

Church Attendance

Church attendance and church membership are not the same. In England, church membership was 10% in 2013, but church attendance was only half that. As the maps indicate, the latter percentage has been shrinking rapidly over the past 20+ years, with most of the country now under 5.5%, except in the south east, and particularly in inner London where it was 10% (an increase from 9% in 1998).

The church growth research of the Church Commissioners found that one reason for decline was stagnation – services “offered with little reflection”. On the other hand, it also found that promoting Christian witness in the church was most likely to encourage growth, if the church had a “clear mission and purpose,” and if numerical growth was made a priority. Growth was more likely when there was much rotation among the volunteer roles in the church. Leadership was also a significant factor.

The latest Church of England research suggests regulars are attending church perhaps just three times a month. Recent research among the Grace Baptists has shown that the trend towards less regular frequency is especially true for those aged 30-44, who often are looking after a young family, with both parents at work. Sunday often being the only family day they have. Some churches seek to accommodate such by having services at different times on a Sunday or mid-week.

A detailed survey by the Church of Scotland, released in January 2014, on why some Christians did not attend church found that many did not believe they had to attend church regularly to be a Christian; or that they disliked their local church; or they had had a family crisis (marriage break-up, ill-health) and subsequently stopped. Many who stopped drifted away gradually. They could be persuaded to return as many wish to continue on a spiritual path.

Australian research found that people stopped attending because of problems with the minister, lack of intellectual stimulation, and having too many church rules. On the other hand, American research found that, inspired by the new Pope, Pope Francis, some were praying more, trusting God more, and attending church more frequently (not just Catholics). Clearly growth is possible, but has to be worked at, and led.

WORK CALLING

The increase in the UK in the number of Church of England ministerial trainees and the increase in the number of Roman Catholic ordinands while, for most, is a divine calling may also reflect the general desire of the Millennial Generation (those now in their 20s) to have a career which has “purpose, meaning and impact”.

Trainees for the Catholic priesthood in England and Wales have increased from 20 in 2011 to 31 in 2012 and 63 in 2013, for example, and the Church of England indicated that 113 out of 501 new trainees were under 30, a higher percentage (23%) than in recent years (22% in 2012 but 15% in 2007).

An American Barna survey found many in this age-group were expecting to change job within 3 years if it lacked the three ideals quoted above. It found three-quarters, 75%, were looking for ways “to live a more meaningful life”. Half, 56%, wanted “to make a difference in the world.”

Many women, especially, are dissatisfied with their work/home balance, finding themselves stressed out (72%), tired (58%) and overcommitted (48%), each of these being aggravated if they are young mothers as well. Christian women in particular do not find that the church offers them much support (so say half, 46%, and a third, 34%, say no support).

Interestingly, the Barna research also finds that increasingly Christians are interested in adopting children, with practising Christians twice as likely to adopt than the general population (5% to 2%), with Catholics and Evangelicals being even more likely to do so. They also find churches very happy to support them if they make such a choice, financially or with travel and home help.

Many churches are now taking a more holistic approach to both employment and unemployment, realising that at least one third of the daily lives of those employed full-time is spent “at work”. Perhaps a particular need is for guidance and support for Millennials in terms of vocation, moving into a first job and failing to find appropriate work (the unemployment rate for those aged 20-24 is 18% compared with 8% for those aged 25-29). “What does God want me to do with my life?” is a question many Millennials ask.

SOURCES: Research and Statistics Dept., Archbishops’ Council, Independent Catholic News and National Office for Vocation websites accessed April 2014; Barna update 19th February 2014, www.barna.org; Office for National Statistics, website Table A05, Economic activity.

Churchgoers as percentage of population, 1989



Churchgoers as percentage of population, 2005



SOURCES: “Numerical change in Church Attendance”, Prof. David Voas, Church of England Church Growth Research, Jan 2014; Research and Statistics Dept., Archbishops’ Council, March 2014; “Investigating the invisible church”, Church of Scotland Mission and Discipleship Council, Steve Aishorpe, Jan 2014; Dr Bob Dixon, Researchers’ Conference, Melbourne 2008; Barna Update, March 2014; English Church Censuses 1989, 1998 and 2005; UK Church Statistics No 2, Page 14.26.

Churchgoers as percentage of population, 1998



Churchgoers as percentage of population, 2012E



Church Membership by Country

The Table shows the membership changes by each of the 4 constituent countries in the UK, as compiled for the next edition of *UK Church Statistics*. The mostly firm figures for 2008 and 2013 and the projections to 2020 show a declining number of church members across the UK, and especially in Wales, Scotland and N Ireland.

The English membership figures between 2008 and 2013 show especial growth for three denominations not strongly present in Wales, Scotland or N Ireland – the New Churches, the Orthodox and the Pentecostal churches, especially the black church component of the last. Growth in these three groups, and Fresh Expressions (which is also strong in Scotland) is high, resulting in and from their planting of new churches.

