FUTURE_FIRST_Issue 35 October 2014_Newsletter_05 12/09/2014 10:44 Page 1

Church Cohabitation

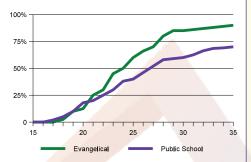
Cohabitation among the general population has increased hugely over the past 20 years, and is highest as a percentage among those in their 20s, put at 22% for this age-group for 2011 by the Office for National Statistics. The percentage of those in their 20s going to church is the smallest percentage of any decadal group in the population, just 3% in 2013.

Perhaps these two percentages are linked. Are some of those in their 20s put off church because most churches do not look approvingly on cohabitation? Nevertheless, some churchgoers do cohabit, although the percentage is difficult to quantify. A detailed survey of all the Anglican churches in three Deaneries in Kent in 2001 found 2% cohabiting (based on personal information from 2,700 active churchgoers across 39 churches). That percentage is likely to have increased since then as cohabitation has become more accepted and popular.

However, a detailed survey across 7 Evangelical churches and 1,100 people in 2012 found just 1% cohabiting, although this was an average across 3% of those under 40, 1% of those aged 40 to 59 and 0% of those older. This suggests fewer cohabitees in Evangelical churches. Does this suggest more positive Scriptural teaching on marriage in Evangelical churches or, perhaps, earlier marriage in lieu of cohabiting?

This latter has now been measured in a sample of 1.500 Americans who were asked among many questions on their education, when they had married and whether they had attended an evangelical or public or Catholic school. The results for the first two categories are shown in the graph (the Catholics were somewhere between

Percentage married by age and type of school attended, 2011



How typical these results are is not known, and Americans may well be different from Britons in their speed of marriage, but this evidence does suggest that Evangelicals tend to marry much more quickly than others, and therefore presumably cohabit less. This, of course, begs the question for Evangelicals of whether even though marrying at an earlier age, a shorter length of co-habitation took place beforehand.



SOURCES: Congregational Attitudes and Beliefs Survey, Diocese Itancy, 2012; How ... Marital Status ... has changed, ONS, March of Religious Research, Vol 56, No 2, June 2014.

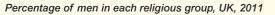
The Gender of Churchgoers

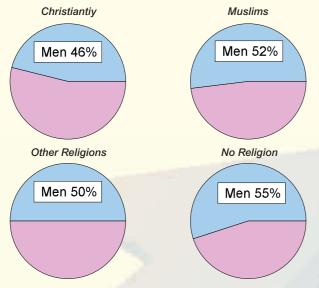
It is frequently said that women go to church more than men, and, statistically, that is true. In 2005, 57% of English churchgoers were women, in 2002 60% of Scottish churchgoers were. The percentage has increased slightly over the years - it was 55% in England in 1979, and 52% in Scotland in 1984.

This is an average across all denominations. In some denominations the sexes reach parity - New Churches (in England), for example, are 50-50; Pentecostals are similar 49-51 (male-female), as are Independent churchgoers (48-52). Some denominations are better than their "group". Baptists, for example, are 59% female, but Grace Baptists (about 4% of total Baptists) are only 54%. All these are comparison with a national population proportion of 49% men, 51% women.

The same ratio was seen in the 2011 Population Census. In England, of those saying they were Christian, 54% were women, 46% men. Both Wales and Scotland had the same proportions, but in N Ireland it was 52% women, 48% men.

However, this is not true for all religions. As the chart shows, in Islam, Other Religions and those with No Religion, males are either in the majority or equal.





In other studies, the same phenomenon occurs, if with different percentages. In the British Social Attitudes' Survey 58% of Christians are women, 50% of those in other religions, but only 43% of those with no religion. A small study of churches in Sheffield showed that men were more likely to attend church less than once a month (54% to 46% women), and that women were more likely to be small group eaders (53% women to 47% men).

Why are there more women in church? An unpublished small study in Scotland in the 1980s asking the question found that men, especially if they were Catholic, saw women in church as "representative of the family", and if the wife was in church praying there was no need for the husband to go too! Some say that church culture, tradition, worship is female. Others consider that women are better at building community, are more family-orientated, better at keeping to a rhythm or cycle of attendance. Each of these reasons have counter arguments.

Further suggestions put forward the view that husbands regard Sunday as their rightful "day off" for sport, entertainment. DIY etc. after a hard week's work, while wives are so used to full-time occupation (running a household, looking after children, holding a full-time job, etc) they don't really need a "day off" and can fit in church attendance with the rest of their activities, after the pattern of the ideal woman

Proverbs 31 (New English Bible)

V 16a: After careful thought she buys a field

V 16b: and plants a vineyard out of her earnings She makes a profit and reinvests V 18: She sees that her business goes well

V 24a: She weaves linen and sells it

V 15a: She rises while it is still night

V15b: and sets meat before her maidens

V20: She is open-handed to the wretched and generous to the poor

V31: Extol her for the fruit of all her toil, and let her labour bring her honour in the city gate and is certainly commendable

What does that mean?

