is the presence of God evident in our services?

Percent (%)	Nearly Always	Usually	Often	Sometimes	Almost Never
Catholic	60	29	7	4	1
Anglican	51	33	12	3	1
Presbyterian	45	35	15	5	1
Baptist	38	35	20	6	1
Union/Cooperating	47	36	13	4	1
Methodist	47	32	14	4	2
Open Brethren	29	44	18	9	1
Wesleyan Methodist	54	32	12	0	1

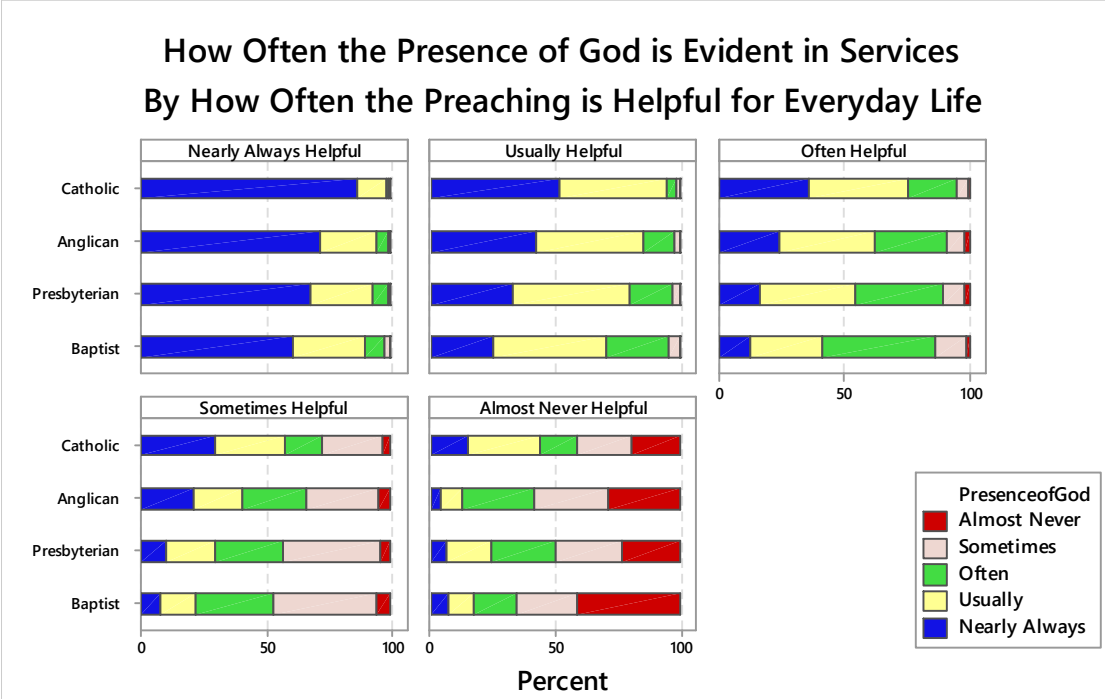
Figure 5 shows that females are more likely than males to be aware of the presence of God in the services. Specifically: for Catholics 61% of females and 57% of males felt the presence of God was nearly always evident; for Anglicans this was 54% of females and 44% of males; for Presbyterians 47% of females and 41% of males; and for Baptists 42% of females and 33% of males. Looking at age: for female Catholics, Anglicans and Presbyterians there is very little difference in awareness of God in the services between the various age groups. However for males, and for female Baptists, there is a trend for the older attenders to be more aware of the presence of God in services than for the younger attenders. *What does this say about the need to help young men connect to God in the Church services?*

Figure 5 Perception that the Presence of God is evident, by sex and age of attender



Percent within Sex and Age Group.

Figure 6 Perception that the Presence of God is evident, by how often the preaching is helpful for everyday life

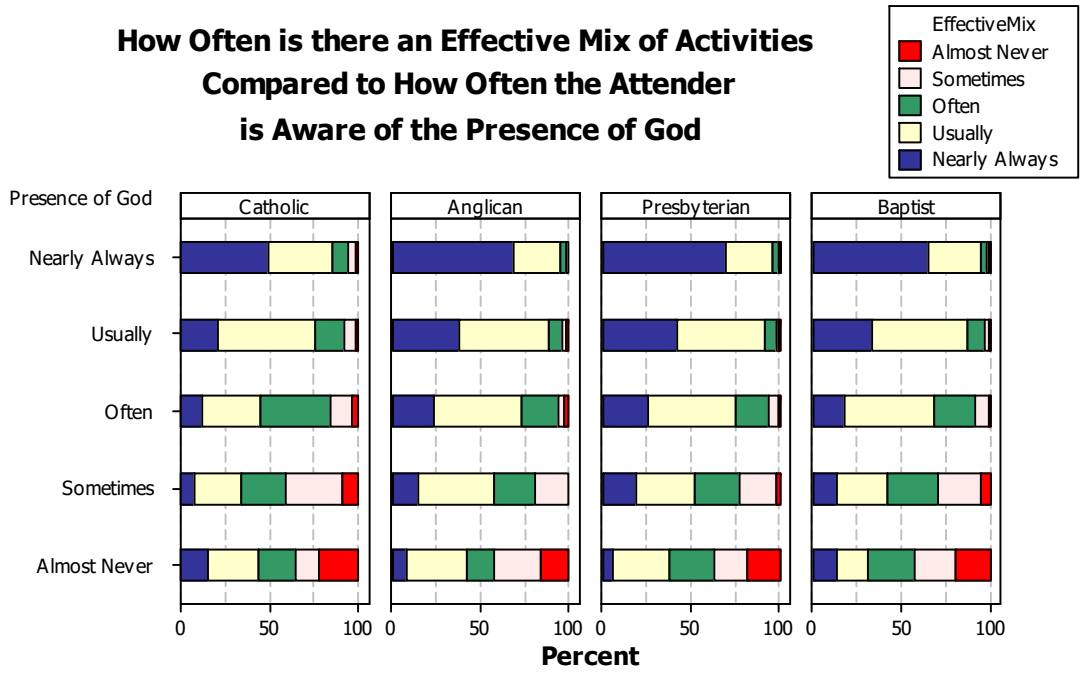


Percent within Denomination by Degree of Helpfulness of Preaching

Figure 6 shows an extremely strong relationship between how often the preaching is helpful (the five different panels within the graph) and how often the attender feels the presence of God is evident. For example, if the preaching is nearly always helpful, then over 80% of Catholic attenders felt the presence of God was also nearly always evident in the services. The less often the preaching was helpful, the less often the attender felt the presence of God was evident in the services. However irrespective of how good the preaching was, Catholic attenders were always more likely to say the presence of God was evident; followed by Anglicans, Presbyterians and Baptists in that order. It is interesting to speculate why.

An almost identical graph to Figure 6 is found for the presence of God versus how often there is an effective mix in the service (of prayer, music, preaching etc.) (graph omitted). So it is not the impact of preaching alone that is important in terms of the presence of God. There is a chicken-and-egg question here: does the effective mix in the service help make people aware of the presence of God, or does a sense of the presence of God make the attenders feel that the mix was effective? Figure 7 indicates that for Catholics, out of those who felt the presence of God was nearly always evident, only 50% felt the mix within the services was nearly always effective. For Protestants on the "nearly always" line, a larger proportion felt that the mix was effective (65-70% nearly always; 90-95% at least "usually". A similar pattern is seen for those with less-frequent awareness of the presence of God in church. The take-home message seems to be that the mix of activities (worship, prayer, preaching etc.) is more important in helping Protestants be aware of the presence of God, but is somewhat less important for Catholics.

Figure 7 How often the services are perceived to have an effective mix, by how often the presence of God is evident



Percent according the frequency of being aware of the Presence of God.

Children Youth and Young Adults

Table 15 shows how often respondents are satisfied with what is available for children, youth and young adults. Note that only 55% of Catholics answered the question about Children, and similarly for the other age categories and denominations. In most denominations nearly 90% of those with children were satisfied or very satisfied with what was available for children. (Methodists were an exception, but this is based on three small churches where there may not have been enough children for an effective Sunday school). Satisfaction with what was available for youth was lower (around 80%, although Baptists and Wesleyan Methodists rated better). In most denominations satisfaction was higher for what was available for young adults, which might indicate an opinion among attenders that young adults didn't need anything special. However Baptists and Wesleyans rated less satisfaction for young adults than for youth.

Table 15. Satisfaction with what is available for children, youth and young adults

		Responses about that agegroup (%)	Percent out of the respondents			
			Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dis-satisfied	Very Dissatisfied
Catholic	Children	55	34	55	9	2
	Youth	62	24	56	16	4
	Young adults	51	49	38	10	2
Anglican	Children	51	34	55	9	1
	Youth	60	25	51	20	5
	Young adults	48	52	32	15	2
Presbyterian	Children	64	43	48	7	2
	Youth	74	33	49	15	3
	Young adults	56	41	40	16	3
Baptist	Children	67	50	44	4	1
	Youth	73	39	50	10	2
	Young adults	56	40	42	15	3
Union/Cooperating	Children	50	32	55	10	3
	Youth	66	22	49	24	5
	Young adults	50	51	32	14	2
Methodist	Children	49	15	41	38	7
	Youth	51	7	43	45	6
	Young adults	56	48	28	18	6
Open Brethren	Children	53	43	53	3	1
	Youth	78	20	52	23	5
	Young adults	53	51	33	15	1
Wesleyan Methodist	Children	68	47	49	4	0
	Youth	80	42	44	12	2
	Young adults	64	35	49	14	3

Table 16 shows that for almost every denomination (with the exception of Methodists which are a small sample) over 80% of the respondents' children under 12 attend church with the respondents; including over 90% of Baptist, Brethren and Wesleyan Methodist families. For Presbyterian attenders, for example, 9% of their children under 12 attend a different congregation and 6% do not attend any other congregation; similarly for the other denominations.

For respondents with children aged 12 to 18 years, between 62% and 84% of these children attend church with the respondent (depending on the denomination). For Baptists, for example, 72% of their youth attend church with the respondent, 14% attend a different congregation and 13% do not attend church anywhere. The percentages shown for Methodists, Open Brethren and Wesleyan Methodists are unreliable due to the small sample.

Table 16 Percentage of respondent's children who attend church

Children Under 12s	Attend Church Here	Attend Another Congregation	Don't Attend Another Congregation	Unsure If Attend anywhere
Catholic	85	9	5	1
Anglican	88	5	6	1
Presbyterian	84	9	6	1
Baptist	91	6	3	1
Union/Cooperating	81	12	5	2
Methodist	77	0	23	0
Open Brethren	98	0	2	0
Wesleyan Methodist	96	0	4	0
Children 12 to 18 years				
Catholic	75	13	7	4
Anglican	63	17	14	4
Presbyterian	73	13	12	1
Baptist	72	14	13	1
Union/Cooperating	62	19	14	2
Methodist	67	20	13	0
Open Brethren	84	16	0	0
Wesleyan Methodist	80	7	14	0

You and your faith

Table 17 shows that around 85-95% of respondents believed that they had grown in their Christlan faith in the last year (percentages varying by denomination). For about half of these (42 - 60%) they described it as 'some growth' and the rest (30-48%) as 'much growth'. In most cases the 'much growth' was mainly through the congregation, but for a few (4-9%) it was through other groups or (8-16%) through their own private activities.