Church Membership in the UK, by Country, 2008-2020

Country	2008 Membership	% change 2008-2013	2013 Membership	% change 2013-2020	2020 Est Membership
England	3,709,300	0%	3,723,300	-1%	3,682,400
Wales	229,600	-8%	210,400	-14%	180,000
Scotland	851,500	-17%	704,300	-27%	513,800
N Ireland	903,900	-12%	798,500	-17%	660,700
Total UK	5,694,300	-5%	5,436,500	-7%	5,036,900

Overall, church membership in England is holding its own, increases offsetting decreases. Membership decline in the other three countries of the UK is much greater. If the major declining denominations in Wales (Union of Welsh Independents), Scotland (Church of Scotland) and N Ireland (Roman Catholics) are taken out, the declines in these three countries would be considerably less.

Continued from page 1 CHURCH DECLINE PUT BACK BY 5 YEARS!

Philip Hughes, writing about ethnicity in Australia, says, “Ethnicity may well have been heightened by the high level of multi-culturalism in Australia. For many people, one of the associations with ethnicity is religion. Hence, religious identification can be a significant carrier for belonging to a particular ethnic group within a multi-ethnic society.”¹ This is very likely to be true in the UK also.

The precise ethnic background of British church members is not known, so only guesimates can be made when specific information is lacking, which it is with many groups. We are also interested not in overall numbers of non-white-British who are church members but rather the number of new people added to church membership because of the huge immigration in the last 10 years. Church membership has been significantly impacted by immigration for much longer than this past decade, but the data to measure it almost certainly doesn’t exist.

Taking the total church membership for the 50+ overseas denominations represented in the UK gives a total of about 368,000, which is 5.7% of the 6.5 million non-white-British living in England in 2001, that is, nearly 6% of non-white-British people are assumed to be church members, a smaller percentage of the population than for white-British people (9%), but a similar order of magnitude. These are not notional members but are included as active members of the denomination in question.

Using the 2011 Population Census figures and the latest membership figures gives a 2011 percentage of immigrants who have become church members of 5.2%, a slightly smaller percentage across the decade, but it probably takes some while for new immigrants to become sufficiently familiar with the UK to join a church. These percentages include children where relevant.

An alternative way of assessing the number of new church members from immigrants is to take the number of non-British born people in England and Wales (7.5 million from the 2011 Census) and the proportion of them who arrived between 2001 and 2011 (50% or 3.8 million). A survey in 2000 found 31% of new immigrants were “Christian” which, if applied to the 3.8 million would be 1.2 million, and if the same proportion of actual church members as of those saying they were “Christian” applied (7%), then in 2008 that would mean 82,000 have become actual church members. However, many of these people have been specifically targeted and welcomed by Christian churches so the actual number is likely to be greater, say half as many again, which is the number used in the Table below for 2008.

Overall Membership

In 2013 there were 5.4 million church members in the UK, 10% of the adult population (taken as 15 and over), 0.3 million fewer than 5 years previously in 2008 when the percentage was 12%. It is likely to continue to decline at about the same rate for the next 12 years, reaching 9% by 2020 and 8% by 2025 if present trends continue. The Table illustrates what church membership would be if Fresh Expressions and Immigrants were taken out of the total.

Church membership, Immigrants and Fresh Expressions

Membership	2008 Membership	% change 2008-2013	2013 Membership	% change 2013-2020	2020 Est Membership
Total membership	5,694,300	-5%	5,436,500	-7%	5,036,900
less Fresh Expressions	19,300	+273%	71,900	+50%	108,200
less new Immigrants	123,000	-13%	106,400	-13%	92,800
Remainder	5,552,000	-5%	5,258,500	-8%	4,835,900

It can be seen that without the two groups of Fresh Expressions and Immigrants, church membership would decline faster in the coming years – instead of -7% as predicted now, it would be -8%. The number of new immigrant church members is decreasing primarily because the total out of which the percentage is taken is diminishing, and the number of new immigrants is also expected to decrease. The total of Fresh Expressions and Immigrants is 2.5% of the 2008 total, 3.3% in 2013 and 4.0% in 2020.



Mosque Attendance

A Channel 4 survey in 2006 asking Muslims in Britain their frequency of attendance at mosque found that half, 51%, attend mosque at least once a year, and half never attend. A quarter, 26%, attend more frequently, percentages which haven’t changed over 20 years.

A more recent Pew Forum study in 2011 across the world found that only 8% of Muslims attended mosque at least once a week in south-eastern Europe, although this percentage was higher in the Middle East and North Africa, at 27%, similar to the UK. In south-east Asia the percentage was 40% and rose to 44% in south Asia, but it was highest in sub-Saharan Africa at 61%.