She does a market assessment and invests

She keeps books and manages cash flow She is involved in manufacturing and retail

V 24b: and supplies merchants with their sashes She has set up a supply chain

She is the bread maker of the family

She provides employment

She uses part of the profit for charitable work

Her work in business should be recognised

SOURCES: Religious Trends Nos 4 and 6; Office for National Statistics; UK Church Statistics No 2; Grace Baptist Church Census, Brierley Consultancy, 2014. The Clue is in the Pew: A Sociological Analysis of Gender Differences..., Jordon Betts, Dept of Sociological Studies, University of Sheffield; Business as Mission Mats Tunehag, www.MatysTunehag.com, Page 7.

RELIGIOUS STUDIES

and A Level. In 2005 2.6% of students took GCSE exams in RS out of all preparation for University. the GCSEs taken that year. By 2009 that had risen to 3.3% and by 2014 it was 5.4%. That doubling is quite an impressive increase. It represents in 2014 more than 280,000 students - some 13 times the number of 16-year olds attending church! Absence from church is not because of disinterest in the broad subject of religion.

A Levels are likewise popular, going from 1.4% of all A Levels taken in 2005 to 2.5% in 2009 and 3.7% in 2014, almost a tripling of numbers in the 10 years. In 2014 the number represented 24,000 students, or 15% more than the number of 18-year olds attending church.

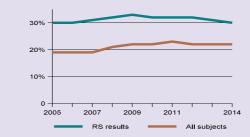
With both GCSE and A Level RS a greater percentage of girls take the exams than boys. 150,000 girls took RS as a GCSE subject in 2014 against 130, 000 boys. With A Levels, however, the disparity is much greater, with more than twice the 7,400 RS A Levels taken by boys in 2014 being taken by girls

The grades obtained by students taking RS as a GCSE subject are generally high, and much higher than the average GCSE results as the graph shows. The comparison for A Levels is much closer. The A Level results in 2014 are slightly lower than in 2013 for both boys and girls.

RS is generally regarded by the Universities as a "middle-difficulty" subject, harder than English but about the same as Geography. Both Oxford and Cambridge include RS in the top-level of "generally suitable" Arts A Levels,

RS (Religious Studies) is an increasingly popular subject, both for GCSE and the Russell Group of Universities generally value RS as a suitable

Percentage of students getting A/A* at GCSE, 2005-2014



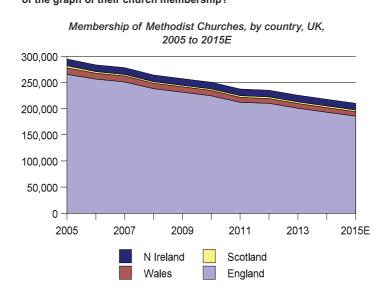
Dr Peter Vardy, former vice-principal of Heythrop College, London sees the long-term outlook of numbers studying RS as declining because the English Baccalaureate excludes it Independent Catholic and Christian schools will probably still teach it, but with pressure to do well in league tables other schools may drop it.

How best can the churches use this broad interest in religion (for RS is not just about Christianity) to help young people learn more about what it means to follow Him who is the Way, the Truth and the Life?

SOURCES: Results from web-site www.bstubbs.co.uk/gender/maie August, 2014, Page 4 and *The Tablet*, 23rd August 2014, Page 27

Methodists: Stemming the Tide?

The 2013 issue of Statistics for Mission has been published by the Methodist Church with a challenge – what can be done to change the direction of the graph of their church membership?



While the decline in membership over the last 10 years of the order of a third, and -15% over the last 5 years, is a cause for deep concern, this is but symptomatic of a much longer decline, not just for Methodism but of British hurch life generally. From a high of almost 30% of the adult population being church members in 1930, that is now 10% in 2013.

A decline of the magnitude shown in the above graph is not unique to Methodism. The membership of the United Reformed Church dropped -13% to 62,000 in the five years 2008 to 2013, the Church of Scotland's membership dropped -29% in the same period to 340,000 (twice the rate of Methodism), the Union of Welsh Independents dropped -23% to 23,000 members in 2013, and the Roman Catholics in Northern Ireland have seen a drop of -20% in the past 5 years. In every part of the UK, some denominations are declining as fast.

What are some of the reasons? Methodist membership is not known by age in detail, but the various English Church Censuses carried out between 1979 and 2005 have provided basic information. In 2005, 47% of those attending Methodist churches were 65 or over, of whom half were 75 or over. That's 9 years ago! Older people are "promoted to glory" in the words of the Salvation Army, and it is a fact that for every person who has joined the church generally in the last 10 years, 4 people have died. That is why the Population Census recorded a drop in the number ticking "Christian" from 72% in 2001 to 59%

Some of the reasons are structural. Methodist ministers are frequently asked to move on after serving for five years, but church growth research has shown that the most likely period for growth occurs after a minister has been present for between 7 and 10 years.

