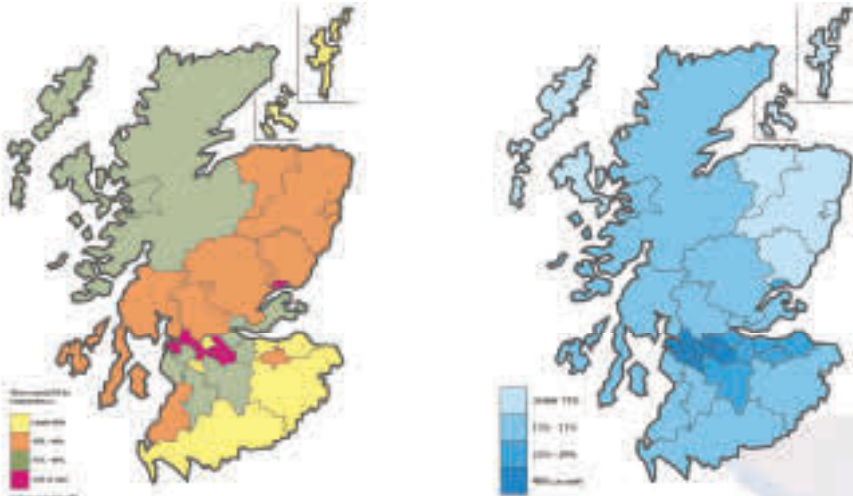


## The Scottish Referendum

It was a nightmare for the pollsters. Several weeks before the special day of 18th September 2014, when Scotland voted for or against Independence, the result seemed clear – massive Scottish support for NO to Independence from the rest of the UK. Then a fateful debate between Alastair Darling and Alex Salmond appeared to turn the tables and YES came out at over 50%, causing royal and political concern and panic. Big businesses, celebrities, foreign state leaders all wanted to give their opinion, and the percentage for YES wavered up and down.

Comparison with other polls, like elections, was inappropriate since no-one had ever voted for Independence before, and the turnout at 85% was one of the highest ever seen in Britain. 16 and 17-year olds were also given the vote for the first time. The very last poll published before the actual result, however, put the NOs at 52%, so the polling companies would say they got it right, just! The overall result was 45% YES, 55% NO. But in 5 of the 32 Scottish Councils (or counties), the percentage voting YES was 50% or more (well, Inverclyde was 49.9% YES but that does round to 50%). Four of these five are close to the City of Glasgow (the fifth was Dundee) and comparing a map showing these with another map indicating where Roman Catholics are strongest gives an immediate impression that the two groups are very similar.



There are six Councils where the Roman Catholics are 40% or more of total church attendance, and four of these are Councils where 50% or more voted YES (Glasgow, Inverclyde, North Lanarkshire and West Dunbartonshire). East Dunbartonshire and Renfrewshire are also strongly Catholic but did not reach the 50% YES percentage. Dundee did reach the 50% (at 57% it had the highest YES percentage in the whole of Scotland) but only 39% of its churchgoers are Catholic.

So it would seem that there could be some relationship between the two, and where the Catholics are weaker (in the North West), the YES vote was only between 40 and 44%. Between these two extremes, however, there is still some correspondence. Strength or weakness in the one, though, does not always match strength or weakness in the other. The actual statistical correlation between Catholic strength and YES for Independence, on a scale from -1 to +1, was  $r = +0.57$ , which is a fair indication of a relationship.

If the Catholic areas of Scotland tended to vote YES, then the non-Catholic areas of Scotland must have tended to vote NO. The non-Catholic areas might generally be described as "Protestant" except that the percentage in Scotland saying they had No Religion in the 2011 Census was 37%, the highest of the 4 countries in the UK. Could the influence of John Knox in the 16th century, who did so much to establish Reformed theology and Presbyterian polity in Scotland, be a warning, though not eliminated, influence? He led the Protestant reformation in Scotland which established the Kirk. The evidence for a relationship here is much less, with the correlation between the NO vote and those churchgoers affirming they are Reformed being  $r = +0.28$ . The (Presbyterian) Church of Scotland officially declared itself neutral to the Referendum.

In the centuries since John Knox, there has been a sea-change in theologies, however, with the rise of the Evangelical movement especially in the later centuries. Were Evangelical churchgoers connected with the NO vote? Not particularly it seems, since that correlation works out at  $r = +0.23$ .

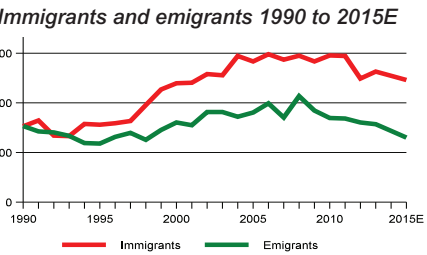
The Economist attempted linking religious practice with the referendum result and felt that the majority of Presbyterians would have voted NO, though whether this was primarily because they are disproportionately elderly and female, as Prof Steve Bruce of Aberdeen University suggested, is not known. However, the Economist writer said that "the campaign saw a resurgence of something which does survive in Scotland, perhaps more robustly than faith itself: religiously inspired radical thought, which was largely in support of independence." He also said that "where secular and religious radicals are highly likely to divide is in their attitudes to the role of the church in a future Scotland," something which is surely true.