Table 17. In the last year, do you believe you have grown in your Christian faith?

	Percent among respondents				
Denomination	No real growth	Some growth	Much growth, mainly through: Congregation	Other groups	Private activity
Catholic	13	42	21	9	15
Anglican	11	50	21	7	12
Presbyterian	12	53	21	6	9
Baptist	9	51	20	7	12
Union/Cooperating	13	53	22	5	8
Methodist	13	53	14	4	16
Open Brethren	10	60	14	5	11
Wesleyan Methodist	5	48	33	7	8

Figure 8 shows that for 'much growth mainly through this congregation' there no relationship with age (lowest segments of the bars). However the young are slightly more likely to indicate much growth through other groups or private activity.

Figure 8. How much growth in your Christian faith, by age and denomination

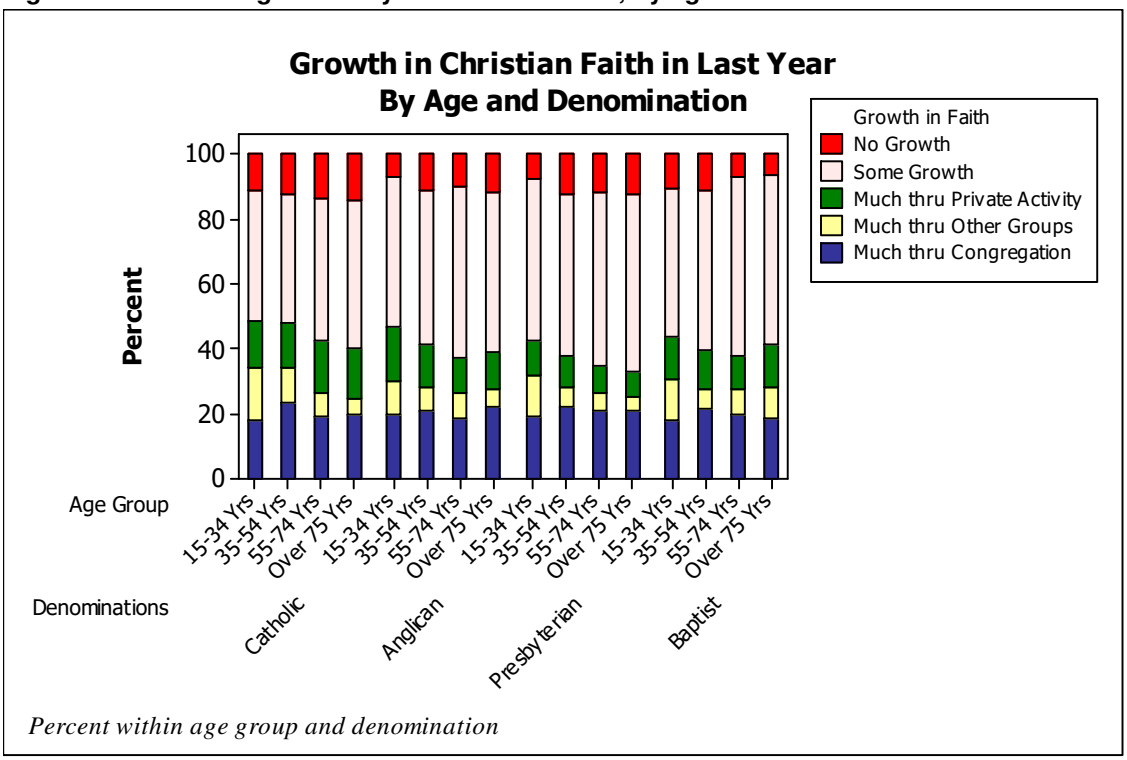
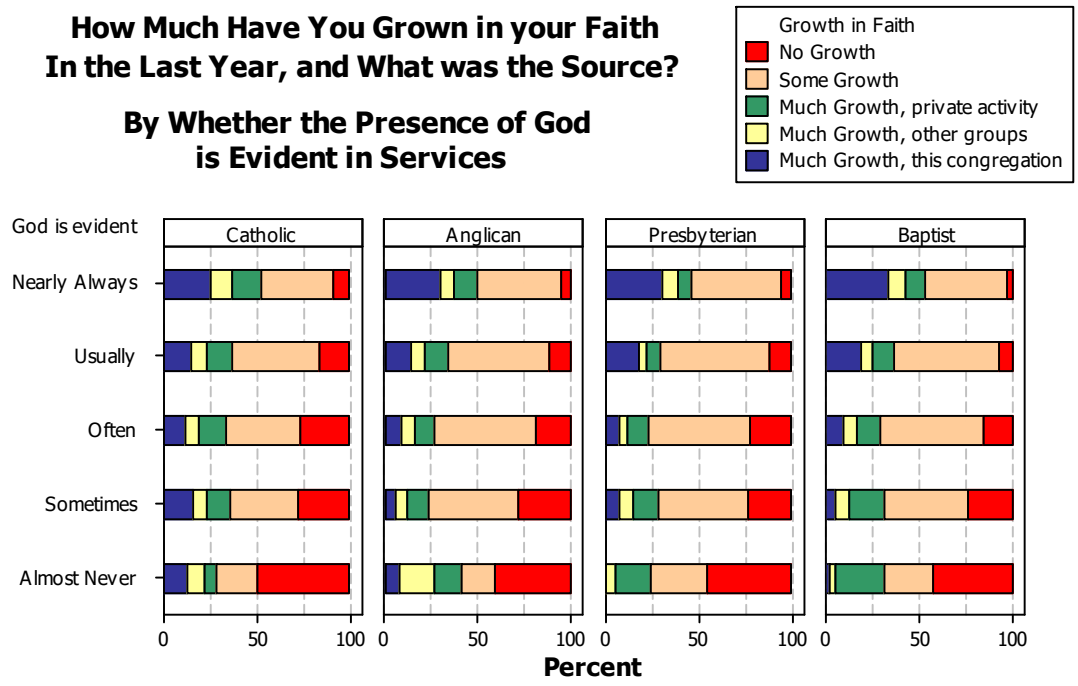


Figure 9 shows that those who stated they were nearly always aware of the presence of God in the services were more likely to have grown in their Christian faith in the last year (especially through the congregation), but those with no awareness of God's presence mostly had no growth in their faith.

Figure 9 Amount and means of growth in the attender's faith, by how often they are aware of the presence of God in the services



Percent among attenders grouped by their perception of the presence of God

Private Devotional Activities

Table 18 explores the private spiritual life of attenders. Private devotional activities could be a short time of prayer, intentionally listening to Christian music, reading spiritual books, etc. For Baptists, 51% spent time in private devotions every day or most days, which was the highest among the denominations, and 26% responded that they had private devotions a few times per week. Between 4-7% had private devotions weekly, while about one-fifth of respondents (12-26%) had occasional private devotions. Depending on the denomination, around one-tenth of church attenders hardly ever or never had private devotions (4-12%). The frequency of private devotions may be lower for Catholics because of participating in group or congregational activities.

Table 18. How often do you spend time in private devotional activities (e.g. prayer, meditation, reading the Bible alone)?

	Every day or Most Days	A Few Times per Week	Once a Week	Occasionally	Hardly Ever	Never
Catholic	42	19	6	21	9	3
Anglican	45	24	5	18	6	2
Presbyterian	41	24	5	21	8	2
Baptist	51	26	4	14	5	1
Union/Cooperating	37	22	5	26	8	3
Methodist	39	26	4	24	7	0
Open Brethren	42	28	7	19	4	1
Wesleyan Methodist	42	34	7	12	3	1

Figure 10. How often do you spend time in private devotional activities, by age

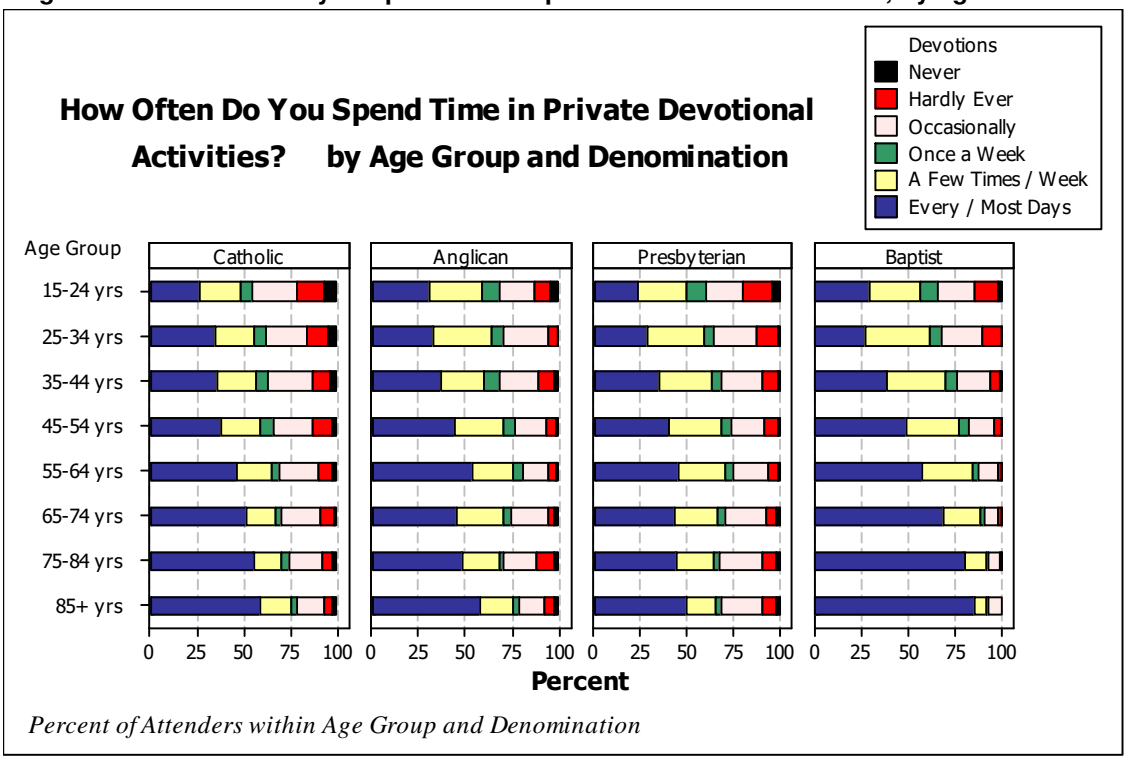


Figure 10 shows that the percentage of attenders who have private devotions declines markedly with age. Around 25% of young Catholics have private devotions every/most days, as compared to over 50% of retirees. The decline in private devotions is similar for Anglicans and Presbyterians, while for Baptists the decline in devotions is even larger, with younger Baptists having nearly one-third the chance of having daily devotions as their elders. Now it is well-known that some older people become more active in their faith when they retire and have more time, and also as they see mortality approaching. However older Baptists have a much higher rate of private devotions than older members of other churches whereas now in the youngest age groups there is little difference between Baptists and other Protestants in terms of daily devotions. This raises the question: is there a generational change in the spiritual life of church attenders? What might be the effects of such a generational change in private piety? For Anglicans and Presbyterians there is a peak of private devotions in the baby-boomer 55-64 year age.