However, the study showed that Muslims were much more likely to pray every day, five-sixths, 83%, on average claiming to do so several times a day. A 2012 survey found that only three-fifths, 62%, of Christians claimed to pray once every day!

SOURCES: *Attitudes to Living in Britain*, A survey of Muslim opinion for Channel 4 Dispatches by GFK NOP Social Research 27th April 2006; Pew Forum survey report in *The Economist*, 18th August, 2012; *Living the Christian Life*, Brierley Consultancy survey for Langham International Partnership, 2012.

HUMOUR

A British Airways Holidays’ study of 2,000 adults in 2012 found that a quarter of Britons who had holidayed in Spain did not know where it was, nor did 53% of UK tourists visiting Cyprus, often mistaking it for Greece. A spokeswoman for BA said, “We know cost and temperature are the most important factors for adults booking a holiday, but 23% never think to look on a map to see where they are going!”

SOURCES: Email from David Longley.

What does all this say?

These figures show that church membership in the UK declined -5% between 2008 and 2013, slightly less than the previous rate of decline partly because of the impact of immigration and Fresh Expressions. A broadly similar rate of decline is expected between 2013 and 2020, and thus continues the general trend over the last 60 years.

A heart for mission and a willingness to try the new are the key elements here, along with a denominational structure which allows such experimentation and in effect gives its new initiatives permission to fail as well as to succeed. It is obvious that the UK churches are not fossilising and in many instances are still vigorously active!

1) Article “What do people mean when they call themselves Christians?” by Rev Dr Philip Hughes, *Pointers*, Christian Research Association, Australia, Vol 24 No 1, March 2014, Page 5.

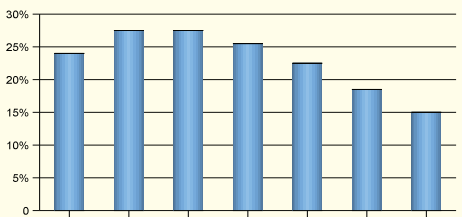
Peter Brierley

Transmission of Faith

The transmission of faith from one generation to another is critically important. One person who has studied this in some depth is Prof David Voas, now of Essex University but previously Professor of Population Studies at Manchester University. In one piece of research published in 2012 he and a colleague evaluated the impact of family life on church attendance through three generations using data from the 2001 International Congregational Life Survey, a significant study with over 9,000 respondents.

In general they found the older a person the more likely they were to have or had churchgoing parents. The chart shows the percentage of churchgoers in England in 2001 who did NOT have regularly attending churchgoing parents.

Percentage of current churchgoers whose parents rarely or never went to church, England, 2001



Older people now attending church are more likely to have continued the family tradition of churchgoing. The research compared results with the Australian data which was based on similar questions, and the overall results found:

- Men were about 5% more likely than women to have or had parents who were not churchgoers, except for those aged 85 or over (2% difference).

- Australian churchgoers were less likely than those in England to have or had parents were not churchgoers, also by about 5%, 18% to 23%.

- The impact of two churchgoing parents is considerably greater than one.

- Grandparental religious activity also has a significant effect.

Approximately a quarter, 23%, of English churchgoers therefore have started going to church when their parents did not, and this might be taken as an estimate of the percentage of “conversion” growth of current congregations. Church congregations grow, of course, because new people join the congregation (having started going to church elsewhere) or newly start coming to that particular church. Other studies have found that new people in a church are relatively few (a 2012 English study found just 24% of those in evangelical churches had been attending less than 20 years), meaning “church growth” is mostly “church transfer”. David Voas’s research thus underlines the huge importance of transmission in family life.

Some factors in present-day family life make that transmission more difficult. Almost half, 46%, of children today will see their parents’ divorce before they are 16, and a family split inhibits transmission of faith very severely. Churchgoing parents seem to be as likely to divorce as non-churchgoing ones.

Many church families are middle-class, and many have both parents working. Those aged 30 to 44 are especially likely not to attend as regularly as others simply because of the pressure in their home with a young family, but it is in this age-group where those practices are often most needed to establish the tradition of churchgoing, and encourage transmission.

The very large majority of churchgoers in both England and Australia are married, much more than the percentage of married people in the population. For the large majority of these, both partners attend church together, so they are making joint decisions on this activity and thus encouraging their children in churchgoing.

The finding about grandparental influence confirms other research of young people undertaken in England – one study found some 60% were likely to attend church if their grandparents did.

The importance of family life and the traditions embodied within that, especially of religious activity, is crucial, and this research confirms this. Encouraging family religious life should therefore be a priority in church teaching.

SOURCES: Article by David Voas and Ingrid Storm in *Review of Religious Research*, Vol 53, No 4, Jan 2012, Page 377; *Living the Christian Life*, Brierley Consultancy, April 2013; Newsletter, Marriage Foundation, Spring 2014; *Reaching and Keeping Teenagers*, Christian Research, 2002.