What does one take from all this? The fact that religious beliefs do impact our political thinking, even if not always realised, and that pollsters should take faith into account more frequently in their assessments. Meanwhile, Scotland moves forward, and the churches seek to do the same.

SOURCES: BBC Website "Scotland Decides"; Wikipedia "John Knox"; article in The Economist, 27th September, 2014, Page 30; UK Church Statistics No 2, 2010-2020, ADBC Publishers, 2014, Page 13.3.4; article in Impact, Market Research Society, Issue 7, October 2014, Page 9.

## Immigration

The number of immigrants, people coming to the UK, rose steadily each year from 1997 to 2004, stayed at about the same level till 2012 and has since declined, as the graph shows.



The difference between the immigration and emigration figures gives a measure of the increase in our population other than through births and deaths.

Between: 1995 & 2000 this averaged 96,000 people a year, 2000 & 2005 it was 175,000 people a year, 2005 & 2010, it was 200,000 people a year, and 2010 & 2015, it will be 225,000 people a year.

200,000 people a year is a million people in 5 years! No wonder the total population of the UK is increasing so rapidly. The number of UK immigrants is second or third highest in the world – the United States mostly and sometimes Canada taking more each year. The UN estimated that at the end of 2010 there were 214 million international immigrants, 3% of the world's population. In this context, diaspora ministries become increasingly important.

The British Social Attitudes' Survey is an annual study based on interviews across a random sample of several thousand households. The latest report, the 31st, includes answers to questions asked about immigration. People feel that immigrants take jobs away from British-born people (50% in 2013 compared to 43% in 2003) and increase the crime rate (43% to 37%), but improve British society with new ideas (40% to 33%) and are generally good for Britain's economy (32% to 21%).

More than half the population, 55%, think that the main reason immigrants come to Britain is so that they can claim benefits. However, a significant percentage come to study at our universities or other centres of learning. Two-fifths, 38%, came for this reason in 2012, which explains why so many are young – two-fifths, 42%, were between 15 and 24 in 2012.

A fifth, 21%, had a specific job to come to, and 13% came to join their family. Another 13% came to look for work. The impression many have, however, is of overcrowded boatloads of people landing in Italy and then trying to get onto lorries at Calais. Those exposed to immigrants in their daily lives have more positive views.

The five most common countries of birth in the UK are India (730,000), Poland (640,000), Pakistan (460,000), Republic of Ireland (400,000) and Germany (300,000).

Overall, a third (33%) of the population are positive about immigration and about a sixth (17%) are neutral. In a recent YouGov survey for this autumn's Westminster Faith Debates, Anglican clergy were asked how Britain had most benefited from immigration. Their three top answers were: broader global horizons (73%), culture (69%), and greater tolerance (66%). How had Britain suffered from immigration? The top answers were: housing (29%), public services (25%) and crime (22%), but a third (30%) did not believe Britain had suffered in any way at all.

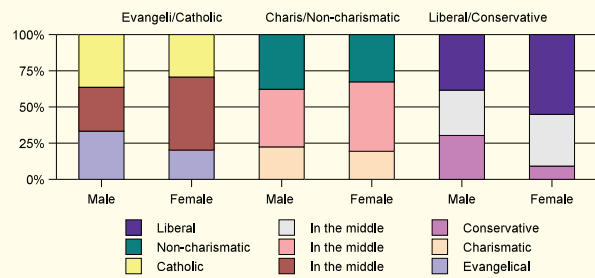
SOURCES: UK Church Statistics No 2 2010-2020, Page 16.11; British Social Attitudes No 31, NatCen, 2014 edition; University of Lancaster and Westminster Faith debates, YouGov, August 2014; Go magazine, Intervise, 4th quarter, 2011, Page 3; Office for National Statistics.

## Gender Variations Matter

The Westminster Faith Debates being held in October, 2014, in Oxford are supported by a detailed YouGov survey of over 1,500 Anglican clergy. Two-thirds of the random sample were male, of whom two-thirds (64%) were full-time stipendiary ministers. The other third were women, only half of whom (49%) were stipendiary, while a third (30%) were self-supporting.

Three questions probed their theological position. Were they evangelical, catholic or "somewhere in the middle"? Were they charismatic or non-charismatic? Were they liberal or conservative?

Gender variations of theological positions of three groups of Anglican clergy



The middle section of the chart shows that there are only small gender differences on the charismatic/non-charismatic scale when about a fifth are charismatic, a third non-charismatic, and the rest in the middle.

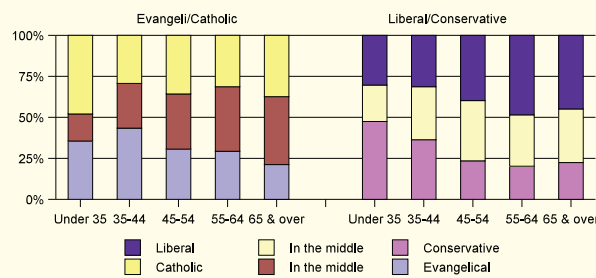
The left hand section, however, shows that there are more evangelical male clergy and more catholic male clergy than female. Half of the female clergy are "in the middle", but this simply reflects the fact that some evangelical churches reject female leadership, and many Anglo-Catholics do not believe it is appropriate either. This 2014 survey reflects similar results from one undertaken in 2002, called The Mind of Anglicans, when the evangelical and Anglo-Catholic positions were tighter.