Table 19 looks at Bible reading. Nearly 40% of Baptists read the Bible every day on their own, as compared to 27% of Anglican and Presbyterian attenders and 12% of Catholics. A total of 72% of Catholic church attenders look at the Bible only occasionally, hardly ever, or never, as compared to 29% for Baptists.

Table 19. How often do you read the Bible on your own?

	Every day or Most Days	A Few Times per Week	Once a Week	Occasionally	Hardly Ever	Never
Catholic	12	11	5	29	25	18
Anglican	27	20	7	28	13	5
Presbyterian	27	19	6	29	15	5
Baptist	39	25	6	20	8	1
Union/Cooperating	21	17	6	35	15	6
Methodist	23	19	6	34	13	5
Open Brethren	30	26	10	28	6	1
Wesleyan Methodist	33	30	7	22	7	1

Figure 11 shows the breakdown of Bible reading by age. In Catholics, Anglicans, and Presbyterians the peak Bible-reading age is in the baby-boomer age group somewhere between 45-64 years old; but for Baptists peak bible reading is among the elderly.

If someone has private devotions every day (or a few times a week) does that mean they read the Bible every day? Figure 12 separates attenders out according to how often they have private devotions, and then classifies them by how often they say they read the Bible. So the top line in Figure 12 are those who have devotions every/most days, and for Catholics about 25% of these include Bible-reading every or most days, while about 30% hardly ever or never include it in their private devotions. For Anglicans and Presbyterians, about 60-65% of those who have devotional activities every/most days read the Bible as part of that, and for Baptists it is over 70%. Another 20% (approximately) include Bible reading between once and a few times per week.

Among those who are less frequent in their private devotions, the chance that they will include the Bible declines even more rapidly.

Figure 11. How often do you read the Bible, by age

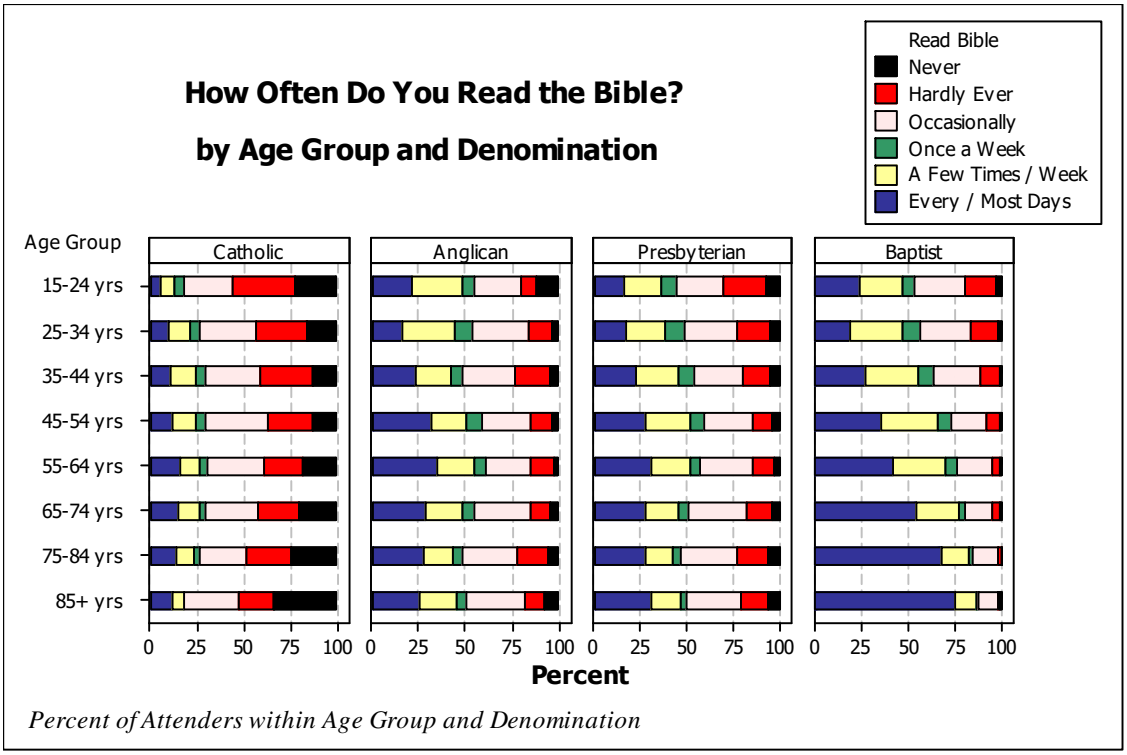
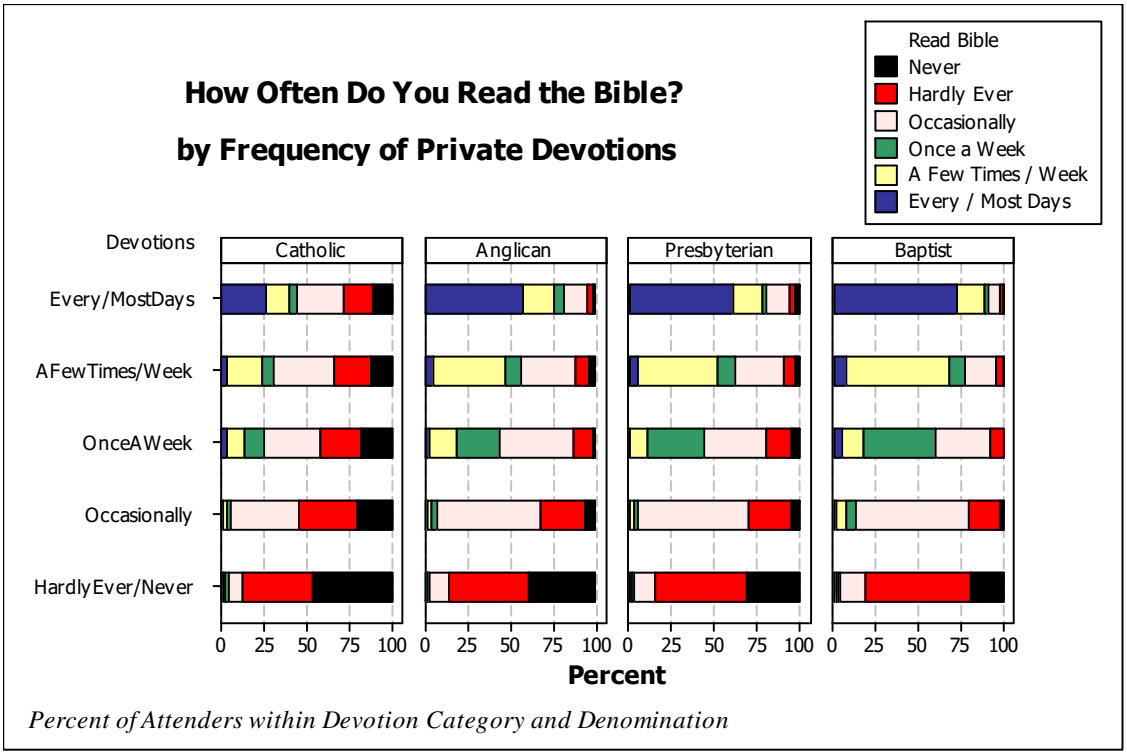


Figure 12. Reading the Bible, by how often the attender has private devotional activities



Theological approach

Table 20 examines what the church attenders think about the Bible. Around 20% of Catholics, Anglicans and Presbyterians believe the Bible should be treated as the Word of God and read as literally true word for word; among Baptists this rises to 36%. This interpretation is generally favoured by fundamentalists.

The second statement "The Bible is the Word of God to be interpreted in the light of its historical and cultural context" is sometimes described as the Evangelical view. Twenty-one percent of Catholics, 41% of Anglicans, 40% of Presbyterians and 47% of Baptists chose this view. Adding in those taking a literal perspective, this means that nearly 60% of Anglican and Presbyterian respondents had a literal or evangelical view of the Bible. (The fact that only a minority of Anglican churches chose to participate, and not all Presbyterian churches, means that this majority might not be so large in a comprehensive survey). Open Brethren and Wesleyan Methodists, not surprisingly, had the highest rates of Evangelical views. Attenders at Union/Cooperating churches (49%) and Methodists (52% based on a small sample) had a lower rate of literal or Evangelical views.

The third statement "The Bible is the Word of God to be interpreted in the light of its historical context and the church's teaching" is often described as the Catholic view, but surprisingly only 48% of Catholics chose this one unprompted. This view was also chosen by about one third of Anglican, Union/Cooperating, and Methodist attenders: but chosen less by Presbyterians.

All the preceding statement start with "the Bible is the word of God". The fourth, fifth and sixth statements "The Bible is not the word of God but contains God's word to us", "The Bible is not the word of God, but is a valuable book", "The Bible is an ancient book with little value today" indicate increasing levels of disbelief in the Biblical text. Six percent of Catholics, 7% of Anglicans and 9% of Presbyterians took one of these views, which are often associated with liberal theology. The highest rate of liberal views on the Bible was in Union/Cooperating Churches (15%) and among Methodists (10%).

Table 20 Which statement comes closest to your view of the Bible?