Listed buildings. The Church of England has some 16,000 churches, 9,000 in rural areas and 7,000 in urban areas including 42 cathedrals. Two-thirds of these are listed buildings, by far the highest percentage of any denomination, and indeed 45% of all the Grade I listed buildings in England are churches or cathedrals. Three are World Heritage Sites: Canterbury Cathedral, Durham Castle and Cathedral and Westminster Abbey. It costs £110 million a year to maintain all these buildings, most of which comes from parishioners. Cathedral attendance continues to increase, especially at weekday services and among children.

SOURCE: Encompass, St Stephen’s Church, Tonbridge, April 2013, Page 1; Research and Statistics Dept., Archbishops’ Council.

OMF International. The previously-titled China Inland Mission gave way to the name Overseas Missionary Fellowship in the 1960s, and in the 1990s the society became “OMF International”. What do those who support it think of it? A Communications Survey held in 2013 found that its character was seen as “prayerful, faithful, Biblical and Christ centred.” When asked what kind of vehicle it most resembled the majority answer was an “all-terrain vehicle coping with a variety of situations,” but quite a few said a “Jeepney, a vehicle which is greater than the sum of its diverse and creative parts!” An interesting question – what kind of vehicle would your congregation reckon your church was like?

SOURCE: Email from Tony Waghorn, OMF International, Dec 2013.

Centenarians increase. In 2012 there were over half a million people in the UK aged 90 or more. Just 3% of these were over 100, some 13,350 people. Of these 5%, or 660, were 105 or more. The number of centenarians has been steadily increasing for the last 50 years, but has increased considerably in the last 30 years – from 2,800 in 1982 to 7,700 in 2002 to 13,350 in 2012. It is likely to continue to grow, with the proportion of men increasing (23% in 2002 and 27% in 2012). How many of these are still active churchgoers? Though there may be few active churchgoing centenarians (the death of a churchgoing lady of 110 was recently reported, and she was probably the oldest), who can gauge the legacy of their prayer, witness and support over a long lifetime?

SOURCE: Statistical Bulletin, Office for National Statistics, March 2014.

City life. The world’s highest cost of living is to be found in Singapore in 2014 where a bottle of table wine costs £16. Paris is the second most expensive city, where unleaded petrol is £1.56 per litre and 1 kg of bread £5! London is not listed among the top 10 costliest cities. The cheapest city in the world is Mumbai. In Europe, the city giving the most satisfaction was Copenhagen, voted in by 97% of a sample of its population. London was 20th out of 28, but did better with public transport when it came third.

SOURCE: *The Economist’s* “Worldwide Cost of Living”, 2014; Eurobarometer “Quality of Life in European Cities”, Oct 2013.

Morality today. A BBC poll asked young people aged 16 to 24 what they thought was the most important moral issue they faced. Answers were:

- 59% Look after their family
- 12% Putting others first
- 4% Religious faith/beliefs

Half (51%) said their peers were less concerned about morals than their parents’ generation.

SOURCE: BBC Religion and Ethics survey, *Daily Telegraph*, 19th September, 2012.



REFLECTIONS

"The weather does lots of different things – and so does the Post Office," an advert repeated on TV too often for some viewers! While Jesus' ministry was characterised by "lots of different things" – Lordship of the weather, miraculous healings, powerful teaching – the word "often" is used surprisingly few times of Jesus, in fact just twice in the Gospels.

One of these two occasions occurs when Jesus sadly commented on the people of Jerusalem, "How often have I desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing," (Matthew 23:37). He longed to comfort them but they refused to be helped. How often in our need we look for answers in other people, in resources, in activity, and only as a last resort "in the shelter of His wings."

There is one other use of "often" applied to Jesus, given only by John (John 18:2). After praying the supreme High Priestly prayer, John records that Jesus and His disciples walked across the Kidron Valley in Jerusalem to a garden, "because Jesus often met there with His disciples." It was probably for them a place of rest away from the thronging crowds and their demands, thoughtful deliberation, quiet conversation, and peaceful enjoyment of the beauty around them.

Often – where do you go "often"? Is there a special place in your frantic life where you can just to be with Jesus away from daily pressures and demanding timetables, a place of uninterrupted conversation with Him, a place of beauty and peace where He is so close, the "garden" of the soul?

But although in this instance John uses the word "often" in a locational sense, "often" can be a spiritual password. How often do we return to a particularly meaningful passage of Scripture we have read or memorised or pray faithfully for ongoing, rather than instant needs (such as our family, for someone's healing, or coming to faith)? How often do we speak to ourselves in "psalms and hymns and spiritual songs"?