The right hand section of the chart also reflects these theological differences, with more than half (54%) the female clergy saying they were liberal against two-fifths of male clergy (38%), and very few female clergy saying they were conservative (9%) to 30% male clergy.

The "in the middle" in all three groups are between a third and two-fifths of clergy overall. Does this mean they would rather not be labelled, or find in practice they have to be a bit of both?

The situation is clearly changing, however, as the evangelical/catholic and liberal/conservative groups varied by age as the second chart indicates. This chart combines both male and female clergy.

Age variations of theological positions of two groups of Anglican clergy



The evangelical/catholic left hand part of the chart shows that "in the middle" increases with age and that there are more evangelicals under 35 than over. Does that mean that "in the middle" is dying out? Catholics are spread more evenly across the ages although nearly half of those under 45 are such.

The liberal/conservative right hand part of the chart shows far more younger conservatives (under 45) than among older clergy, and also fewer liberals. It is between the 35 to 44 and 45 to 54 that the key age break occurs.

There were a couple of other questions in the YouGov survey where gender differences were significant. On the issue of reducing the legal time limit for abortion, female clergy were much more in favour of reducing the time limit to below 24 weeks (52% to 38% male). Male clergy were much more likely to conclude that same-sex marriage is wrong (56% to 39% female).

Does gender matter? Of course, which is why there has been so much debate about women bishops. Should gender matter? Well, that's another question!

SOURCES: Email Prof Linda Woodhead, tables of the University of Lancaster and Westminster Faith debate YouGov survey, August 2014; The Mind of Anglicans, Cost of Conscience study, Christian Research, 2002.

## A Religious World

The World Religion Database is maintained by Gordon-Conwell University in South Hamilton, Massachusetts, and seeks to keep track of denominational numbers in every country of the world – a task more than big enough to keep more than half a dozen people employed full-time. The original data base was the World Christian Encyclopaedia edited by Dr David Barrett, but is now headed up by Prof Todd Johnson, whose most recent book explains the sources of the data and how it is all used.

Most data starts from 1970, the year David Barrett used as his base year, but extrapolations backwards have been used for 1800, 1900, 1910 and 1950 at different times. They also project forwards to 2025 and 2050. The following Table is extracted from their latest publication and shows the percentage of the world's population belonging to different religious groups, including the high proportion of agnostics in the Communist era in 1970.

Almost three-quarters of the world, 72.3%, belong to one of the three religions, but while Christianity is still the largest, the Muslim growth rate far exceeds the Christian rate and, at present rates of change, will exceed the Christian percentage in 2115.

SOURCES: The World's Religions in Figures: An Introduction to International Religious Demography, Todd Johnson and Brian Grim, Wiley/Blackwell 2013.

The world's religious population

Group	1910 %	1950 %	1970 %	2000 %	2010 %	2025 %
No Religion	0.2	6.7	19.2	12.9	11.8	10.2
Agnostics	0.2	5.1	14.7	10.7	9.8	8.6
Atheists	0.0	1.6	4.5	2.2	2.0	1.6
All Religions	99.8	93.3	80.8	87.1	88.2	89.8
Christian	34.8	34.2	33.2	32.4	32.7	33.7
Muslim	12.6	13.6	15.6	21.1	22.5	24.6
Hindu	12.7	12.6	12.5	13.5	13.8	14.0
Buddhist	7.9	7.0	6.4	7.3	7.2	7.0
All Others	31.8	25.9	13.1	12.8	12.0	10.5
World population	1.76 bn	2.56 bn	3.70 bn	6.12 bn	6.91 bn	8.00 bn

## Christmas Tunes

Can you decipher the real titles of these exaggerated very familiar Christmas tunes? (answers page 6)

- 1) From dark 'til dawn, soundless and sanctimonious
- 2) Celestial messengers from splendid empires
- 3) In a distant bovine diner
- 4) Universal elation

- 5) Ornament the enclosure with large sprigs of berry-bearing evergreen
- 6) O miniature Nazarene village
- 7) May Jehovah grant unto you hilarious males retirement
- 8) Those of you who are true, come here!
- 9) Are you detecting the same aural sensations as I am?
- 10) The diminutive male of less than adult age who plays a percussion instrument
- 11) Primary Yuletide
- 12) Heavenly cherubs announcing in song – listen!

## SNOWFLAKES

Baptist church planting is multiplying across parts of Europe. In 1991 there were 11,000 Baptists in 130 churches in Moldova; by 2006 that number had increased to 22,000 in 512 churches. In Armenia 4 congregations in 1991 with 350 members had grown to 100 churches with 6,500 members in 2013. The European Baptist Federation's 2002 "Indigenous Missionary Partnership" has seen 110 new congregations with 4,500 Christians by 2010. Over 2,000 Baptist churches have been planted in Ukraine since 1991.

SOURCE: Vista bulletin, Issue 18, August 2014.