	Cath-olic	Angl-ican	Presby-terian	Baptist	Union/ Cooper-ating	Meth-odist	Open Breth-ren	Wesley-an Methodist
The Bible is the Word of God to be taken literally word by word	21	18	21	36	16	10	20	35
The Bible is the Word of God to be interpreted in the light of its historical and cultural context	21	41	40	47	33	42	63	45
The Bible is the Word of God to be interpreted in the light of its historical context and the church's teaching	48	33	28	14	33	37	16	17
The Bible is not the word of God but contains God's word to us	5	6	7	2	11	9	1	2
The Bible is not the word of God, but is a valuable book	1	1	2	0	3	0	0	1
The Bible is an ancient book with little value today	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0
Don't know	4	1	2	1	2	1	1	1

Figure 13 Which statement about the Bible is closest to your view, Percent of age group

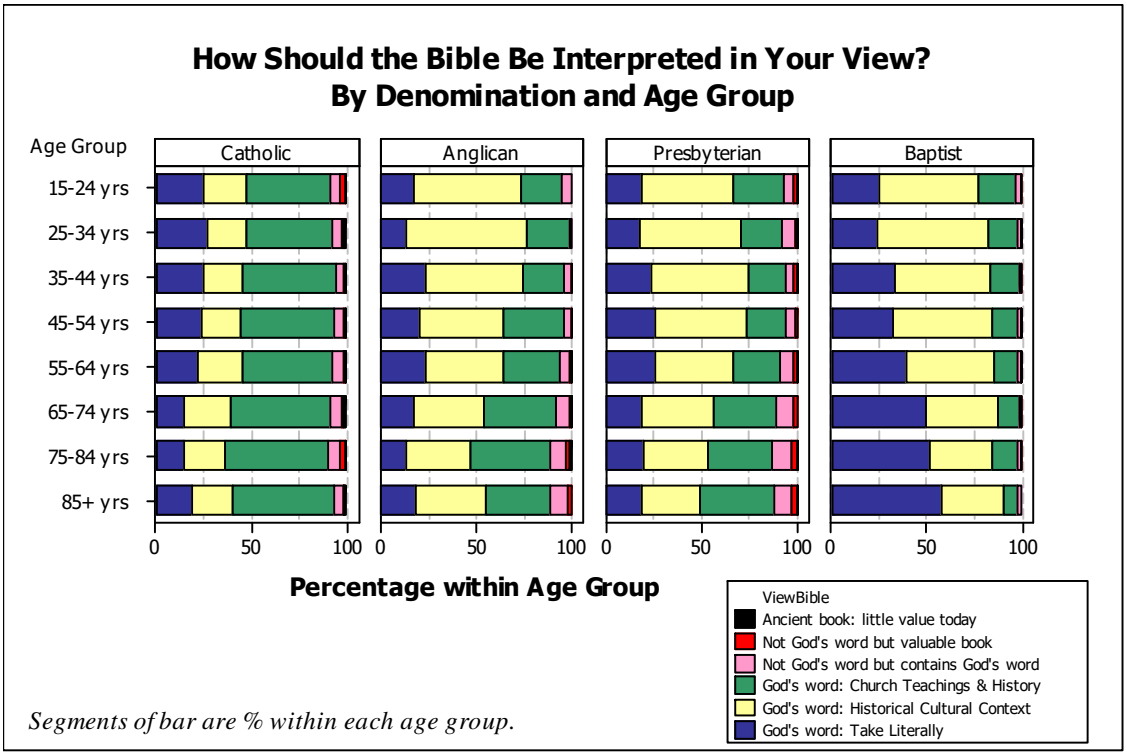


Figure 14 Which statement about the Bible is closest to your view, Percent of denomination

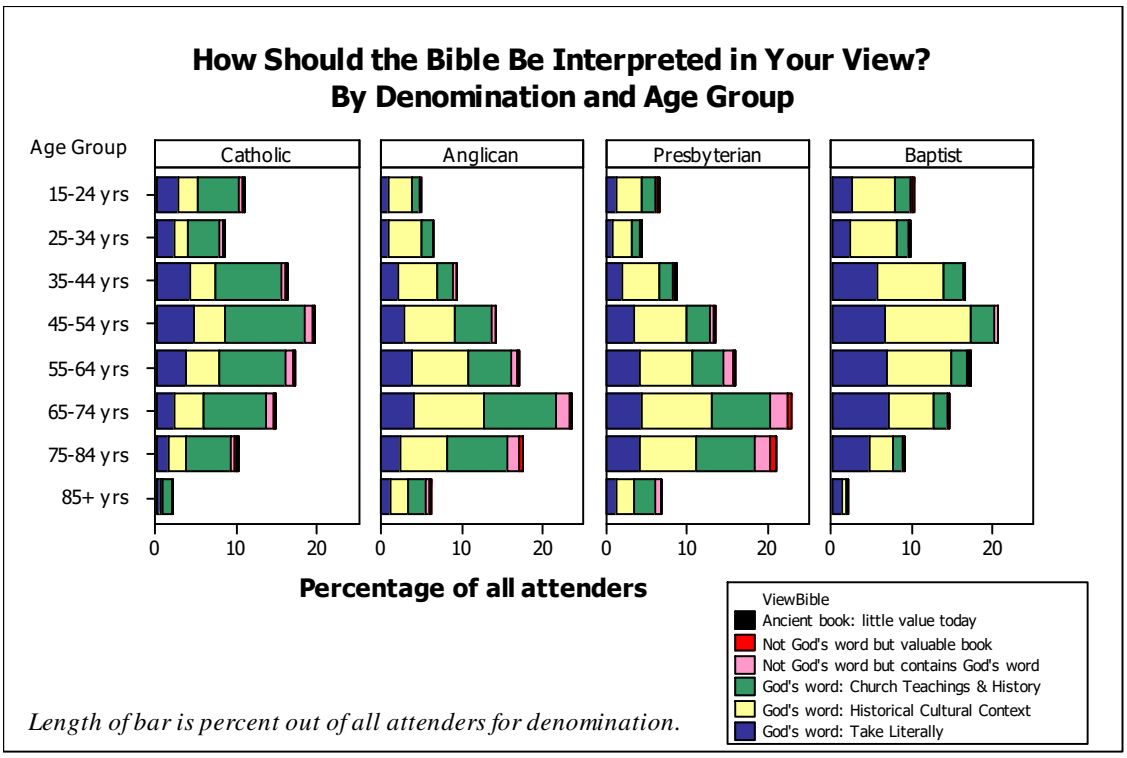


Figure 13 looks at how views about the Bible are changing as the generations change. The bars total 100% for each ten-year age group. For Catholics under the age of 65, they were 10-15% more likely to choose a literal view of the Bible, and correspondingly less likely to choose the more traditional view that the Bible should be interpreted in terms of historical context and the church's teachings. For Anglicans and Presbyterians, the literal view was most popular in the 35-64 age group (baby-boomers and generation X) while the proportion choosing the Evangelical "historical and cultural context" view grew from about 35% among the elderly to around 50% among the young. This was at largely the expense of the "historical context and church's teachings" option, and may point to a decline in Anglo-Catholic views within the Anglican church. The proportion of Anglicans and Presbyterians choosing a more liberal view of the Bible was never large, and reduces in size as one looks from older to younger. These facts together point to a rising evangelicalism within attenders of both churches, as time goes on. Among Baptists, the prominent feature is that older Baptists are more likely to choose the literal word by word option (favoured by fundamentalists) while younger Baptists are more likely to choose the more nuanced evangelical view that the Bible is God's word "to be interpreted in the light of its historical and cultural context".

Figure 14 presents the same data but this time as a percentage of the total respondents from each denomination. It shows that even though liberal views of the Bible were never a large proportion of any particular age group, nevertheless scaled up by the size of the denomination these views were held by a large number of people. As the generations move on, the number of church attenders holding these views is likely to decline significantly.

Table 21 Do you identify with any of the following approaches in matters of faith (tick as many as apply)?

% choosing that approach (possibly among several choices)	Catholic	Anglican	Presby-terian	Baptist	Union/ Cooper -ating	Methodist	Open Brethren	Wesleyan Methodist
Catholic/Anglo-Catholic	88	37	12	9	15	12	6	11
Evangelical	7	35	32	54	21	26	69	64
Reformed	3	5	14	7	10	5	6	9
Charismatic	11	24	18	30	10	11	19	22
Pentecostal	4	15	14	24	9	9	9	15
Fundamental	2	6	7	12	5	5	12	7
Traditional	13	37	41	22	51	53	22	19
Moderate	4	12	15	9	20	26	15	14
Liberal	3	7	10	3	13	21	3	2
NewAge	2	2	2	2	3	2	2	3
Don't Identify with Descriptions	5	12	15	20	12	12	18	16

Figure 15. Approach to Faith, by Age and Denomination (first graph)

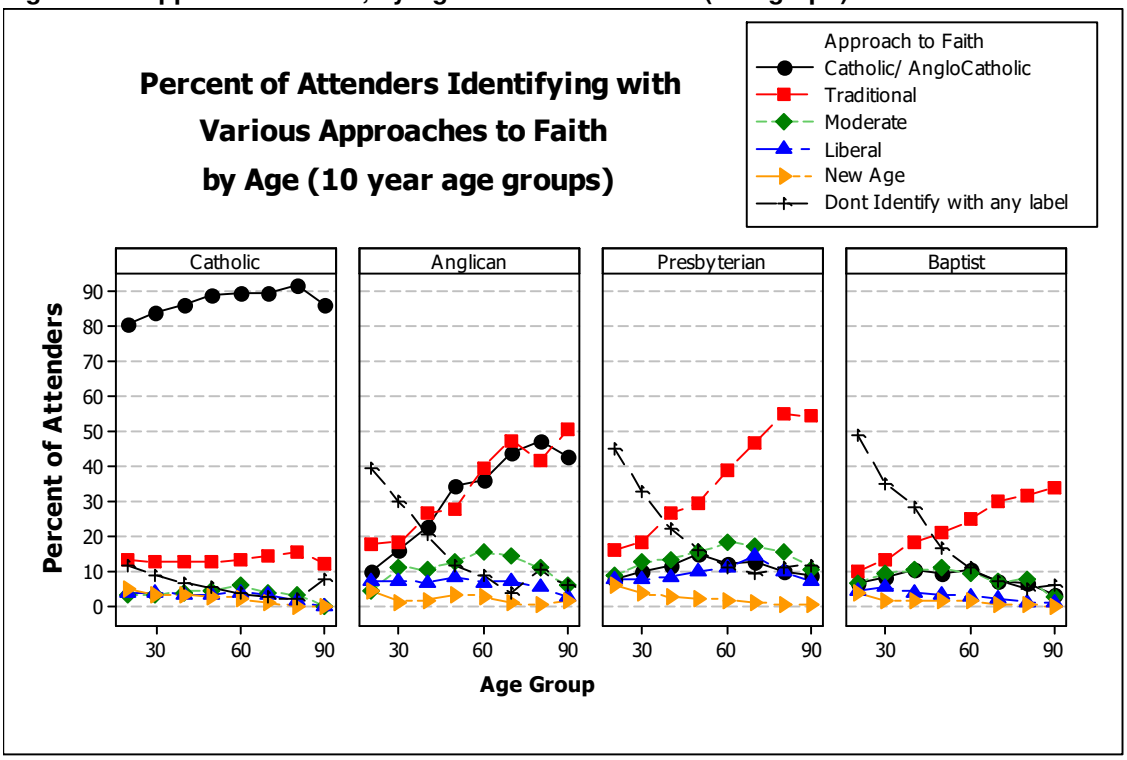
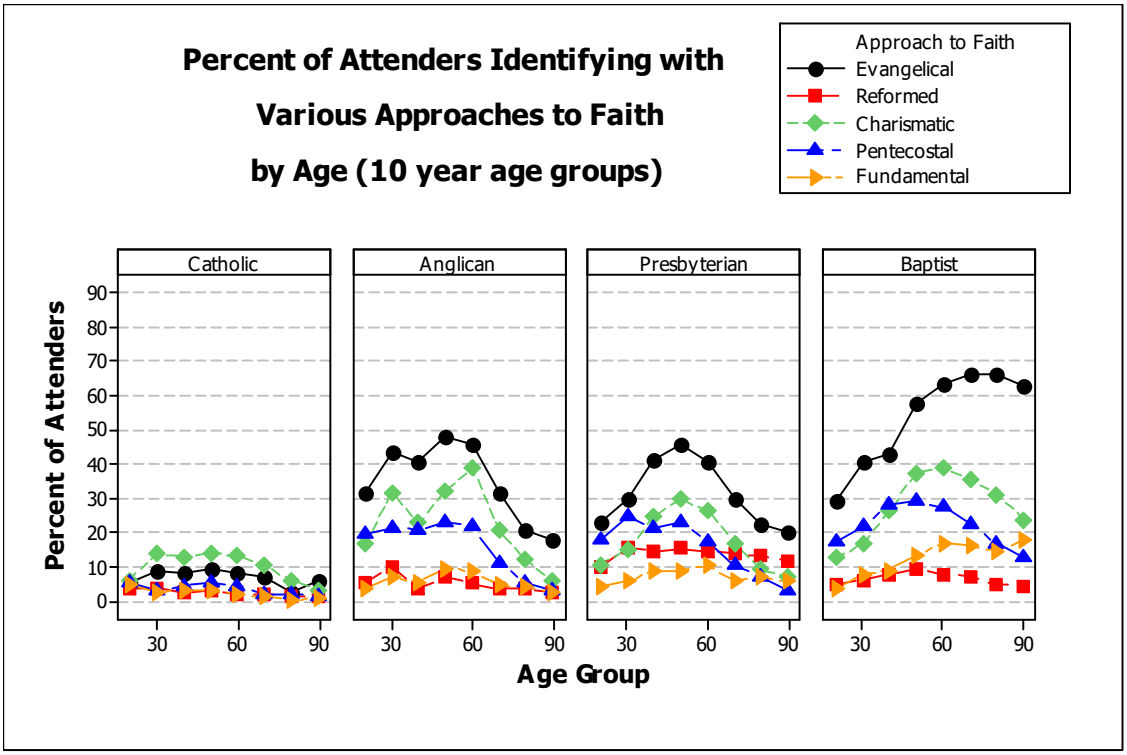