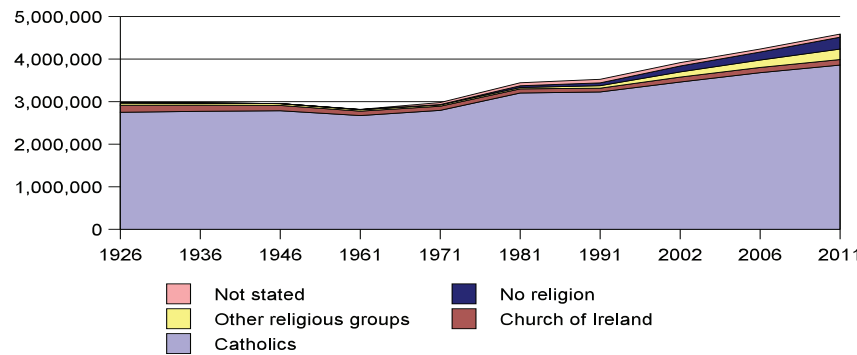
Repetition is often despised because it can so easily degenerate into meaningless mumbo-jumbo. Yet, as embodied in some church services, the beauty of such as the Lord's Prayer and a liturgy can enable us to explore the words in greater depth, to focus jumbled and wandering thoughts and to share in the fellowship of other believing hearts around us. Doing something "often" somehow strengthens us, deepens us, encourages us.

There is a physical and psychological side to "often" as well. "Smile, God loves you" may be a facile statement (though true), and smiling or laughing "often" somehow helps define our personality. We are who we are because we do some things "often". Prayerfulness characterises a person who prays often, generosity a person who gives often, selflessness a person who often denies self, kindness a person who is often serving others and above all, Christlikeness a person who is increasingly often in the Presence of the Lord Jesus.

Irish Religion

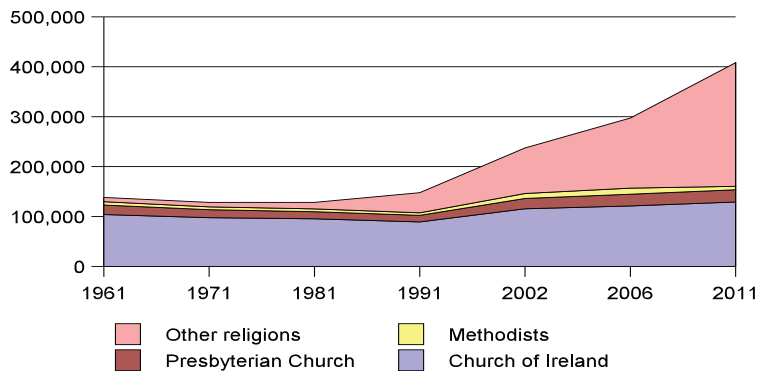
The Republic of Ireland also undertook a Census of Population in 2011 as it has done in previous years, though not always at 10 year intervals. Religion was allowed as an optional question for the first time in 1961 and "No Religion" was also introduced then as a category.

Religion of the Population of the Republic of Ireland, 1926 to 2011



It is obvious that the Catholic church dominates, though while increasing in actual numbers, decreasing as a percentage of the population (93% of the population in 1926 but 84% by 2011). It may also be seen that the proportion of No Religion is increasing, from 1% in 1981 to 4% in 2002 and to 6% in 2011; the actual numbers virtually doubled between 2006 and 2011. The other much smaller religious groups are hidden in this chart, so are shown separately in the second chart.

Non-Catholic religions in the Republic of Ireland, 1961 to 2011



The Church of Ireland, Presbyterians, Methodists all declined between 1961 and 1991, but they have all increased since then, although the Methodists have dropped again in the 2011 Census. It is obvious that it is the Other Religions which have grown so greatly over the last 20 years.

Muslims, for example, have increased from 19,000 in 2002 to over 49,000 nine years later in 2011. This 2011 figure represents 1.1% of the population, up from 0.1% in 1991. Ireland's Central Statistics Office predicts that by 2043, Islam will become the Republic's second largest religion after Catholicism when the Muslim population is expected to be more than 100,000.

Orthodox also have grown from 10,000 in 2002 to more than 45,000 by 2011, a four-fold increase. Romanian Orthodox account for a quarter of all Orthodox Christians in Ireland.

These are the two very large increases, and if these were omitted then Other Religions would be a total of 60,000 in 2002 and 151,000 in 2011, still a large increase. However, the Irish statisticians, like their British counterparts, include other Christian denominations within the "Other Religions" category, and more than half of the 151,000 is Christian. Much of the growth in the 21st century is due to these, especially some of the (black) Pentecostal denominations. In other words, some of the increases seen in England are also happening in the Republic.

These are Census counts of adherents which is not the same as membership or attendance. An Ipsos/BMRB/Irish Times survey in 2012 found that while 89% of the population identified as being Catholic, only 32% attended weekly, 8% fortnightly, 20% every 2 or 3 months, and 40% who never went or only very occasionally. Those who do go weekly are mostly elderly people and those living in rural areas. Only 18% of the Catholic population in Dublin, for example, attend weekly.