Methodist ministers are frequently appointed to a Circuit, not a single church, yet the most recent Church of England research, From Anecdote to Evidence, has shown that growth is most likely when a minister is responsible for just a

Part of the reason is theological. The 2005 Census showed that 51% of Methodists were Broad or Liberal (terms the ministers themselves chose), 24% Low Church, and 18% Evangelical. But across the country it is the Evangelicals which are growing (from 30% of all churchgoers in 1989 to 40%in 2005) while those who are Broad or Liberal have stayed at 19% in both

Can the situation be redeemed? Yes! Methodists have invested heavily in "Messy Church" and "Fresh Expressions", having nearly 900 such units in 2009. Church Army research has shown that nationwide (a) these are growing very rapidly, and (b) about two-fifths of those attending are new to the church. The average size is about 40 people so this represents a welcome influx of fresh faces, although not yet in sufficient numbers to offset those ageing and dying. Many of those attending these churches have young families and Messy Church has yet to see if such will continue to attend when these young people leave Junior and start Secondary School. If they do stay, there is great hope for the future even if "institutionalism" will have to be reinvented as Fresh Expressions is anything but institutional! Instead it stands for - Fun, Food, Families and Fellowship.

Poster in a public school in South Pasadena, California: "In the event of atomic attack, the rule prohibiting prayer in school will be temporarily suspended."

Thora Hird told this story on a BBC1 programme Praise Be about a little girl saying her prayers: "God bless Mummy, God bless Daddy, God bless my brother Tommy, God bless Granny - and God look after yourself, 'cos if anything happens to you, we've had it!"

A very earnest member of the local church was praising the obvious spiritual gifts of the new vicar, adding, "We never knew anything about sin until he

SOURCE: Humour, Clerical and General, by John M Barnes, formerly of the Secretaries' and Administrators' Christian Fellowsi

SNOWFLAKES

Cost of the cinema. The graph shows how the average spend per person in the UK on going to the cinema has increased over the last few years, and how the price has always kept above the average annual rate of inflation.

Price per person for attending cinema, 2000-2013



SOURCES: Screen Digest, quoted in Impact, Issue 5, April 2014, Page 45;

Redundant Churches. English Heritage maintains a "Buildings at Risk" register across buildings of all types, but roughly an eighth of these are churches. Many such are redundant Church of England churches, which spend 8 to 10 years on the register with them, but in that process many are re-used in totally different ways. About a fifth (21%) continue to be used for Christian worship, a further fifth (20%) are demolished and another fifth (19%) are turned into residential accommodation. Of the remainder, 11% are used for cultural or civic community purposes, 9% are used as offices or for shopping, 8% are retained as monuments, and the remaining 12% become used either as a private chapel, for light industry, sports, education or arts and crafts.

SOURCE: The reuse of redundant and at risk churches and chapels i London: Principles, Process and Practice, Sarah Earney, Conservation

Big Data, such as all the products bought by Sainsbury's millions of customers over 5 years, can only be analysed through computers. A study by the CIA found that having more data did not necessarily improve the decision but increased the confidence placed in the answers.

SOURCE: Article in Management Today, May 2014.

iPads or Tablets are more likely to be owned by a 9 2 Chronicles 9:9 man, aged between 20 and 39, working in an 10 A pinch of Leviticus 2:13 office. He will have had at least 4 years' experience 11 1 teaspoonful of Amos 4:5* of such devices and will access it at least 5 times a day on average, and will have at least 15 regular friends. These are the results of a survey looking at social networking.

SOURCE: International Journal of Market Research, Vol 56 Issue 3, 2014,

Sunday Schools. 1916 Annual Report, National Sunday School Union: "The shortage of male teachers has been interpreted by women as a 6 Then add 12 golden opportunity for the exercise of their gifts, and one hears of some Sunday Schools now entirely staffed by women; whilst in several others the women workers outnumber the men. No historian of the modern Sunday School can fail to record this fact and to pay a tribute of admiration to such noble and self-sacrificing labours".

World War was being fought]. SOURCE: Courtesy Naomi Stanton in presentation on Twentieth Century

Multi-church Benefices. The recent Anglican

research From Anecdote to Evidence shows that growth is more likely if clergy are responsible for just one church. The 2012 London Church Census found the same. However, in a third of the Church of England Dioceses two-fifths, 40%, of clergy have benefices of 3 or more churches, and in a further half of all Dioceses one-fifth, 20%, do so. The average number of churches per incumbent is 2.5. A forecast of the situation in 2021 was that 90% of clergy would be in multiparish benefices.