Church of Scotland clergy. Their average age on the start of their vocation is 48. Of the 845 in post in 2012 (with 220 vacancies), only 3 were under 30, while 110 (13%) were between 30 and 44. Seven in eight (87%) were 45 or over. The 2014 Assembly sought to engage the whole Church in training at least 100 members for the ministry per year between 2015 and 2025, the Decade of Ministry.

SOURCE: Moira MacGregor's Assembly notes, 2013 and 2014.

Reading the Bible. While 86% of British parents read, watched or listened to Bible stories when they were growing up, only 55% of today's children have the same. Knowledge of the Bible is therefore low – 54% of the 1,019 parents asked in a January 2014 YouGov survey thought The Hunger Games was a Bible story, and 27% thought Superman was part of the Bible. Over half of the 804 children aged 8 to 15 asked did not know Noah's Ark came from the Bible, nor 59% that Jonah did, while 19% were ignorant that Adam and Eve were Bible characters. 43% of children had never read, seen or heard of the story of the Crucifixion. Nevertheless, a third, 31%, of children felt Bible stories were important.

SOURCE: YouGov survey by Bible Society, Word in Action, Summer 2014, Page 8; CEN and Church Times articles, 14th February, 2014.

HIV and AIDS. An article identifies 11 consequences of this illness – life expectancy is reduced, human rights are reduced, there is an economic impact, professional and technical skills are lost, there is an increased gender inequity, stigma, a lack of education for the children, more orphans and vulnerable children, a drain on health resources, an increased burden of care and sickness, death, poverty and grief. Someone associated with a Kenyan orphanage confirmed the truth of all these.

SOURCE: Evangelical Missiology, 1st quarter 2014, Page 24.

New Year Resolutions are often treated cynically. Alex Linley, a psychologist, says that goals are more likely to be achieved if they are in areas of strength rather than weakness. What are the key characteristics if goals are to be achieved? Matt Driver in his book Coaching Positively suggests:

- Goals need to have a positively stated outcome
- This outcome needs to be of value to the person having the goal
- Goals need to be specific
- They need to be clear
- They need to be set primarily in areas of strength

It is also true that:

- They need to be achievable
- They need to be sufficiently worthwhile to justify and maintain a person's ongoing commitment
- They need to incorporate the understanding that time and patience are essential, and that failure along the way need only be a temporary setback and not a final downfall.

SOURCE: Article on "New Year's Resolutions" by Matt Driver, Management Futures Newsletter, January, 2012; Christian housewife in Britain (anon).

American Households. The make-up of American households is more stable than those in the UK. The American household is slightly larger than the British (2.6 to 2.4 people), but while the married average is similar at present, the British percentage is declining faster. The proportion of one person households is a little less, but there are more lone parents. Britain has twice the percentage of cohabiting couples, however.

Type of household	America				Great Britain			
	2000 %	2005 %	2010 %	2015 %	2001 %	2006 %	2011 %	2016 %
One person	26	26	27	27	29	29	33	35
Married couple	52	51	50	50	46	45	41	38
Cohabiting couple	5	5	6	6	11	12	12	13
Lone parent	14	13	12	12	10	10	9	8
Other type	3	5	5	5	4	4	5	6
Households (millions)	105	112	118	123	24	25	26	28

SOURCES: International Journal of Market Research, Vol 53, Issue 5, 2011, Page 598 for American data, UK Church Statistics No 2 2010-2020, 2014, for British data, Table 17.1.1.

Northern Ireland stars. In 2014 44% of pupils obtained grade A\* to B in their GCSEs and 52% grade A\* to B in their A Levels. Those are UK percentages but pupils' results in Northern Ireland were 8% higher than those in England for GCSE and 10% for A Levels, as they have been for some years. In Religious Studies the overall UK percentages were 52% for GCSE and 54% for A Levels.

SOURCES: www.bstubs.co.uk and The Economist 26th November, 2011.

Movements in Crisis. A J Toynbee, the historian, said in his book An Historian's Approach to Religion that when a movement faces a crisis, it can take one of several ways out. First, it can retreat into the past and glory in what it was. Toynbee calls that archaism. Second, it can leap into the future and build castles in the air; it can dream of what it would like to do. That he calls futurism. Third, it can retreat into itself and give itself to mystical experiences. His term for that is mysticism. Fourth, it can take hold of the crisis, transform it into something positive and make a fresh beginning. He calls that reformation. Only the last solution has the possibility of resolving the problem; the rest are short-lived.

Parental work. The number of hours spent by parents, with at least one child under 18 living in their household, on paid work, housework or child care in the United States (but probably similar in Britain) since 1965 is shown in the Table.

Average hours work	Mothers			Fathers		
	Paid work	House work	Child care	Paid work	House work	Child care
1965	9	31	11	42	5	3
1985	18	22	9	39	10	3
1995	22	19	10	37	10	4
2005	20	19	12	39	11	7
2011	20	19	12	38	11	7

Mums today do much more paid work, much less housework and more child care than nearly 50 years ago, while Dads do a little less paid work but more housework and child care.

SOURCE: Pew Research Centre; American Bureau of Statistics; article in The Economist 26th July, 2014.