So the Irish are seeing large growths in numbers following No Religion, Orthodoxy, Pentecostalism and Islam, and while Catholic nominalism is still the "default" religion, in reality a declining number of people attend weekly. Some of the growth will be because of immigration.

SOURCES: Articles in *The Tablet* 7th April, 9th June 2012 and 4th January 2014. Irish Central Statistics Office Census website.

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Answering the Religious Question

The 2001 and 2011 Population Censuses in the UK had a non-compulsory question on religion included in the Census form, the analysis of which has given a lot of useful information. The results showed that 59% identified with the Christian religion, 9% with other religions, 25% with No Religion, and 7% declined to answer the question, some 4 million people in England and Wales.

Australia also carried out a national Population Census in the same years, with also a non-compulsory question on religion, and had similar results to Britain – 61% Christian but with 9% not answering the question. The Australian Bureau of Statistics has given some analysis of this 9% and an Australian researcher, Dr Philip Hughes, Director of their Christian Research Association, has looked at that analysis to try and draw conclusions about the actual religiosity of those not replying, rather than assuming they either have none or should be ignored as a category. Some of his findings will be relevant to the UK situation also.

In Australia, over two-fifths (44%) of the "not stated" were because no Census form was received at all from these people. They thus "not stated" all the questions, not just the religious question. Some of these were those living in very isolated places, or places hard to enumerate like high-rise blocks in cities, or those living on ships or otherwise travelling at the time of the Census, and so on. Very likely if they had been able to complete a Census form most would have answered the religion question, and very likely would have given similar overall answers as the rest of the population. If the same was true in Britain, and a similar proportion of "not stated" were because no Census form was completed at all, then this would mean an extra 2% should be added to the "Christian" total of 59%.

The other three-fifths (56%) of the Australian "not stated" were on forms which were generally otherwise completed but where those completing the forms chose not to answer this question. Some of those omitting this question perhaps did so because they did not wish to have their religion "registered" with the government, out of possible fear of persecution (especially if they were immigrants from certain countries), or past experience of government in their home country. Some of those not answering this question were either under 5 or over 75, presumably because their form was completed on their behalf by another who chose not to give their religion. Some of those over 75, however, would undoubtedly have indicated their religion – almost certainly as Christian – had the question been answered. A few Christians in exclusive groups probably would not have answered the question either.

If the British proportions are similar to those estimated in Australia then a further fifth of the "not stated" might have indicated their religion, and in British terms this would be equivalent to a further 0.5% who are Christian, making a grand total of 62% instead of the published figure of 59%. In Australia, the calculations made a slightly greater difference, the truer estimate of Christian being suggested as 65% instead of their published 61%.

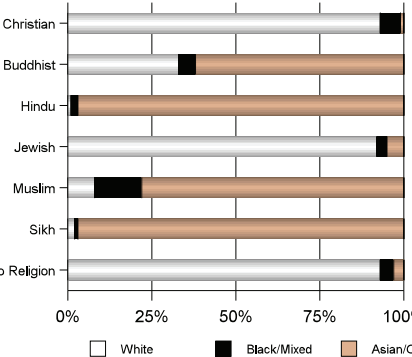
SOURCE: Article "What do people mean when they call themselves Christians?" by Rev Dr Philip Hughes, Director, Christian Research Association, Australia in *Pointers*, CRA, Vol 24 No 1, March 2014, Page 76.

Ethnicity and Religion

The 2001 and 2011 Population Censuses not only counted people's religion but they also requested a person's ethnicity, and the chart shows what percentage of each religion may be found in the three broad ethnic groups of White, Asian and Black in England in 2011.

The large majority of Christians, Jews and those of No Religion in England are White, while the large majority of Hindus and Sikhs are Asian. Most of those of Other Religions (not shown) are also White British. Three-quarters of Muslims are Asian, and while the percentage of White Muslims

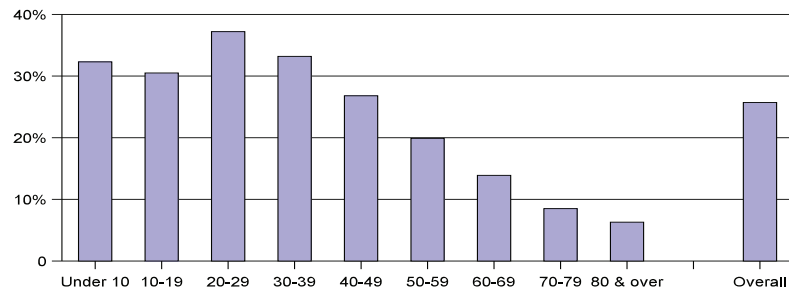
Religion by Ethnic Group, 2000, England



YES, I have NO Religion

In the 2011 Population Census, a quarter (26%) of those living in the UK said they had No Religion, a percentage made up of 25% of those in England, 32% of those in Wales, 27% of those in Scotland and 10% of those in N Ireland. The overall percentage varied by age as shown in the graph.