British children dropout. About 6.3% of children

under 15 in 2010 were involved with church. That dropped to 4.1% for those aged 15 to 19 before falling to 3% for those in their 20s. So half the children in church are "lost" before they reach 20. This comes through a variety of reasons - boredom with Sunday School-type format, lack of relevance in what is taught, and with wrestling with questions of (a) science v Genesis (evolution v creation). If evolution is right, how can we trust the rest of the Bible? (b) the issue of sex/puberty/ sexting/ pornography etc.; (c) "love" - what does married commitment mean if half see their parents split before they take their GCSEs? (d) creation /environment care (very important for some); (e) life usually pending a decision on what should be done questions, like – why am I here? Why suffering? Why so much poverty? Where am I going? Is there life after death?

> Children's commitment may also waver through "faith transmission" problems. If both parents work,

Biblical Cooking

If you can prepare this dish without looking up the references in the Bible, you should be on Mastermind! It is suggested the Authorised Version

Ingredient

½ lb of Judges 5:25 (end)

½ lb of Jeremiah 6:20

1 tablespoon of 1 Samuel 14:25

3 of Jeremiah 17:11

5 1/2 lb of 1 Samuel 30:12

6 ½ lb of Nahum 3:12 (chopped) 7 2 oz of Numbers 17:8 (blanched and chopped)

8 1 lb of 1 Kings 4:22

12 3 tablespoons of Judges 4:19

Preparation Mix 8, 9, 10 and 11, and put them aside

2 Beat 1, 2 and 3 to a cream

Still beating add 4, one at a time

Add 5, 6 and 7 and beat again

Then add the mixture of 8, 9, 10 and 11,

Bake in a low oven for 1½ hours

*Leaven may be taken as baking powder or as yeast, then prepare according to instructions on the package.

SOURCE: Becket News, No 57, January 2014, Bulletin of the Hamburg

[Ed: There were far fewer men because the First when is the time for joint Bible reading? Family prayer? Just talking about God and Jesus? Grandparents are a key part of this mix also – and their faith and example are very important in a grandchild's life.

SOURCE: English Church Census data updated in UK Church Statistics

AIDS/HIV. The good news is that the number of deaths worldwide from AIDS has reduced from 2.5 million in 2005 to 1.6 million in 2013. The annual number of new infections has also dropped, from 3 million in 2005 to 2.3 million in 2013. With 35 million people already infected, it's clear that this disease is not going to be eradicated soon. A study in Natal, South Africa, showed that 1% of boys under 15 had AIDS, which increased to 2% of those who were over 20. For girls, however, the percentages were much worse - from 3% to 25%.

SOURCE: Report in The Economist, 26th July, 2014, Page 67

These may be helpful Books and reports received

The Future is Now, How God is Working in the 21st Century, by Dr Kent R Hunter, www.church doctor.org. It includes a good description of the various evangelism methods being used in America and the UK.

The J-Dog Journey, Where is Life?, by Dr Kent R Hunter, www.churchdoctor.org. Gives an excellent biographical description from a participant's ewpoint of the one year 2-day a week FORM discipleship programme of St Thomas' Church, Philadelphia, Sheffield. Very modern presentation, and very readable.

Archbishop, Michell Guinness, Hodder Stoughton, 2014. A fascinating read of the first woman Archbishop, revealing the many intrigues that confront the holder of the office. Builds to an exciting climax, with a well-worked out story all along. Accurately reflects the Church of England.

Another Window on British Secularization: Public Attitudes to Church and Clergy since the 1960s, by Dr Clive Field, published on line June 2014 by Routledge, in *Contemporary British History*, Vol 28, No 2. Downloadable from: www.dx.doi.org/ 10.1080/13619462.2014.923765. A summary of dozens of studies, with very helpful analysis.

Continued from page 1

they would welcome the opportunity "to join a small group of Christians who meet in homes and discuss faith and life together"; 15% said that they would like to attend a church congregation if a different style was available locally: 34% suggested that they would be open to attending church if it fitted with other commitments.

These findings are also the tip of an iceberg. The survey has provided a wealth of invaluable data and a more comprehensive report is available at: www.resourcingmission.org.uk/ resources/mission-research.

If you would like to be kept informed about further developments or share your own reflections on what has been discovered, please contact Mission Development Worker, Steve Aisthorpe: E: saisthorpe@cofscotland.org.uk.

www.resourcingmission.org.uk/resources/faith-journeys-beyond-

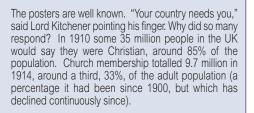
Statistically, we can be "95% confident" that the true proportion of all who fit our criteria is in the range 41.93% to 45.67% (that is, c.127,600 to 139,000).

³ The 10-item Hoge Intrinsic Religiosity Scale. See Hoge, D (1972) A Validated Intrinsic Religious Motion Scale in *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, Vol 11, p 369-376.

Third, Fourth and Fifth Agers

When giving the age of churchgoers, the oldest group is usually simply summarised as "65 and over" as often the comparison is between the younger and older ages. However, "65 and over" may be divided into the "Third Age," a title given by the government for those between 65 and 74, and what might be called "Fourth Agers", those between 75 and 84, and "Fifth Agers", those who are 85 and over. These three groups are in fact quite different, not only in years but also in health, ability, energy, mobility, availability and outlook.