Figure 16. Approach to Faith, by Age and Denomination (second graph)



Theological labels

The preceding question asked about views of the Bible, but in Table 21 attenders were asked whether they identify with particular theological positions or approaches to their Christian faith. Not everyone understands the labels, however, and 20% of Baptists, for example, did not identify with any of the descriptions. Eighty-eight percent of Catholics identified as having a specifically Catholic approach to their faith. Eleven percent of Catholics identified as Charismatic. For Anglican attenders, 37% self-identified as Anglo-Catholic, which is similar to the total 33% who identified with the "historical context and church's teaching" view of the Bible. A similar number identified as Traditional, which probably has some overlap with Anglo-Catholic. Thirty-five percent of Anglicans, 32% of Presbyterians and 54% of Baptists self-identified as Evangelical. Although 36% of Baptists felt the Bible should be taken literally word-for-word, only 12% identified with the Fundamental label. Thirty percent of Baptists self-identified as Charismatic, along with sizeable percentages of Anglicans, Presbyterians, Open Brethren and Wesleyan Methodists. Twenty-one percent of Methodist attenders identified as Liberal in their approach to faith, by far the highest proportion. Of the large denominations 10% of Presbyterians and 7% of Anglican attenders self-identified as Liberal in their approach to faith.

Figures 15 and 16 explore how these approaches to faith vary across age groups. The points represent the percentage of all attenders (in ten-year age bands) ticking each approach. In Figure 15 the '+' shows that those don't identify themselves with a description are mostly the younger members of the congregation. For Anglicans, the graphs for Traditional and Anglo-Catholic follow each other quite closely, suggesting they are linked in the minds of Anglicans. The percentage of Traditional Presbyterians rises with age, whereas no other approach to faith rises with age for Presbyterians. Traditional Baptists are more common among the elderly, which also happens with Evangelical and Fundamental views among Baptists (Figure 16). Liberal views in the Presbyterian church peak in the 65-74 year age group. In Figure 16, Anglican Evangelicals are much more common in those under 65 years old. In Presbyterians, evangelicals peak above 40% in the 35-64 year age groups (those with Charismatic or Pentecostal views peak in the same age range). The drop-off in Evangelicals in the under-35 age groups parallels the drop-off in almost all approaches to faith except new age and "don't identify with descriptions". So it probably relates to unfamiliarity with the definitions.

Awareness of God outside church

Tables 22, 23 and 24 relate to how often the church attender is aware of God's presence outside of church: in the work place, the community and in nature. Across the various denominations 81-90% of attenders were nearly always, usually or often aware of God in the work place; as compared to 66-83% aware of God in the community; and 91-97% nearly always, usually and often aware of God in nature. Nearly half of all attenders said they were nearly always aware of God in nature. More Catholics than Protestants were nearly always aware of the presence of God at work (32%) and in the community (28%).

Table 22. I am aware of the presence of God in my work place?

%	Nearly Always	Usually	Often	Sometimes	Almost Never
Catholic	32	25	17	10	7
Anglican	22	26	25	10	5
Presbyterian	19	25	24	13	6
Baptist	22	26	25	12	6
Union/Cooperating	20	22	25	11	6
Methodist	21	20	22	13	4
Open Brethren	19	26	26	16	3
Wesleyan Methodist	24	33	26	4	6

Table 23. I am aware of the presence of God in the community (eg sports clubs, shops, school)?

%	Nearly Always	Usually	Often	Sometimes	Almost Never
Catholic	28	26	23	15	9
Anglican	17	24	32	18	9
Presbyterian	14	23	32	21	11
Baptist	16	24	31	20	9
Union/Cooperating	15	21	30	22	12
Methodist	20	17	27	28	8
Open Brethren	12	24	38	21	5
Wesleyan Methodist	22	25	36	10	7

Table 24. I am aware of the presence of God in nature (eg parks, sunsets animals plants)?

%	Nearly Always	Usually	Often	Sometimes	Almost Never
Catholic	47	30	14	7	2
Anglican	52	30	13	4	1
Presbyterian	47	32	15	5	1
Baptist	50	30	14	4	1
Union/Cooperating	47	31	14	6	1
Methodist	54	29	12	4	1
Open Brethren	46	34	18	2	1
Wesleyan Methodist	55	28	12	3	2

Ecological issues

In the 2011 survey attenders were asked “Do you agree or disagree: ecological issues are important to this congregation?” Table 25 gives the percentage of agreement (etc.) by denomination: however the results must be interpreted with caution. The question did not ask whether ecology is personally important to the respondent, but rather how the respondent perceives the importance of ecological issues to the congregation as a whole. So, contrary to this writer’s expectation, the percentage agreeing/strongly agreeing that ecological issues are important to this congregation is higher in the older age groups than among the young (figure 17). Perhaps this is because the older people perceive how things have changed, while the younger attenders do not see things as having changed enough. Similarly those who said they usually or nearly always were aware of the presence of God in nature (e.g. parks, sunsets, animals, plants) were *less* likely to perceive ecological issues as being important to the congregation (figure 18) and indeed were somewhat more likely to disagree that ecological issues were being taken seriously in the congregation. A similar analysis (not shown) indicates those with a conservative theological outlook (Traditional, Evangelical, Reformed, Charismatic, Pentecostal and/or Fundamental; who are not generally noted for being interested in ecology themselves) were the same or more likely to perceive ecological issues being important in the congregation. What this all means is open for debate, but this writer’s interpretation is that younger people, in contrast to their elders, are more likely to feel that the churches are not taking ecological issues seriously enough.

Table 25. Do you agree or disagree: ecological issues are important to this congregation?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Catholic	20	44	32	3	1
Anglican	14	43	38	4	1
Presbyterian	13	46	36	4	1
Baptist	10	36	46	7	1
Union/Cooperating	15	51	31	3	0
Methodist	14	53	28	4	1
Open Brethren	8	39	48	4	1
Wesleyan Methodist	6	50	41	3	0