CORRECTION: In the October issue Page 1 the left hand pie chart should be "Time in Region" not "Time in Religion"

## These may be helpful Books and reports received

Atonement – God's Means of Effecting Man's Reconciliation, by Chris Woodall, Wipf and Stock publishers, £15, available Feb 2015 from doctorwoodall@gmail.com.

Are We Good Neighbours?, 21st Century Evangelicals, Evangelical Alliance research, Summer 2014, 24 pages.

## HUMOUR

My mother taught me to appreciate a job well done – "If you're going to kill each other, do it outside. I've just finishing cleaning."

My father taught me logic – "Because I said so, that's why."

My mother taught me about the science of osmosis – "Shut your mouth and eat your supper."

My father taught me irony – "Keep crying, and I'll give you something to cry about."

My mother taught me about hypocrisy – "If I told you once, I've told you a million times. Don't exaggerate!"

SOURCE: Email from Belisha John Price, New Zealand.

Continued from page 1

While the opposite of growth is decline, in reality the bigger danger is stagnation. In the Anglican study, 18% of churches had grown, 27% had declined, but 55% were stagnant. Growth comes from recognising the situation, prayerfully planning and taking action. Many church members are indifferent to the future; hence change and growth come from those who think and act differently. Leadership is critical for identifying and using such, but responsibility for growth or lack of it cannot solely be laid at leadership's door. It is the divine mandate for each believer, gripped by prayer and filled with the Spirit.

Sometimes, however, it is worth remembering the principles of church growth from the father of the movement, Dr Donald McGavran, even if some disagree with him. He had four:

- God wants His lost sheep found
- Our choice of method must be based on facts
- Pour your resources into winning channels
- People like to stay with their own people.

MAIN SOURCE: Numerical Change in Church Attendance, National, Local and Individual factors, David Voas, Professor of Population Studies, University of Essex, Church of England, 2014; article "The Father of Church Growth" in India Church Growth Quarterly, July-Sept 2014, Vol 21, No 2, Page 11.





## REFLECTION

The end was inevitable. Total loss. Loss of power, loss of equipment, driven by fierce, howling winds for two weeks, the hazardous approach of rocks which would tear the bottom off the boat – it was obvious what would happen – total shipwreck. But not to praying Paul, who stood and said to the entire ship's company, "God has granted safety to all those who are sailing with me" (Acts 27: 24). Some swam, others clutched pieces of wood or planks, but "all were brought safely to land" (27:44) on the island of Malta.

The word "all" comes twice. God is always generous. "I have given you every plant ... every tree ... you shall have them for food," God says for man's provision (Gen 1:29). "Everything ... was very good," (v.31). More than enough sustenance for newly formed herds and humans.

Centuries later, Joshua was told, "Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon I have given to you ... all the land of the Hittites ..." (Joshua 1:3,4). Hundreds of hectares for a migrant people.

Further centuries on, King Hezekiah was under siege, threatened by a massive army on his doorstep, with arrogant commanders abusing the God whom Hezekiah sought to serve. Crisis point came – deliver your people to us or die as we capture you! But Sennacherib reckoned without the divine – "that very night the angel of the Lord set out ... when morning dawned they were all dead bodies" (2 Kings 19:35), some 185,000 of them. God doesn't do things by halves.

Yet more hundreds of years pass, and a lone figure is teaching on the hills of Galilee. "Very truly, I tell you, anyone who hears my word and believes ... has eternal life," (John 5:24). Not for the favoured Pharisees, nor the Roman upper-class, nor the Gentile dogs, but anyone.

So it is not surprising that in heaven, "there was a great multitude ... from all tribes and peoples and languages standing before the throne" (Rev 7:9). The scope is comprehensive, total, all-embracing, utterly complete.

God is a total God. Every aspect is considered; every circumstance weighed up; every possibility thought through. The result is not just 100% thorough, but absolutely perfect. Every, every, every ... all, all, all. Universal. Entire. Full. And not just for a short time, but for the complete extent of eternity. "He himself is before all things, and in him all things hold together," (Col 1:17).

Fulfillment is complete in this babe of Bethlehem. "I have come not to abolish but fulfil ... not one stroke of a letter will pass from the law until all is accomplished," (Matt 5:18). Those who seek to follow the Nazarene are therefore called to "strive first for the kingdom of God ... and all these things will be given to you as well," (Matt 6:33) for "all power is given unto Me" (Matt 28:18). Consumption will be complete, "the fullness of him who fills all in all" (Eph 1:23). That's why our commitment has to be total – all – as nothing else is adequate or captures the heart of God.

## WHY WATCH TELEVISION?



An interesting piece of research by a company called Thinkbox sought to ascertain what are the reasons why we watch television. It concluded that we have various needs, which watching TV satisfies, and identified six of these:

- 1) To unwind. People desire to de-stress from the pressures of the day.
- 2) To comfort. Centred on family time and incorporates the feelings of togetherness, rituals, family and routine.
- 3) To connect. The idea of "plugging in" to wider society, or at a particular time or place, and feeling a sense of connection thereby.
- 4) To experience. The need for fun, or a sense of occasion to be shared.
- 5) To escape. This represents the desire to be taken on an enjoyable journey to another time and place.
- 6) To indulge. The need to satisfy guilty pleasures with personal favourites, usually alone.