Numbers of churchgoers in these different groups were first requested in the English Church Census for 2005, and while the total number of those 65 and over is known earlier and has been estimated for later years, the subdivision into these age groups was not included. It can, however, perhaps be taken to be similar to the population split which is known much more precisely from the Population Censuses. and the forward forecasts given by the Office for National Statistics. A calculation of these yields the following chart and Table, the numbers behind the chart being shown as they are important:



REFLECTION

In the autumn of 1914, 100 years ago, the world was

at war. Total British casualties exceeded 700,000

dead, an eighth (13%) of all those who fought for

their country, about 2% of the entire population, plus

a further 4% who were wounded. The dead and

wounded were mostly men. In total, worldwide,

some 9.4 million died (1.8% of the combined

population of the countries involved) and a further

23 million were wounded. Enormous numbers.

Because the average life expectancy was so much less in 1910 than today, almost a third, 31%, of the population was under 15 (it's 18% in 2014), some 13 million young people. Of that 31% in 1910 some 7 million (or 54%) had attended Sunday School. The Sunday School movement had its boom years from 1880 to 1920, when more than half the young people in the country

What did the Sunday School movement achieve? Not church attendance: the average percentage of Sunday School scholars joining the church 1900 to 1937 was 7.2%. What it did achieve, however, was a reformation in civil society, as there was a "decline in violence, dishonesty, drunkenness and illegitimacy in the late 19th century and probably up to the First World War. [British] people had created the moral qualities of selfcontrol and self-restraint, of probity and prudence, of decency and sobriety."

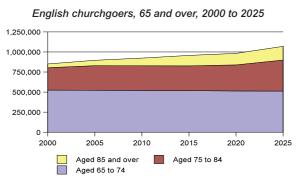
So comments Christie Davies, Professor of Sociology at the University of Reading. He makes it clear that these were the qualities that enabled the British people to survive two World Wars, the slump and massive unemployment between them, and the postwar austerity. "They may not have been good times, but they were the times of a good people."

He argues in his book The Strange Death of Moral Britain that it was the Sunday School movement that provided the background teaching for societal behaviour, morals and attitudes on which Lord Kitchener and his colleagues could call to bring about the enormous response of young men flocking to fight the

That is one possibility. The latter half of the 19th century and into the 20th saw the rise and fall of the British Empire. At its peak a quarter of the world was coloured red on global maps depicting its extent; the sun "never set on the Queen's dominions". There are many cons as well as pros for the British Empire, but one pro was that it gave the British a sense of purpose: "to lead the world", "to educate the nationals", "to Christianise (civilise) the heathen" or whatever phrases were used then which we would reformulate today. Such a purpose helped sustain the war effort.

Today, 100 years later, we have lost that purpose and, as Eugene Peterson says in his brilliant Revelation commentary, "result no longer flows from purpose." "Rebel angels, disbarred from practising in the courts of heaven, infiltrate invisible world realms, twisting the glories of intelligence into patterns of deception." The Pope has declared that we are now in World War III. Perhaps. But there is no question that the world order is crumbling and that Britain no longer engenders or exports national morality.

SOURCES: Historial Museum, Thiepval, France for war details; Religious Trends No 2 2000/2001, Christian Research, for population; numbers joining church, Naomi Stanton research; The Strange Death of Moral Britain, Christie Davies, Transaction Publishers, London, 2007; Reversed Thunder, Eugene Peterson, HarperOne, 1991, Page 152.



nalich	churchaoers.	65 and over	2000 to	2021
rialisti	criurcriaoers.	oo ariu over.	2000 10	2023

Year	65 - 74	75-84	85 & over	Total 65 & over	Average age	% of all of all attenders
2000	524,900	278,800	46,800	850,500	74.5	25%
2005	522,200	307,100	61,400	890,700	75.0	28%
2010	519,900	307,800	95,900	923,600	75.6	30%
2015	518,200	308,500	130,200	956,900	76.2	33%
2020	514,200	324,600	143,600	982,400	76.5	36%
2025	512,700	386,700	170,500	1,069,900	77.1	42%

It may be seen that there is little change across these 25 years in the number of churchgoers aged 65 to 74, mostly because there are good numbers of churchgoers in earlier years who continue to come to church, being healthy and active enough to do so.

Numbers of churchgoers aged 75 to 84 increase slightly (16%) between 2000 and 2020 but then increase quite substantially between 2020 and 2025, assuming that churchgoers follow the general population whose Fourth Age also expands significantly during this period.