Figure 17 Ecological issues important in congregation, by age

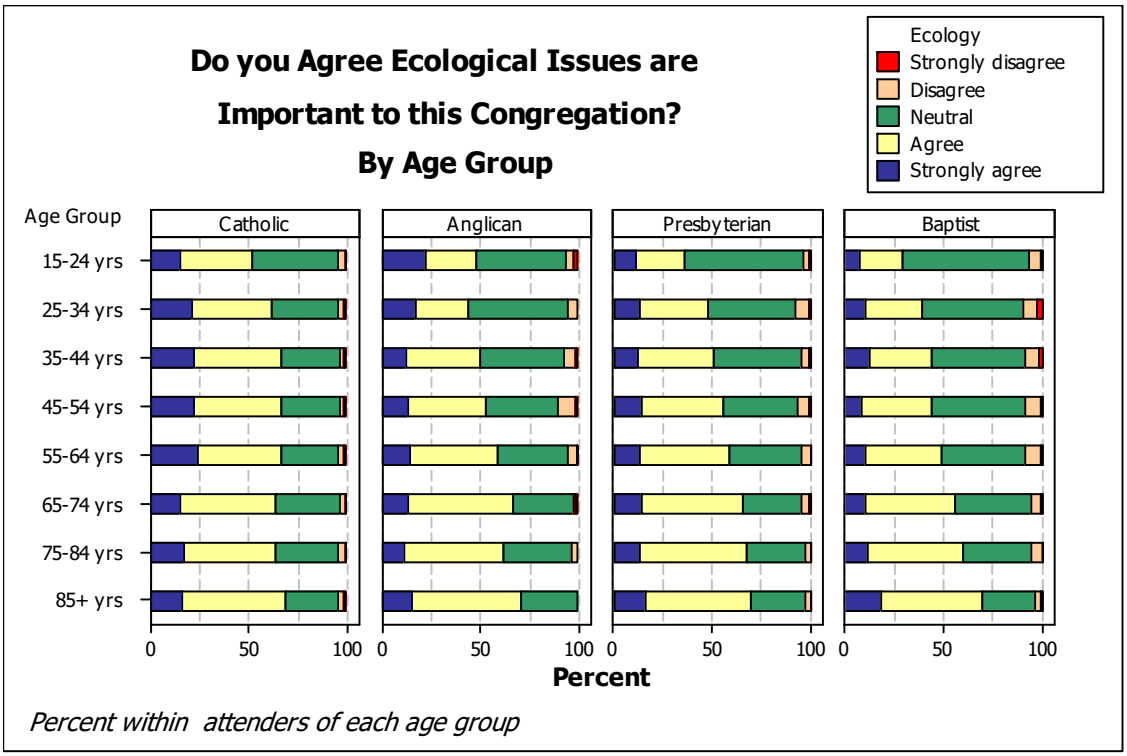
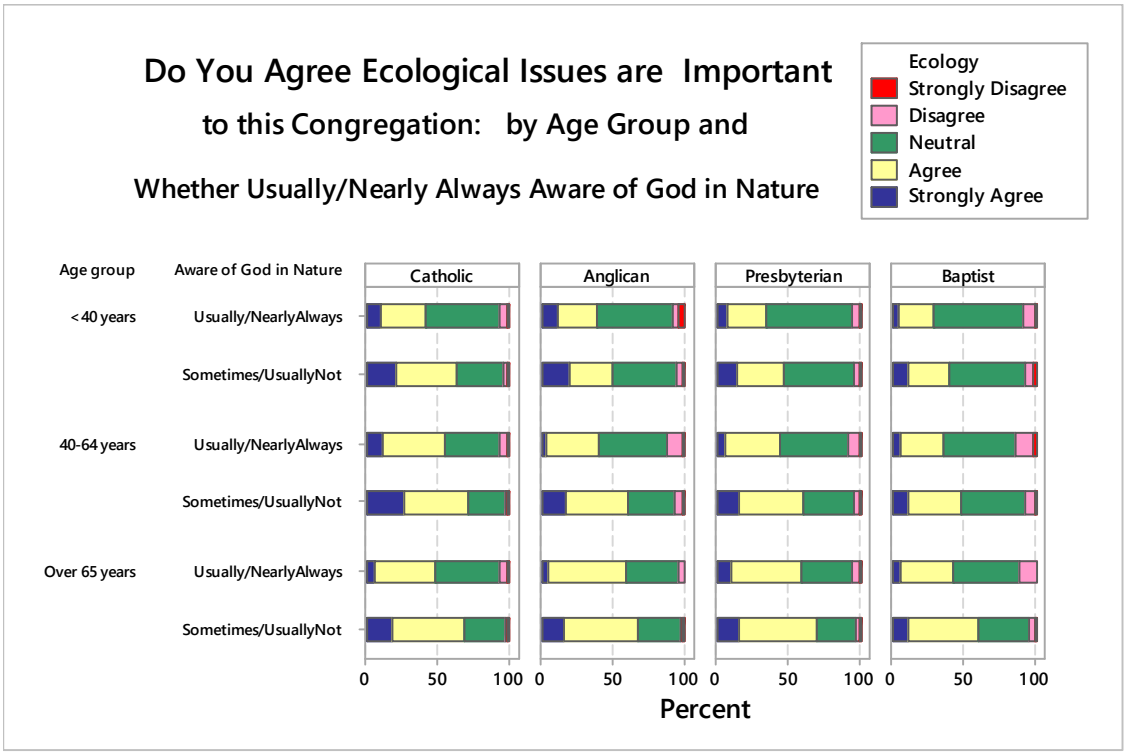


Figure 18 Ecological issues important in congregation, by whether aware of God in nature



Community service, social action, and outreach/ evangelism

Table 26 and 27 explore whether the attender is involved in community service (for example practical care and welfare groups) and/or more policy-focused social action, justice or lobby groups. Table 26 asks about groups not connected to the congregation, while table 27 asks about involvement through the congregation.

Table 26 shows Union/Cooperating Church attenders were most often (40%) involved in community service/care/welfare type groups outside the congregation, which may reflect the older age demographic of those churches. Other than that, between 23 – 34% of attenders are involved in outside welfare groups, depending on the denomination. About 5- 8% of attenders were only involved in social action, justice or lobby groups, and 4-9% of attenders were involved in both types of groups.

Involvement in church-sponsored activities varied a lot, because it depended on what the church could manage to do (Table 27). A total of 12% percent of Catholics said they were involved in outreach/evangelism (7% by itself, and 5% both outreach and welfare activities). This compares with a total of 20% of Anglicans, 21% of Presbyterians, 23% of Baptists, 20% of Union/cooperating attenders, 10% of Methodists, 28% of Open Brethren and 34% of Wesleyan Methodists.

Table 26. Are you involved in any community service, social action or welfare groups (e.g. environmental, human rights or local issues) **NOT CONNECTED to this congregation/parish?**

	Yes, community service, care or welfare groups	Yes, social action, justice or lobby groups	Yes, both of these types of groups	No, I'm not involved with such groups
Catholic	23	5	5	67
Anglican	33	7	6	54
Presbyterian	33	6	6	55
Baptist	25	5	4	66
Union/Cooperating	40	7	6	48
Methodist	28	7	9	56
Open Brethren	34	7	7	53
Wesleyan Methodist	26	8	4	63

Table 27 Do you regularly take part in any activities of this congregation that reach out to the wider community (eg visitation, outreach, community service, social justice, welfare)?

%	Yes, in evangelistic or outreach activities	Yes, in community service, social justice or welfare activities of this congregation	Yes, in both of these types of activities	No, we don't have such activities	No, I am not regularly involved
Catholic	7	15	5	10	62
Anglican	12	22	8	5	53
Presbyterian	11	28	10	5	47
Baptist	14	21	9	7	49
Union/Cooperating	10	32	10	6	41
Methodist	7	34	3	10	47
Open Brethren	17	32	11	3	37
Wesleyan Methodist	22	18	14	14	32

Table 28 shows that Catholics were the most likely to say they felt at ease talking about their faith and indeed looking for opportunities to share it (22%). Baptists and Wesleyan Methodists were next most-prepared, at 18%. A clear majority in every denomination (52- 60%) said they were at ease to talk about their faith if it came up. Between 13- 22% of attenders (depending on the denomination) agreed they found it hard to talk about their faith in ordinary language. Ten percent or more of Catholics, Presbyterians, Methodists and Union/Cooperating Church attenders felt that their life and actions were sufficient without speaking about their faith.

Table 29 shows that for most denominations around 30% of attenders had, in the last year, invited an friend or relative who did not attend church to come to their congregation (54% for Weyleyan Methodists). A higher percentage had invited others in the past, but not in the last year. Thirty-three percent of Catholics (and a smaller percentage of Protestants) either did not know whether they would invite someone, or simply would not invite anyone.

Table 28 Which of the following best describes your readiness to talk to others about your faith?

	At ease to talk about it, look for opportunity to share faith	At ease to talk about it if it comes up	Hard to talk about my faith in ordinary language	Don't like to talk about my faith; life and actions are Sufficient	Don't have a faith
Catholic	22	55	13	10	1
Anglican	14	55	20	9	1
Presbyterian	12	54	22	12	1
Baptist	18	55	22	4	0
Union/Cooperating	10	52	22	15	1
Methodist	11	60	17	12	0
Open Brethren	15	58	21	6	0
Wesleyan Methodist	18	58	19	5	1

Table 29 Would you be prepared to invite to a church service here any of your friends and relatives who do not currently attend church?

	Yes, and I have done so in the past 12 months	Yes, but I have not done so in the past 12 months	Don't know	No, probably not	No, definitely not
Catholic	31	37	18	13	2
Anglican	36	42	11	10	1
Presbyterian	31	45	12	10	1
Baptist	34	44	12	9	1
Union/Cooperating	28	45	12	13	1
Methodist	28	42	19	9	1
Open Brethren	28	46	16	8	1
Wesleyan Methodist	54	32	10	4	0

You and Your Involvement Here

Tables 30-34 explore the attender's level of involvement in the congregation.

Table 30 reveals that Catholics mostly are not involved in any congregational groups. Over half of Baptists, Brethren and Wesleyan Methodists were involved in small groups for prayer, discussion, Bible study, etc.; as were over a third of Anglican and Presbyterian attenders. Presbyterian, Union/Cooperating and Methodist attenders were more likely to be involved in social or fellowship groups: this may reflect the older age profile of those denominations.

Table 31 shows that around 50% of attenders have much the same level of involvement in the congregation as two years ago. Of the rest, a larger number (roughly 20-30%) were participating more than two years ago, than were participating less. Among Protestants, between 6-12% of attenders had been in the congregation less than two years. (The higher rate 16% for Catholics may reflect people from the same parish but who were attending a different congregation on the day).

Table 30 Are you regularly involved in any group activities here?

%	Yes, in small prayer, discussion or Bible study groups.	Yes, in fellowship, clubs, social or other groups	Yes, in both of these types of groups	No, we have no such groups	No, I am not regularly involved
Catholic	13	17	1	8	64
Anglican	34	27	6	2	36
Presbyterian	37	33	2	2	36
Baptist	52	23	6	1	28
Union/Cooperating	29	45	0	3	34
Methodist	23	36	0	5	45
Open Brethren	70	25	0	1	21
Wesleyan Methodist	57	24	9	0	19

Table 31 How much do you think you participate in the activities of the church/parish, compared to two years ago?

	Participate more	About the same participation	Participate less	Not applicable (been coming less than 2 years)
Catholic	20	45	19	16
Anglican	25	49	16	10
Presbyterian	23	50	18	9
Baptist	29	42	18	11
Union/Cooperating	21	57	17	6
Methodist	17	50	23	10
Open Brethren	24	49	21	6
Wesleyan Methodist	35	42	11	12

Table 32 Have this congregation's leaders encouraged you to find and use your gifts and skills here?

	Yes, to a great extent	Yes, to some extent	Yes, to a small extent	Not at all
Catholic	14	30	25	31
Anglican	23	39	24	15
Presbyterian	20	41	25	14
Baptist	22	39	24	14
Union/Cooperating	22	42	24	12
Methodist	28	39	20	12
Open Brethren	17	45	27	12
Wesleyan Methodist	37	43	13	6

Table 32 indicates that most attenders feel at least somewhat encouraged to find and use their gifrts and skills in the congregation. Only 31% of Catholics and 6-15% of Protestants felt not at all encouraged. In most Protestant congregations somewhere around 22% of attenders felt greatly encouraged to use their gifts; around 40% encouraged to some extent, and around 24% to a small extent.

Figure 19 shows that members of all age groups and both sexes are fairly evenly encouraged to use their gifts and skills. In the Catholic and Anglican church young men (aged 25-34) feel slightly more encouraged, as to Baptists aged 15-24. But apart from elderly people not being able to do so much, the pattern is *reasonably* similar across all age groups within a denomination.