This research looks behind a particular action frequently undertaken. A similar question could be asked, "Why do we go to church?", and answers might be along the following lines:

- 1) To worship. We are conscious of God, ever-living, ever-present, and want to lift up our hearts to Him, which is often easier when with others, or with music to help.
- 2) To serve. We help with creche, or sidesman duties, or doing the refreshments, or whatever. Our focus is on other people rather than self.
- 3) To embrace. Not the same as worship, but the need to hear God-for-me-today, a verse of Scripture, or a hymn or song, or a story, but something to help this week.
- 4) To fulfil. The need to see someone, say something, give something to someone, to arrange something or whatever, so while the action is towards others the key motive is personal.
- 5) To escape. To leave for the moment the demands of children, partner, and to have some "me-time," albeit in the presence of others and following a service or liturgical routine. Perhaps similar to unwinding.
- 6) To connect. The idea of experiencing being part of the worldwide church, and perhaps the church triumphant (in heaven), recognising the needs of the earthly and praying for others. The concept of togetherness.

What other needs of ours are fulfilled when we go to church? Are they and the ones above worthy ones? How altruistic might we be?

SOURCE: Article "Divided attention" in Impact, Market Research Society, Issue 7, October 2014, Page 32

## The Uniqueness of Man

At what was called the UK Creation Mega Conference in September 2014, one of the speakers, Prof Stuart Burgess of the University of Bristol, explained why man is a unique creation. Each of the following is unique to man and cannot be paralleled in apes or other creatures, the words "his" or "man" covering both genders:

- 1) His arched foot. Man has 3 arches in his foot, two across the foot and one the length, allowing a triangle on which he can balance if necessary on his sole. His legs also are unique, and enable him to run up to 150 miles a day, and to play sport.
- 2) His skilful hands. Can hold on all fingers, can grip both hands together, perfect length of fingers to hold a pen; hands can play music.
- 3) His fine skin. It can feel touch, pain, it can bleed, we can cool it down when overhot.
- 4) His facial expressions. There are 50 muscles in our face, 24 of them are just for expressions to communicate fear, joy, anger and many other emotions. We can see the white in people's eyes; we can also smile.
- 5) His language and speech. There are a million words in many languages. A man on average uses 4,000 words a day, a woman uses 8,000! We also have vocal chords, which allow singing in a choir.
- 6) His childhood, lasting 18 years. Brains triple in weight during our childhood. Animals have much less time.
- 7) His marriage and reproduction. Females are fertile all through the year, so we can be born anytime.
- 8) His brain. Man has unique intelligence and memory, but a quarter of the brain is used to control our facial muscles. We can memorise many things. A Japanese man set a world record in remembering the digits of  $\pi$  to 42,000 decimal places!
- 9) His beauty. We fit appropriately in height and width, there is a centre, and balance. Animals can be beautiful in their own way also.
- 10) His soul. We can appreciate beauty, we have the power of choice in decision making, we can worship.

Prof Burgess is a mechanical engineer who helps car companies with vehicle design so is able to assess the unique design points of man, and give it as evidence of a wonderful creator God.

SOURCE: The talk was based on his book *The Design and Origin of Man*, Stuart Burgess, DayOne, Leominster, 2013.



# Attitudes to Church and Clergy in Britain

by Clive Field, British Religion in Numbers

Secularization has been a defining characteristic of the historiography of religion in modern Britain since the 1960s. It has usually been measured in terms of decreases in religious affiliation, church membership, attendance, and rites of passage. However, in a seminal article in 1994, Mark Chaves reconceptualized secularization as "the declining scope of religious authority".<sup>1</sup> Several scholars applied this approach to US evidence, but there have been few adopters, conceptually or empirically, within the British religious context. In a recent article, based on public opinion polls (125 non-recurrent investigations and 15 time series incorporating 114 data points), I examined the attitudes of British adults to Church and clergy since the 1960s, with reference to their perceived influence and degree of confidence or trust in them.<sup>2</sup> Some of that data are highlighted here.

### Church

Ever since polling on the subject began in the 1960s, few Britons (never more than one-sixth) have considered the Churches to have a great deal of influence on the country's future, a plurality thinking they had no influence whatsoever (hitting 44% in 1993). In European Values' Surveys, confidence in the Church has slipped since the 1980s (Table 1), with very many sensing it has no answers to modern problems (Table 2). The proportion contending the Church was out of touch with society rose from 43% in 1968 to 54% in 1995. According to Eurobarometers, trust in religious organizations fell from a peak of 59% in 2001 to 36% in 2010 (53% expressing distrust), while a majority in every annual Charity Awareness Monitor since 2006 voiced mistrust in the Church (just 37% trusting it in 2014). The Global Corruption Monitor found growing numbers believing religious bodies to be corrupt (18% in 2005, 35% in 2012-13). TNS reported in 2003 that 74% felt less loyal to the Church than 20 years previously. Survation in 2014 that 69% of young adults did not trust religious institutions to meet their needs.