Percentage of each age-group indicating they had No Religion



It is clear that the majority with No Religion are those under 40, the high percentage of those under 10 presumably being because their parents, who will be mostly those in their 30s, completed the form on their behalf and followed their own lack of belief. The highest percentage is among those in their 20s, some of whom are overseas students (over half the Chinese in the UK, 56%, for example, said they had no religion, although this was by far the highest percentage). A third, 32%, of those who have a "mixed" ethnicity also see themselves as having No Religion.

More men than women say they have no religion – 29% men but 23% women, a disparity seen across all four countries in the UK and greatest in Scotland (39% men, 34% women).

Prof Linda Woodhead in her surveys for the Westminster Debates found that "No Religion is the New Religion", especially as it has grown substantially in the inter-censal decade – only 16% of the UK population said they had No Religion in 2001.

The No Religionists grew by 77% in these 10 years from 9.2 million to 16.2 million. However, the Muslims grew by virtually the same percentage, 75%, to a 2011 total of 2.8 million, and all the other religions by 40% in the same period. The Christian percentage dropped 11% in the same 10 years.

The growth rate of No Religionists therefore is not unique to them and reflects in part the fact that a number of immigrants have No Religion (a fifth, 21%, when measured in 2000, and it may be higher now).

This rate of growth is similar to that seen in the United States where No Religionists have increased from 15% of the population in 2007 to 20% in 2012, an increase in numbers of 33% in these 5 years, and which could be 66% over 10 years if the increase was the same in earlier years.

Linda Woodhead's YouGov survey found that 16% of those with No Religion believe in God, although by far the majority, 84%, are either agnostics or atheists. A few read the Bible (2%) and a few pray (3%). A sixth, 18%, meditate. She found that 13% of those with No Religion were positively hostile to religion, three-fifths, 62%, of these being men.

The British Social Attitudes survey has shown that the growth of No Religion is mostly at the expense of those who formerly belonged to the Church of England, as did Linda's study. She comments, "Whilst it's always possible that this trend could be reversed, it gets less and less likely as the chain of memory connecting young people to religion stretches and snaps."

SOURCES: Census statistics from UK national statistical offices, quoted in *UK Church Statistics* No 2; press release by Lancaster University for the Westminster Debates, Dec 2013; *Religion Watch* Vol 29, No 1, Nov 2013; www.bsa-30.natcen.ac.uk.

declined between 2001 and 2011, the percentage of Black Muslims has increased. Only the Buddhists substantially span the ethnic groups, with a third being White and three-fifths Asian, and the rest Black.

This is likely to mean homogeneity will be very prevalent in churches. The 2005 English Church Census found just 3% of congregations had over 10% from more than one ethnic group. Evangelism will largely be by ethnic group reaching out to similar ethnic groups – the main reason for the expansion of attendance in London between 2005 and 2012.

SOURCE: Office for National Statistics, website on Census, 2011.



Providing Facts for Forward Planning

SNIPPETS

1) 57% of Americans connect violent behaviour with playing violent video games, and 47% with listening to music with violent lyrics.

2) 33% of UK's current workforce is Generation Y (born 1982 to 2000), 38% is Generation X (born 1965 to 1981) and 29% are Baby Boomers (born 1946 to 1964).

3) Google's rule: 70% of staff time spent on core business; 20% on related tasks; and 10% thinking about something completely unrelated.

4) While it took London 130 years to grow from 1 million population to 8 million, Dhaka took 37 years and Seoul only 25 years.

5) The city is where four crucial groups of people are most likely to be found – young people, the most unreached, the "culture shapers" and the poorest of the poor.

6) In the period 2000 to 2012, the number of employees in the UK rose by 5%, while the number self-employed rose by 38%. The latter tend to be male, over 50, working longer hours than salaried employees but earning less.

7) The UN says that the most dangerous place in the world to be born as a girl is India, having the highest female death rate up to 5 years of age; it also traffics 1.2 million child prostitutes annually.

SOURCES: 1) Email from Barna Group, 24th January 2014, Page 8; 2) and 3) Professional Manager, CMI, Winter 2014, Pages 31 and 45 respectively; 4) and 5) Article "Commitment to the City" by Paul Hindreth, *Lausanne Global Analysis*, Vol 3, No 2 March 2014; 6) *The Economist*, 12th April 2014, Page 78; 7) The original quotation, given as one of the Feb 2014 Snippets, omitted the middle phrase on death rate, kindly supplied by David Ford, of the Free Church of Scotland.