Figure 19. Encouraged to use gifts and skills, by age group, total across denomination

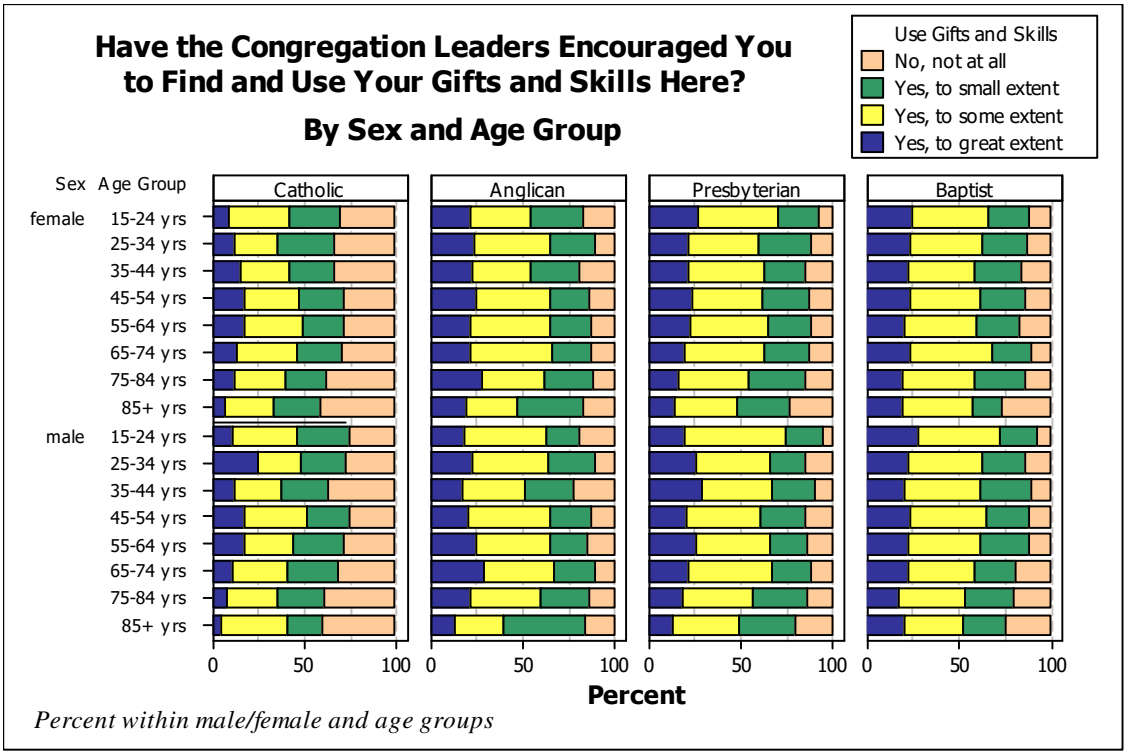


Table 33 Looks at the attender's ministry roles within the congregation. It is hard to see any clear pattern except that lay Catholics have less opportunity to perform particular roles.

Table 33 Do you currently perform any of these leadership or ministry roles here? (tick as many as apply)

	Cath-olic	Angl-ican	Presbyt-erian	Baptist	Union / Cooper-ating	Method-ist	Open Breth-ren	Wesleyan Method-ist
Teaching or preaching at church services	4	9	9	7	13	12	14	13
Music ministry (e.g. choir, organist, band)	10	16	16	16	17	20	21	25
Lead, plan or assist in church services (e.g. worship leader, liturgical assistant)	10	18	11	8	16	16	20	19
Oversight of the church (e.g. Elder, parish council, wardens)	4	13	19	8	23	14	10	15
Member of a committee or task force	7	16	18	12	24	22	23	18
Pastoral care role (e.g. Visitation of the sick, the elderly)	6	15	17	9	21	20	16	13
Small group leadership among adults (e.g. Bible study groups, prayer groups)	4	13	12	17	10	7	22	18
Adult social group leadership	2	4	3	4	5	2	4	4
Children's ministry role (under 12s)	3	7	9	11	8	3	13	17
Youth ministry role / youth group leadership	2	3	4	6	3	1	1	10
Religious education teacher / scripture teacher in schools	2	2	2	3	2	1	3	3
Preparing adults for membership, marriage or sacraments	2	2	1	2	1	1	4	3
Another role not mentioned above	11	14	11	14	9	14	11	18
No such leadership or ministry role	58	36	37	37	33	37	29	25

Giving to this congregation

Table 34 shows the percentage of respondents who regularly give various amounts of their income to this congregation. It was left the respondents themselves to decide whether to think in terms of net or gross income. Baptists (34%) and Wesleyan Methodists (32%) were the most likely to give at least 10% of their income to the congregation, while Catholics were the least likely.

Table 34. About how much do you give financially to this congregation?

% of attenders	>= 10% of income regularly	5-9% of Income regularly	< 5% of Income regularly	Small Amount If I Can	Don't Contribute Here
Catholic	6	14	32	38	9
Anglican	22	28	24	18	8
Presbyterian	18	31	27	18	6
Baptist	34	26	14	18	8
Union/Cooperating	14	33	33	17	3
Methodist	10	27	37	24	2
Open Brethren	25	32	18	20	5
Wesleyan Methodist	32	30	19	15	5

Figure 20 shows that in all four denominations giving tended to be higher among the elderly, with over 80% of older Baptists giving at least 5% of their income to the congregation.

Figure 20 Giving to this congregation, by age

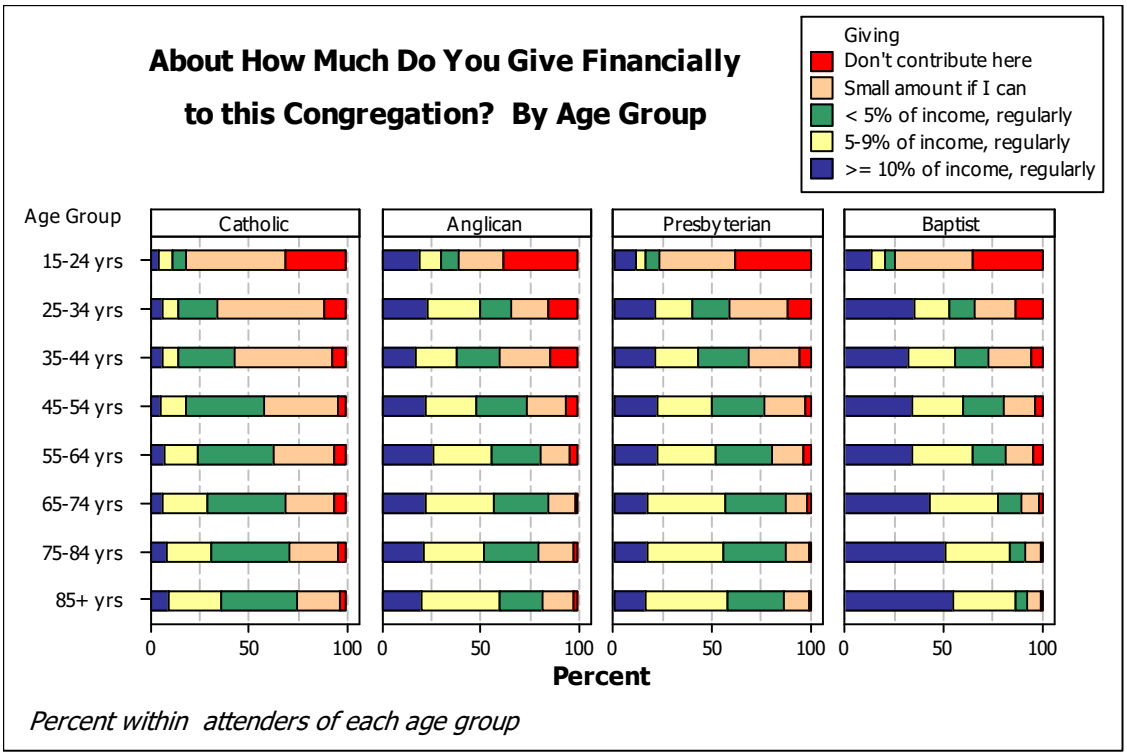


Figure 21 shows the relationship between how the respondent approaches his/her faith and the percentage of respondents that give over 5% of their income to the congregation. Note that respondents could choose more than one approach to faith, so could be counted in more than one percentage. There is a tendency for respondents to be more likely to give over 5% if they identify with Evangelical or Reformed or Charismatic or Pentecostal or Fundamental or Traditional approaches to their faith. Of course the meaning of these words will differ by denominational context, but they all indicate respondents who have a conservative approach to their faith, holding on to traditional doctrines.