Table 1: Confidence in the Church

Confidence	1981	1990	1999	2009/10
	%	%	%	%
Great deal/Quite a lot	48	42	33	35
Not very much/None	51	57	62	61

Table 2: Adequacy of answers given by the Church to modern problems

Adequacy	1981	1990	1999	2009/10	1981	1990	1999	2009/10
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
	Adequate				Inadequate			
Moral problems/needs of the individual	30	28	26	27	45	53	53	50
People's spiritual needs	42	53	47	51	32	31	34	29
Problems of family life	31	31	23	26	44	54	55	52
Social problems facing our country today	17	25	21	20	57	60	57	59

## Christmas Tunes

### Answers

- 1) Silent Night
- 2) Angels From the Realms of Glory
- 3) Away in a Manger
- 4) Joy to the World
- 5) Decks the Halls with Boughs of Holly
- 6) O Little Town of Bethlehem
- 7) God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen
- 8) O Come, All Ye Faithful
- 9) Do You Hear What I Hear?
- 10) Little Drummer Boy
- 11) The First Noel
- 12) Hark, the Herald Angels Sing

SOURCE: Peter Liddelow, Christmas letter 2013.

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

Established 2009. UK subscriptions £20 per annum; overseas £32 per annum. Make cheque out to 'Peter Briery', or contact for BACS details and send to Briery Consultancy, The Old Post Office, 1 Thorpe Avenue, Tonbridge, Kent TN11 4PW. Email: peter@brieryconsultancy.com www.brieryconsultancy.com

01732 369 303 ISSN 2040-0268

### Clergy

Anti-clericalism has featured less in British history than in other European countries such as France and Spain. Unsurprisingly, then, the public still largely held a positive opinion of ministers of religion when surveys commenced in the 1960s, but their standing has slipped in recent decades. In particular, clergy/priests are decreasingly trusted to tell the truth, according to Ipsos MORI (Table 3). YouGov recorded an even steeper fall in such trust, from 78% in 2003 to 54% in 2013. Overall trust in the clergy declined on the GfK index from 71% in 2003 to 63% in 2010. Respect for priests/ministers dipped from 57% to 54% in Angus Reid surveys between 2009 and 2012

Table 3: Trust in clergy/priests to tell the truth

Trust	1983	1993	2003	2013
	%	%	%	%
Do trust	85	80	71	66
Do not trust	11	13	20	27

### Conclusion

The standing of Church and clergy in Britain has diminished over the past half-century, especially in the 1990s and 2000s, mirroring the net decline in institutional Christianity and proliferation of religious "nones". Although Church and clergy have not entirely lost their appeal, they now tend to occupy a middling to low position in comparative tables of popularity of, respectively, other institutions and professions. Since Church and clergy provide the dual infrastructure for institutional Christianity, their relative loss of public prestige has broader implications for Britain's religious landscape.

Putting it at its most extreme, the religious authority figureheads of Church and clergy have become decoupled, or at least distanced, from Christianity in the popular mind, in the same way that much nominal "Christianity" has been decoupled from the Bible.<sup>3</sup> One manifestation is that a growing proportion of professing Christians reject any denominational label (28% in the 2013 British Social Attitudes Survey compared with just 5% in 1983). More significantly, Church and clergy no longer provide the nation's moral compass. Asked by YouGov in 2013 on whom or what they relied for guidance in their everyday life and decision-making, a mere 2% of Britons cited religious leaders and no more than 11% the teachings of their religion, as against 64% reliant on personal reason and judgment, 57% on their intuition or feelings, and 53% on family.

This loss of status reflects, not merely the passive effects of a secularizing climate, but active disenchantment with policies and practices pursued by Church and clergy. This is illustrated in my full article with reference to the Church of England and Roman Catholic Church, the public often being frustrated with the former for its slowness to embrace gender and sexual orientation diversity and with the latter for its conservatism on personal morality and its failure to address priestly sexual abuse of children. The unmasking of other clerical moral indiscretions in both Churches has naturally also fuelled charges of hypocrisy. The Catholic data are written up at greater length elsewhere.<sup>4</sup>

1 M. Chaves, "Secularization as Declining Religious Authority", *Social Forces*, 72(3), 1994, 749-74.

2 C.D. Field, "Another Window on British Secularization: Public Attitudes to Church and Clergy since the 1960s", *Contemporary British History*, 28(2), 2014, 190-218.

3 C.D. Field, "Is the Bible Becoming a Closed Book? British Opinion Poll Evidence", *Journal of Contemporary Religion*, 29(3), 2014, 503-28.

4 C.D. Field, "No Popery's Ghost: Does Popular Anti-Catholicism Survive in Contemporary Britain?" *Journal of Religion in Europe*, 7(2), 2014, 116-49, available at <https://clivedfield.files.wordpress.com/2012/03/anti-catholicism-published.pdf>.



## Providing Facts for Forward Planning

### SNIPPETS

1) There were only 7 white Christmasases in the UK in the 20th century.

2) Presents account for 70% of Christmas spending, but the increase of their average prices has been only 13% over the last 25 years, unlike food which has risen 250%.

3) 98% of Americans live within 30 minutes travel of a small airport.

4) Half, 52%, of Seoul's population left school before they were 15 – the world's lowest rate!

5) There are 1,257 independent schools in the UK, of which three-quarters, 76%, are co-ed. 92% of independent pupils go on to higher education.