CHURCH DECLINE PUT BACK BY 5 YEARS!

The latest analysis of church membership, to be published in the forthcoming second edition of *UK Church Statistics*, shows that numbers across the UK continue to decline. However, the good news is that the rate of decline has lessened significantly and the membership level previously anticipated for 2020 will now most likely not be evident till 2025.

This alleviation is due to two major changes over the last few years – the large number of new black and other immigrant churches which have been started, and the increasing success of new gatherings often called "Fresh Expressions", which is becoming a generic name for all kinds of usually fairly informal gatherings like Messy Church, Pub groups or Café Churches, mission-minded churches, Churches Without Walls (especially in Scotland) as well as those specifically named as Fresh Expressions.

Sources of data

The basic data was collected by sending a form to every single denomination in the UK in the middle of 2013 where a contact address was available and asking for the detail just described, followed by a reminder letter to those who hadn't replied in November 2013. Some respondents were unable to provide all the data requested, so where necessary the missing information has been estimated. Where no data was available from a denomination, sometimes their website was used instead. There are nearly 300 different denominations in the UK, where a denomination is defined as "a Christian organisation uniting a number of local congregations", using John Adair's definition given in his book *The Becoming Church* (SPCK, 1977).

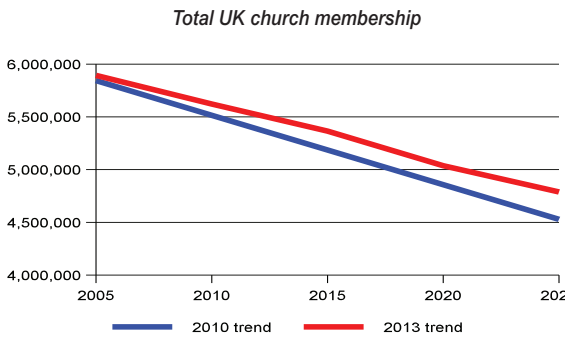
Reasons for growth

The 2011 Population Census results have now been published across all four countries of the UK. As each country included a (voluntary) question on religion, a question on ethnicity and another on immigration, an analysis of all this data may be made. Since many of the immigrants have come from "Christian" countries, the flow of new people into existing congregations has been notable, as well as resulting in the formation of literally hundreds of new churches. The Black Majority Churches' (BMCs) "explosion" has been significant, especially in Greater London where of the 700 new churches which began between 2005 and 2012, at least 400 were BMCs. The Redeemed Christian Church of God alone has started 296 new churches in the UK in the last 5 years, the largest number for any single denomination.

The phenomenal growth of Fresh Expressions has been noted and analysed in some detail, especially by Dr George Lings of the Church Army. This movement, while formally launched by the Church of England in 2005, has been applied (as a name) retrospectively to previous congregational starts and is now a collective force, difficult to quantify precisely, but without doubt drawing many new people into the churches.

Both of these areas of growth have been explored at some length in the next *UK Church Statistics*, and because the impact of both has been to increase congregational attendance and membership, the previous rate of decline, while continuing, has slowed. In the first volume the total UK church membership for 2015 was estimated as 5,190,000 and 2020 as 4,860,000. In this second volume these figures are estimated respectively as 5,370,000 and 5,040,000 with a 2025 forecast of 4,790,000, these being increases of nearly 4% on the 2015 and 2020 figures.

While these increases are not sufficient to bring overall growth, these two key movements have, however, in effect, pushed the previous rate of decline back by about 5 years. The rates of change are illustrated in the graph, where the estimated 2020 membership on the blue line (the 2010 trend) is about the number for 2025 on the red line (the 2013 trend):



Multi-multi Britain

In 2011, English people were 80% white-British, which means that 20% came from other backgrounds. They also came from a multi-cultural, multi-linguistic and multi-religious background. In 2001, English people were 88% white-British, which means that the number of white-British people in England has actually decreased by 3.3 million people in the inter-censal decade, while the population as a whole has increased by 1.0 million, giving an extra 4.3 million



people in England in 2011 who were not white-British, in addition to the 6.5 million already living here, and giving a grand total of 10.8 million people, or 20%, of the entire population. In other words the non-white-British contingent in our population increased by two-thirds, 65%, in the 10 years 2001 to 2011.

That gives something of the scale of the immigration which has occurred and, because a number of these immigrants are "Christian" people, or come from countries notionally Christian, an indication of the impact they have had on our church life. The main denominations affected by this influx of immigrants are the Roman Catholics, the Orthodox, the Pentecostals and the many "Overseas Protestant" churches as they are called. Between them these four major groups have more than 50 denominations dedicated to those from overseas countries, some countries having immigrant churches from multiple denominations (like Polish Catholics and Polish Lutherans, or Romanian Orthodox and Romanian Catholics).

Continued on page 3