Numbers of churchgoers in their Fifth Age, 85 and over, increase almost 4-fold in this period, from 47,000 in 2000 to over 170,000 by 2025. Again, this follows what is happening in the general population, but also takes into account the general finding on older churchgoers that they continue with their life-time habit of regular church attendance even in their old age. Some may well need transport or other help

As these numbers increase (and the average age of those 65 and over moves from 74 in 2000 to 77 by 2025), the proportion they are of total church attendance also increases, from 25% in 2000 to 42% by 2025. The proportion of those in their Third Age moves from 62% in 2000 to 48% by 2025, if these trends turn out to be correct.

In general, church leaders should be aware of the likely changes that lie ahead - relatively little movement over the next 5 years but much more so in the five years after that.

SOURCE: English Church Census 2005, as given in Religious Trends No 6, 2006/2007, Christian Research, and subsequent estimates of total churchgoers, using the Population Census to give appropriate proportions over 65.

HEADS OF HOUSEHOLDS

A survey of Heads of Households (or "Family CEO" as IPC Media calls such) asked them about shopping. They said:

99%	took responsibility for the grocery shop
0070	took roopenoismity for the grootily onep

like to try new food products

look out for vouchers and take advantage of promotions

like to try new technology

shop around to get the best deals

have favourite brands but don't always buy them

say people trust them to give good advice and guidance

62% are responsible for how the household budget is spent

use price comparison sites to get the best deals say their partner would be lost without them to manage the finances.

Summarising, most are very conscious of finance, accept their role and are prepared to bypass usual habits. Something for the church to build on?

SOURCE: Articles in Impact, Market Research Society, Issue 6, July 2014, Page 52.

Urban Living

Many more people live in urban areas than rural in Britain (82% to 18%). People in urban areas are less likely to be born in Britain (85% to 95% in rural areas), and less likely to own their homes (61% to 74%). Those of other than white ethnicities are more likely to live in urban areas (88% to 12%). People with long-term illnesses are more likely to live in rural areas (19% to 14%).

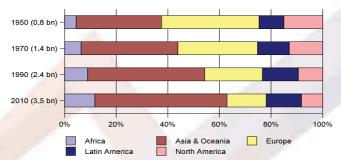
However, two-fifths of churches are in rural areas (41% to 59% in urban areas) but only 19% of churchgoers (to 81% in urban areas). Rural churches on average are therefore much smaller: 39 on a Sunday compared with 116 in urban areas, four times the size. However, rural Anglican churches produce more confirmation candidates per capita (and more female) than urban parishes, and have a larger average Electoral Roll – but urban parishes keep them on their Roll for longer. Rural churches also have more Easter Day communicants.

In Britain over the last 40 years, many cities have had to de-industrialise, often leading to great inner city deprivation. A few places, like Islington, have "gentrified," making older property highly desirable and now modernised and owned by senior professionals. Some towns, like London generally, have seen large increases in the service industry, but others like Cambridge and Warrington have seen research and new manufacturing built on greenfield sites but requiring motorised transport to reach them. Each of these changes brings big challenges to churches trying to meet people's needs.

Others, especially in the north and Midlands, have preserved their industrial heritage with the opening of (often very modern) museum or heritage centres, which increasingly attract visitors. Birmingham's Think Tank or Coventry's Transport Museum are just two examples. Other cities have gone "digital", that is, providing good coverage for texting, calling, web access, emailing, etc. As a consequence people meet through Wi-Fi in cafés, bars, libraries, park benches. Workplaces are increasingly connected to home by fast broadband, so that families, friends and colleagues can always be in touch. Cities in Britain have also become "under siege" by being centres of surveillance, with nearly 2 million CCTV cameras in operation. Again, how are churches changing to meet such needs? The huge growth of Fresh Expressions is one way in which more informal networking is taking shape. If, for example, some ancient city/town churches became Heritage Centres, would this attract more people to Sunday worship? Many have an incredible story to tell, and the popularity of Cathedral Exhibitions, for example,

These huge changes are also reflected globally where there has been an enormous swing to urban population. It may be hard to realise, but in 1800, Asia had 64 of the world's largest cities. Industrialisation meant that by 1900 Europe had 53 of the largest, but by 2000 Asia had swung back again with 49 of the largest. Africa and Asia are the fast growing urban areas of the world. The change in the urban population by continent over the last 60 years is shown in the chart:

Urban population by continent, 1950-2010



What of the future? Urbanisation, at least in developing countries, is likely to continue to increase rapidly. Four experts, three from the University of Lancaster and one in Australia, have produced a working paper on the "Future of Cities" and have suggested four types into which current cities may develop:

1) "High-tech" cities, with extensive links elsewhere, requiring frequent transport and movement (including space), people in "coffices" (working at home), who are always exploring, travelling, with

2) "Digital" cities, with 3D printing common (at home also), driver-less cars, with many sensors to reduce energy use, more localised amenities, but people seeking ownership of latest technical solutions.

3) "Liveable" cities, with high density neighbourhoods, neighbourhood communities, collective local services, access via slow moving vehicles (like bikes) or just walking, where being a local hero counts.

4) "Fortress" cities, in poverty areas, limited long-distance travel, much pollution, shortage of resources, where life is guarded, crises are frequent, and safety and access to food etc. are key concerns.