6) In the morning peak 550,000 passengers arrived by rail into central London in 2013 (Zone 1 of the Travelcard area), a 2% increase from the year before. Birmingham, the next largest, had 39,000.

7) Two-thirds, 67%, of Nigeria's 180 million population are mobile subscribers, and 24% have an internet connection. Nigeria is the 7th largest country globally by population.

SOURCES: 1) Abel & Cole Christmas card, 2013; 2) Article in *The Economist*, 21st December 2013; 3) and 4) *Time* magazine, 8th Sept, 2014, Pages 55 and 62; 5) *The Week Independent Schools Guide*, Autumn 20-14, Page 3; 6) *Rail Passenger Numbers 2013*, Dept for Transport, Statistical Release, 14th Sept 2014; 7) *Impact*, Market Research Society, Issue 7, October 2014, Page 15

## ANGLICAN GROWTH

The Church of England engaged in a major research project in 2013 looking specially at the reasons for church growth. The results were published in January 2014 under the title *From Anecdote to Evidence*, and, at its launch, Prof David Voas gave a presentation of the main findings. His talk was subsequently made available on line.

At a conference for new leaders in larger churches in October, the question was asked, "How can churches grow?" "Enough of the statistics of decline", they said, "but is there any way to turn the ship around?" David Voas made it clear that there was no single or simple answer to the basic question. What he did identify, with statistical significance, were some of the characteristics of growing churches. The key factors, along with other associated research, are:

### For young people:

1) Keeping young people is important, because once committed to the church they are likely to stay committed for their next 50 years. That does not mean that their commitment will equal frequent attendance, but involves answering the question, "What keeps young people?" Other research has shown that a key factor for young people is their sensing the presence of God in worship.

2) Younger people are more likely to doubt God's existence than older people. A quarter (25%) don't believe in God, a third (32%) are unsure, and only a fifth (20%) really know God exists. So how can church leaders help young people experience the reality of God, the Creator of the world?

3) Part of today's problem is that God-believing parents have failed to pass that belief on adequately to their children. When asked what qualities children should be encouraged to learn, only a third, 36%, of "active" Anglicans said, "Religious faith". Church leaders therefore need to help parents in their time-poor world to know how best to prioritise sharing their faith.

4) Mid-week attendance for children (in both churches and cathedrals) is good, suggesting scope for innovation and outreach. The key leaving time is when young people are allowed to make their own decisions (usually early teens), so finding new ways of building young people's community then (which may be difficult) might be the answer. Voas found that youth retreats, conferences and camps all helped retention and growth, but only a fifth of churches offered such. Late adolescence and early adulthood are also key transition times.

5) Having a paid youth worker was also especially important. A third, 30%, of churches with one had grown substantially against only 12% of those with no paid staff. In general terms, staff numbers are associated with growth.

6) Actual numbers of young people are important also. Some years ago, when their numbers were low, six churches in Selby joined their youth groups into a single group meeting in different churches each week. It worked! Churches with a good proportion of young people (20% or more) are more likely to grow than those with fewer than 10% young people (27% to

5%), so maybe combining your group with another church might be helpful.

7) The cultural presence of the Anglican church is strongly reinforced through "occasional offices," like baptism and bereavement counselling. A church in Cheshire encourages parents to bring all their friends to their first child's baptism (especially if they had no similar gathering when starting to live together); they found 3 in every 8 such couples subsequently joined their church. One-third of all babies are baptised as infants (across all denominations; about half are Anglican), so a good baptismal programme could help keep some families.

### Other factors

1) Having teaching courses which encourage Christian witness frequently help growth (30% of churches having such grew substantially but only 10% which didn't).

2) Having a clear understanding of where the church is going (or its "mission and purpose") is very important (22% of churches with such grew substantially but only 3% without). Putting a priority on numerical growth was successfully significant for 13% of churches.

3) The congregation overall must be willing to embrace change if necessary. This is helped by encouraging and developing volunteers. Half, 47%, of churches where there were many volunteers grew but only 8% where they were only a few. Some volunteers, perhaps especially aged 65 to 74, are often capable of taking on senior responsibility roles.

4) It needs to be recognised that not all clergy are gifted to enable a church to grow; they have other skills to offer. Lack of enthusiasm and decline go together, because apathy demotivates. Those energised by dealing with the outside world ("extraverts") and those who gain information intuitively enabling them to focus on possibilities and the bigger picture are twice as likely to see growth than others not so motivated. 35% of churches with ministers generating enthusiasm grew substantially while only 8% without such did the same. Similar percentages resulted from ministers with a clear vision for the future and being focussed on achieving it.

5) Younger ministers (under 45) are more likely to see growth, many of whom will have young families which also often helps. Ministers also need to be in post for at least 7 years. Ministerial training, however, had no statistical association with growth!

6) People are attracted to churches with good facilities and programmes. They naturally attend churches according to the churchmanship and worship style they prefer. Christmas is especially important and particularly so for Anglican churches. Having other special services during the year is also attractive.

7) Inevitably, location is important. Growth and frequency of attendance are not the same. Frequency can be high in rural areas where growth is difficult, but urban growth can occur where they are few Anglicans. Having substantial numbers of ethnic minority Christians often helps.

Continued on page 4