Figure 21 Relationship between giving and approach to faith

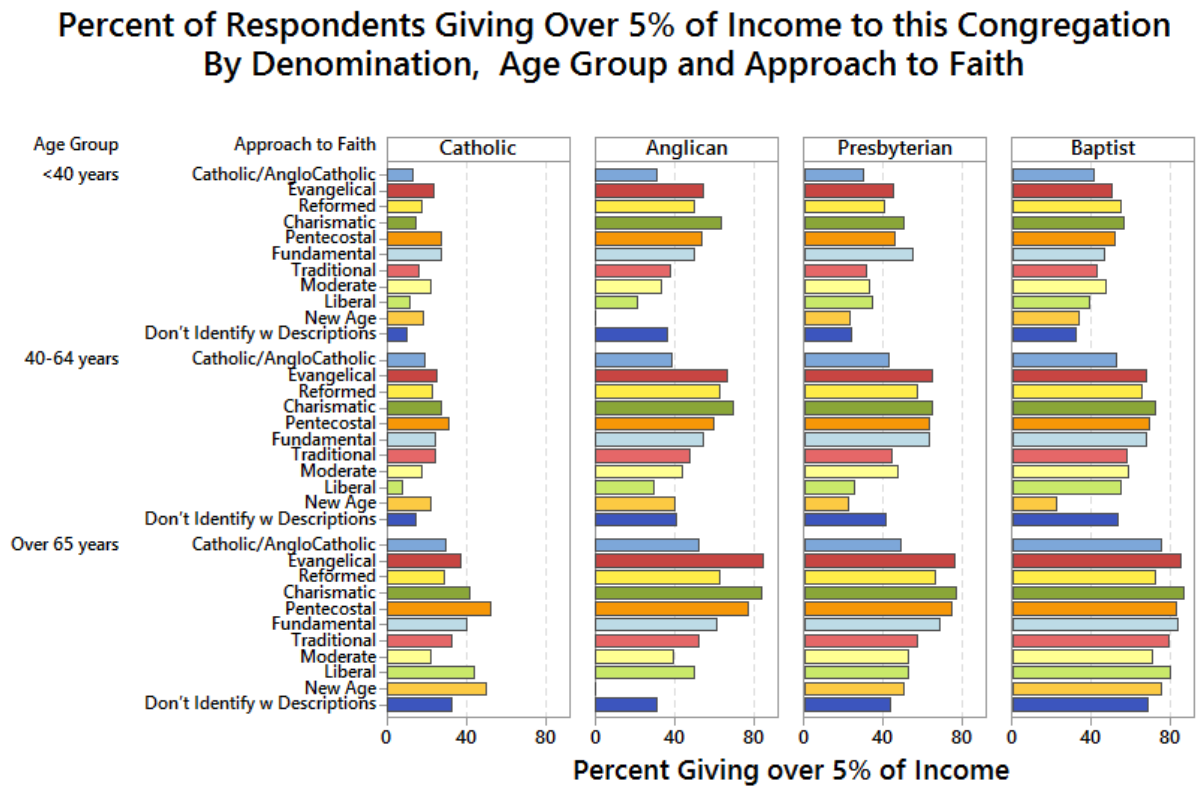
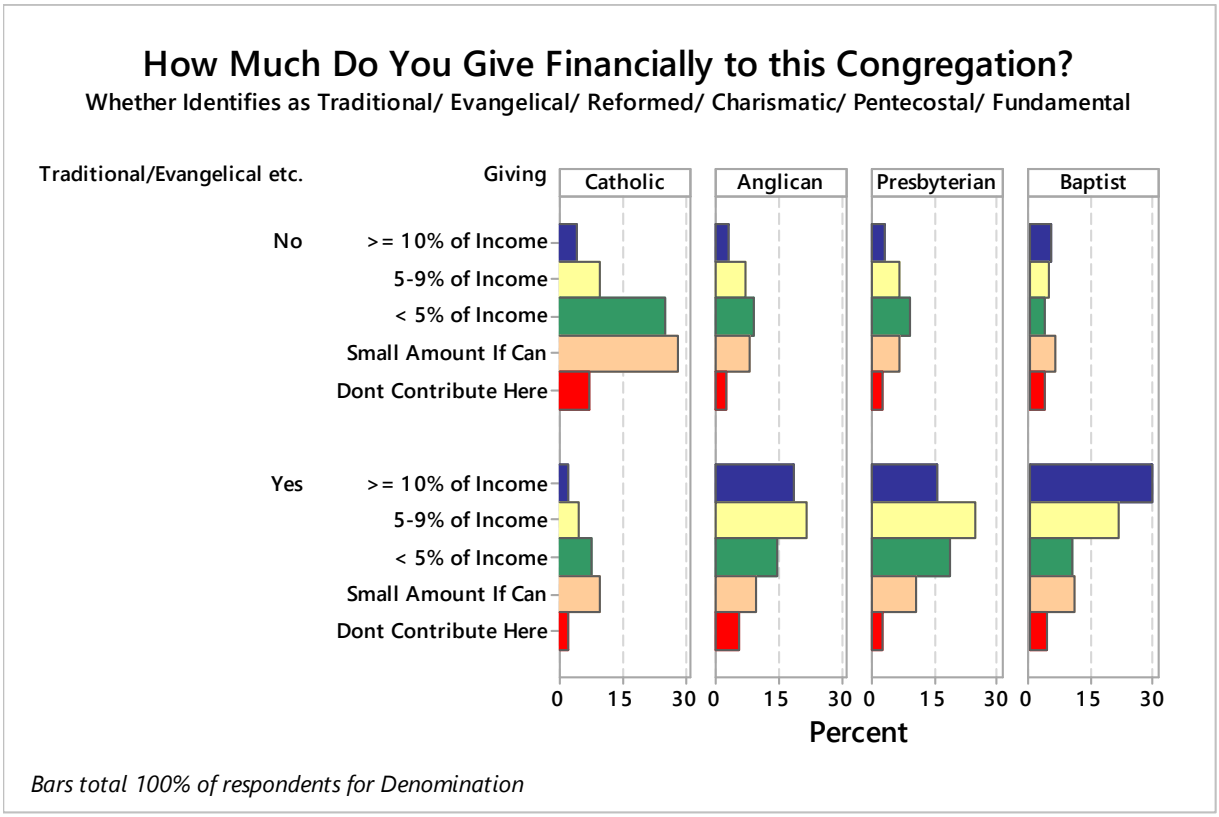


Figure 22 splits the respondents into those who identify with at least one of these conservative approaches to faith, and those who do not identify with any of them. The total length of the bars within each panel (Catholics, etc) refers to the total respondents for that denomination. It shows that the majority of Catholics did not identify with any of these approaches, and also that a majority of Catholics give less than 5% of their income or a small amount if they can. Conversely a majority of Anglicans, Presbyterians and Baptists identified with at least one of these conservative approaches, and a large proportion of these give either 5-9% or over 10% of their income to the congregation.

Figure 22 Amount given by attenders, by whether approach to faith is Traditional/Evangelical etc.



Direction

Respondents were asked about how they understand future directions for their congregation. This was a difficult question for many attenders, but somewhere between 49% and 85% of attenders said there was a clear vision, goals and direction for the congregation, and that they were at least partly committed to them. Commitment was lowest among Catholics, many of whom were not aware of visions/goals or directions, or felt they were just ideas, or knew there were plans but the attender had no commitment to them. Commitment to the vision/ goals or direction was strongest in the Wesleyan Methodist and Baptist congregations.

Table 35 Does this congregation /parish have a clear vision, goals or direction for its ministry and mission?

	Cath-olic	Angl-ican	Presby-terian	Bap-tist	Union/ Coope-rating	Meth-odist	Open Breth-ren	Wesleyan Method-ist
Yes and I am strongly committed to them	25	38	39	43	36	31	37	59
Yes and I am partly committed to them	24	30	34	33	34	35	37	25
Yes, but I am not committed to them	15	9	10	8	11	12	6	7
There are ideas but no clear vision, goals or direction	10	11	10	10	12	12	15	5
I am not aware of such vision/ goals or direction	23	9	6	5	6	7	5	3
We need to go back to the way we did things in the past	3	1	1	1	2	2	1	0

Related to that, Table 36 explores opinions about change in direction. Depending on the denomination, between 29% and 57% of attenders felt the congregation was currently moving in new directions, and another 21% to 34% felt that new directions were being considered. Among Catholics, 17% felt they were faithfully maintaining past directions, which was slightly higher than in other denominations, and over 10% of Catholics, Methodist, Brethren and Union/Cooperating attenders felt the congregation needed to rethink where they were heading.

Table 36 Of the following, which one best describes your opinion of the future direction of this congregation/ parish?

	Cath-olic	Angl-ican	Presby-terian	Bap-tist	Union/ Coope-rating	Meth-odist	Open Breth-ren	Wesleyan Method-ist
We are currently moving in new directions	29	35	38	45	31	40	35	57
We are currently deciding on new directions	21	31	33	29	34	27	32	26
We are faithfully maintaining past directions	17	13	11	10	14	13	10	10
We need to rethink where we are heading	11	8	8	6	11	10	12	4
Our future is unclear to me	22	13	9	10	10	10	12	4

Leadership

Respondents were asked "The following questions are about your senior minister, pastor, priest or leadership team. If there is more than one such leader here with equal seniority, please answer for the person who is most involved here." Table 37 shows that around half the attenders felt that senior leader of their church had the style of 'inspires people to take action'. Catholic and Anglican attenders were slightly more likely to say that their leader 'tends to take charge', while Methodists and Open Brethren were more likely to say that the 'Leadership that acts on goals that the people here have been involved in setting', or 'Leadership where the people start most things'.

Table 37. Which of the following is the best description of the style of leadership of your minister, pastor, priest or leadership team? (please tick up to two)

	Cath-olic	Angl-ican	Presby-terian	Bap-tist	Union/ Coope-rating	Meth-odist	Open Breth-ren	Wesleyan Method-ist
Leader that tends to take charge	21	18	13	14	13	8	7	17
Leader that inspires people to action	48	58	55	57	46	39	40	57
Leadership that acts on goals that the people here have been involved in setting	22	19	23	20	28	36	37	18
Leadership where the people start most things	7	4	4	4	5	14	11	3
A Leadership Team runs things here	3	1	4	5	9	4	5	5

Table 38 explores what the attender believes are the main roles that the church leader actually carries out. Ideas vary. Apart from Baptists, Brethren and Wesleyan Methodists, attenders most often thought of leaders as conducting worship or administering the sacraments. Baptist, Brethren and Wesleyans were more likely to think of their leader in the role of teaching people about the Christian faith, and for other denominations this was the second-top role, chosen by 47% to 76% of the attenders (depending on the denomination) . Baptists, Brethren and Wesleyans placed a high emphasis on the leader developing a vision and goals for the future. "Visiting, counselling and helping people", "Administration", and "Offering prayer/being a spiritual role model" were the next main things that leaders were expected to do. Few attenders perceived their leader as having "Training people for ministry and mission" as a main role (but more in Baptist than other churches) or having a special focus on "converting others to the faith" or "Involvement in wider community groups or social issues".

Table 38. What do you think are the main roles that your minister, pastor or priest actually carries out. (Please tick up to three).

	Cath-olic	Angl-ican	Presby-terian	Bap-tist	Union/ Coope-rating	Meth-odist	Open Breth-ren	Wesleyan Method-ist
Conducting worship or administering the sacraments	80	73	68	33	78	71	27	51
Teaching people about the Christian faith	53	60	62	76	52	47	71	71
Training people for ministry and mission	14	15	11	24	7	13	19	21
Converting others to the faith	7	6	6	11	4	4	9	13
Administering the work of the congregation/parish	23	25	21	18	21	20	35	17
Visiting, counseling and helping people	27	36	42	31	52	34	37	27
Developing a vision and goals for the future	10	25	27	41	19	19	34	38
Offering prayer/being a spiritual role model	26	23	21	27	20	24	25	24
Involvement in wider community groups or social issues	7	12	10	11	11	9	9	16

Conclusion and Acknowledgements

There are many differences between Christian churches but also many similarities. Change, especially demographic and cultural change, is affecting them all. The CLSNZ survey provides a snapshot of some congregations, from some denominations. This report allows those participating congregations, and other non-participants, to compare themselves to all the participants, so they can see how they fare compared to others. By pooling information across many congregations, this report has given insights into some wider trends within New Zealand churches, including some pointers to how the church might change as the generations move on. It would be extremely useful in future to have a broader participation within those denominations reported on here, and to have other denominations including the increasing numbers of Pentecostal churches. However even though those are not included this time, there is no reason to think that the trends shown in this report will not apply to other denominations as well.

This report was originally prepared towards publication in the second edition of New Vision New Zealand, a project which unfortunately was not completed due to changing circumstances.

The participating congregations in the 2007-11 CLSNZ survey, and their respondents, are thanked for contributing their data. The organising committee for CLSNZ for these surveys comprised Pat Lythe (Catholic), Rev Max Scott (Anglican), Sushila Nelson (Baptist – earlier Rev Graeme Lindsay), Glyn Carpenter (New Zealand Christian Network), Dr Margaret Galt (Presbyterian), Rev Nigel Hanscamp (Methodist), and two academics Professor Peter Lineham and Dr Barry McDonald both from Massey University.