The difference between High-tech and Digital cities is that the former is inhabited by richer people. Vertical space above their city is used (for example, helicopter transportation as in São Paulo now): Amazon has speculated on using drones to make customer deliveries; tall buildings could even house animals and crops. Churches might be on one floor of a skyscraper.

Churches in Digital cities would need to evolve a very different culture and edifice from that which most have today, while existing churches could probably fit into Liveable cities without too much adaptation. Churches in Fortress cities would need help and support as many do today in developing countries.

What type of church is your church likely to become? What type of city would your nearest urban area most likely move towards if these were the only alternatives? Thinking how cities in the UK might change over the next 50 years is not something many of us do, but those who are now churchgoers in their 20s are highly likely to see some of these changes. Awareness of such is essential if the church is not only

SOURCES: Religious Trends, No 6, 2006/2007, Christian Research; article "Is the rural church different?" by David Lankshear in Rural Theology; Society Now, sue 19. Summer 2014, Pages 20/21; Living in the City, Future of cities working paper, Government Office for Science, June 2014

e-Books

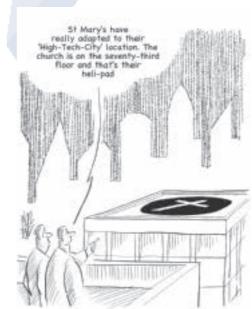
e-books, books which can be read electronically on a Kindle, platter or ipad, are a relatively recent phenomenon. A huge jump in their sales occurred in the middle of 2012 when Fifty Shades of Grey was published, when total sales of digital fiction went from £70 mn in 2011 to £175 mn in 2012 (not all due to this trilogy), about three-quarters (77%) of all digital sales.

Although sales of printed books declined -5% between 2012 and 2013 (from £3,039 mn to £2,880 mn), sales of digital books continued to increase by +19% from £427 mn to £509 mn. Of those reading books at all, three-fifths (62%) read them as printed books, and just 15% use an ereader. Of this 15%, 4% use a tablet and 3% a smartphone. The remaining quarter of adults, 23%, said they did not read for pleasure. Of those 65 and over, a slightly higher percentage, 19%, use e-readers. How far are Christian organisations able to use this technological advance for God's Word and relevant Christian iterature such as Christian novels?

The same "Quick Reads" survey in 2013 also found that 9% of parents have stopped reading to their children because their child wants to do other things. A further 4% have stopped reading to them as they found their children could read better than they can!

An e-book is cheaper than a printed book; in 2012 t was about 40% or two-fifths of the price. Although fewer e-books were printed in 2012 than 2011, the volume of sales was higher, and the same occurred in 2013. However, the rate of increase in sales is slowing down. In 2014 it is expected that three-fifths, 60%, of e-book sales will be fiction. The difficulty for publishers is to know whether this proportion is likely to continue to increase

SOURCES: Articles in The Bookseller 20th December 2012, 4th October 2013, 7th February 2014 and 2nd May 2014.



FutureFirst is a bimonthly bulletin for those concerned with the future of the church published by Brierley Consultancy. Editorial poard: Rosemary Dowsett, Anne Coomes and Peter Brierley. The acceptance and publication of copy does not indicate editoria sement. Readers are welcome to quote items provided hey give the source.

stablished 2009. UK subscriptions £20 per annum; overseas 32 per annum. Make cheque out to 'Peter Brierley', or contact r BACS details and send to Brierley Consultancy, The Old Pos Office, 1 Thorpe Avenue, Tonbridge, Kent TN10 4PW. Email:peter@brierleyres.com

7 01732 369 303

ISSN 2040-0268

FutureFirst

regularly attend a service of worship on Sunday mornings

The empirical data suggest that the majority of people in the

UK who identify themselves as Christians are no longer

engaged with a congregation in the traditional sense. Eager

understand better the changes shaping the Christian

community, last autumn the Church of Scotland took the

the Christian population of the Highlands and Islands that has

little or no engagement with church congregations. A random

sample of over 5,500 people was contacted by telephone. Of

The purpose of the survey was to build on the foundations of

out in-depth interviews with thirty Christians who were not

attending a congregation. It provided unique insights into the

experiences and perceptions of Christian believers who had

either disengaged from congregational life or who, in some

Last autumn's survey, being based on a random and

substantial sample, has put some empirical flesh on the bones

of previous insights and probed the themes that emerged from

those previous in-depth interviews. We can now say with

confidence that approximately 44% of the population of the

Highlands and Islands identify themselves as Christians but

are not engaged with a church congregation. We also now

have a valuable understanding of what people mean when

they identify themselves as "Christian". The survey included a

set of questions which, together, give an indication of how

significant a person's faith is to them and the extent to which it

influences their whole life.³ The same questions (comprising

the "HIR Scale") have been used extensively in other studies.

High scores on this scale indicate that a person's faith

underpins all that they do; their faith is core to their motivation

and, in this sense, they live their faith. Low scores suggest that

they perceive their faith as having less impact on their life.

Other questions asked about their habits regarding prayer,

Time in Religion

Whole life 49%

Scripture reading, and meeting with other Christians.

cases, had never been involved in a congregation.

research undertaken in 2012/13.1 That earlier study carried

these, 2,698 took part in a short interview; 430 returned a 76

plunge and went below the waterline to take a careful look at

Providing Facts for Forward Planning

are "the tip of the iceberg".

CONTENTS ovestigating the Invisible Church Church Cohabitation The Gender of Churchgoers Religious Studies Methodists: Stemming the Tide? Biblical Cooking Reflections

INVESTIGATING THE INVISIBLE CHURCH

by Steve Aisthorpe, Church of Scotland

1) "Alpha is now used in more Catholic churches than Anglican," Archbishop Justin Welby when talking to Pope Francis in his June visit, confirmed by Nicky

SNIPPETS

2) The average Briton goes to bed at 11.15 pm and get 6 hours and 35 minutes of sleep per night.

3) A quarter, 23%, of all the women in the whole world (720 million) were married before they were 18 – 8% before they were 15 years age and 15% between the ages of 15 and 17.

4) 690 deaths are occurring every day in 2014 worldwide from HIV/AIDS. 550 from Malaria, 400 from Diarrhoea, 110 from Tuberculosis, 14 from Lassa Fever and 4 from Ebola (the last two West Africa only).

5) The LIK has 1 222 McDonald's cateries (in 2014), but there are 6 countries with a larger number, France, Canada Germany, China, Japan and, of course, the USA with 14,278! They partly attribute their success to having satisfied employees

6) 16% of churchgoers believe that domestic violence takes place because women don't submit to their husband or partner, but 79% disagree, and 5% aren't sure.

7) Around one in 10 of Catholic priests in England and Wales were formerly Church of England clergy, a total of 389 including 87 in the Ordinariate of Our Lady of Walsingham.

SOURCES: 1) Article in *The Tablet*, 21st June, 2014, Page 5; 2) The Sleep Council, quoted in *Christianity* Augus 2014, Page 53; 3) Note in *Time* magazine 4th August, 2014; 4) The Economist, 16th August 2014, Page 48; 5) Article in Management Today, July/August 2014, Page 39; 6) Survey in Christianity manazine. Dec 2013 in Christianity magazine, Dec 2013, Page 14; 7) Article in The Tablet 2nd August 2014, Page 32, figures from Prof Linda Woodhead and Fr Christopher Jamison OSB.

The total volume and shape of an iceberg is notoriously

It has sometimes been suggested that this "churchless faith" difficult to predict. The visible portion, that spire of ice that phenomenon is the result of migration, as new arrivals reject traditional local forms of church. However, the data does not projects above the waterline, is only a fraction of the support this. Nearly half (49%) of those surveyed had lived in whole, hence the expression "tip of the iceberg" for what is only a partial manifestation of something considerably the Highlands and Islands for their whole life and a further 32% larger. There is now evidence to suggest that those had been in the region for more than twenty years. Christians who belong to a church congregation and

Another popular justification for the drift away from congregations is a "lack of commitment" in recent generations. However, most respondents reported that they had regularly attended church for more than a decade before leaving. Indeed, nearly a quarter had been engaged with a congregation for more than twenty years. So most of those surveyed had demonstrated considerable commitment before disengaging from their congregation.

Third, Fourth and Fifth Agers

Heads of Households

Urban Living

e-Books

ISSN 2040-0268 | Number 35, October 2014

Whilst there have been other studies on "church leavers", this research has, for the first time, also surveyed Christians who have never been regularly involved with a congregation. Such people formed 15% of the sample.

Other findings suggest that congregations need to ask searching questions about issues of welcome, hospitality and inclusion. Sadly, about a guarter of respondents (with no significant differences on the basis of age, previous experience of church, score on the HIR Scale or gender) agreed with the statement, "I used to go to church but felt that I didn't fit in". The data also encourages us to think afresh about what we mean by "church". Most of those surveyed expressed a sense of belonging to the worldwide Christian community despite not being affiliated to a congregation.

The survey responses also suggest that congregations may need to rediscover the priority of discipleship. Many of those who are not engaged with a congregation are serious about developing habits that sustain and develop their Christian lives: practices such as prayer, Scripture reading and meeting with other Christians. However, for many, the congregational context has not provided a helpful context for growth. About a quarter of respondents found congregational teaching and worship "superficial".

Are these people contentedly post-congregational ... or would they consider re-engaging with a congregation? In response to a statement, "I want to follow my own spiritual quest without religious institutions," four out of ten (41%) agreed. Just under a third (31%) agreed with the statement, "Not being involved in a traditional church congregation frees me to pursue what I believe is my Christian calling". However, 8% indicated that Continued on page 4

