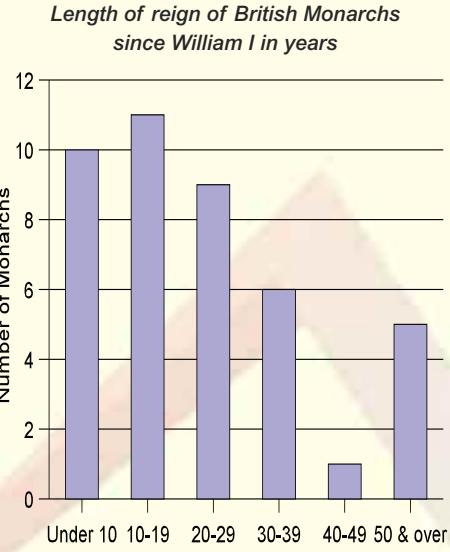


ROYALTY

The Queen may trace her ancestry back to Alfred the Great, but a vital transition occurs when the uncrowned King elected to replace Harold II defeated at the battle of Hastings, a man called Edgar the Ætheling, was put aside and William the Conqueror was crowned on Christmas Day, 1066. Since that date the Kings and Queens of England have taken regnal numbers, and William is thus called William I.

From 1066 to 2012 are 946 years. Including the years of the Commonwealth and its two Cromwell rulers, there have been 42 monarchs during that time, with an average reign of 23 years. But the average is misleading. The list of rulers includes three who were very short – Edward V who was hailed as King in 1483, but died later that year, Richard Cromwell, son of Oliver, who led the Commonwealth between 1658 and 1659, and Edward VIII who both came to the throne and abdicated in 1936.

Equally there have been five monarchs who have reigned for 50 years or more. Henry III ruled 56 years from 1216 to 1272, and his great-grandson Edward III ruled 50 years from 1327 to 1377. Then there is a long gap till we come to George II, King from 1760 to 1820, followed by his grand-daughter Victoria from 1837 to 1901. Then, of course, comes our own Queen, Elizabeth II, who celebrates her Diamond Jubilee this year.



The chart shows the number of British monarchs since William 1. Over two-thirds (71%) have served under 30 years, a sixth (17%) for between 30 and 49 years and just 12% for 50 years or more. Only one monarch served for between 40 and 49 years – the 45-year reign of Queen Elizabeth I (1558 to 1603). Long may her fitly named successor reign!

The practice of praying for the current Monarch in church services has been common for many centuries across most denominations. The Jews also pray for the current Monarch, the one prayer said in English in an otherwise Hebrew service. But many churches, especially evangelical churches, follow this custom far less frequently.

SOURCE: Website www.kingsofengland.co.uk accessed 22nd April 2012.



While it can be seen that Ireland continues to be a Catholic country, even if church attendance is actually declining, it is equally clear that growth is taking place in other areas, especially that of “No religion”. The Table shows the change in the major denominations since 2002 (there was no 2001 Census).

Irish population by religion, and increase, 2002-2011					
Group	2002	2006	2011	Increase 2002-11	% of total in 2011
Roman Catholic	3,462,606	3,681,446	3,861,335	+12%	84
Church of Ireland	115,611	125,585	129,039	+12%	3
Presbyterian	20,582	23,546	24,600	+20%	0
Methodist	10,033	12,160	6,842	-32%	0
Muslims	19,147	32,539	49,204	+157%	1
All Others	71,866	107,934	174,507	+143%	4
No religion	138,264	186,316	269,811	+95%	6
None stated	79,094	70,322	72,914	- 8%	2
TOTAL population	3,917,203	4,239,848	4,588,252	+17%	100%

Town and City Missions

City Missions have an honourable place in British Church history. The largest, which began in 1835, is the London City Mission which has some 127 evangelists working across the capital today. It was started by David Naismith, who, nine years earlier in 1826, began the Glasgow City Mission, also still working today, out of his concern to reach people for Christ.

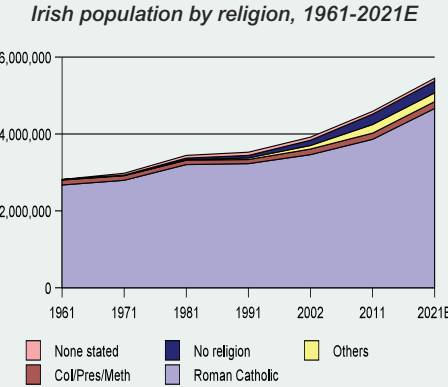
Today there are City Missions in many of our big cities – Belfast, Birmingham, Brighton & Hove, Coventry, Darlington, Derby, Edinburgh, Leeds, Liverpool, Macclesfield, Manchester, Sheffield and Southampton. In addition there are a number of specifically Methodist Missions working in urban areas, such as Battersea, Belfast Central, East Belfast, Lambeth, London North West, Newtownabbey, Plymouth, South London, West London and Whitechapel among others.

These are joined by churches and other organisations working in particular parts of towns or cities like Bath, Bridge Community (in the Ravenhill area of Belfast), Friends International (Oxford), Light Project in Chester, Mission in Hounslow, St Giles in North London, Shankill Road in Belfast, South West London Evangelistic Mobile Unit, Touchstone Centre in Bradford and elsewhere.

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Irish Religion

The 2011 Population Census results of the Republic of Ireland have been published by the Irish Central Statistical Office (the figures for Northern Ireland are due to be published by the Office of National Statistics later this year). The Irish Census included a question asking for a person's religion. The Irish population has grown very rapidly in the 21st century as the graph shows, and is projected to continue growing. Col/Pres/Meth = Church of Ireland (Anglican), Presbyterians and Methodists combined.



The Table shows that the Christian denominations, apart from the Methodists who have declined quite drastically, are increasing more or less in line with the population increase, that is, in general terms they are static with respect to the population. It is the Muslims and the other, smaller, religions within the “All Others” category which are growing very rapidly, together with the “No Religion” group. The implications are obvious.

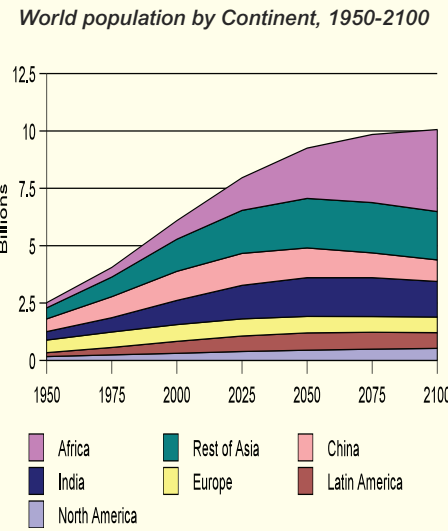
A survey in February 2012 by the Irish Association of Catholic Priests (formed in 2009) found that 35% of Catholics in Ireland attend Mass every week, and a further half (51%) once or more each month; 9% attend less frequently and 5% never go. It also found that three-fifths (57%) felt the Irish church was too subservient to Rome – shown in part that seven in every 8 (87%) feel that priests should be allowed to marry, and that three-quarters (77%) felt that women should be ordained to the priesthood. Perhaps this disaffection is hindering the growth of the Catholic Church in Ireland in relation to the present rapid growth in population.

SOURCES: Irish CSO website under *Irish Population Census 2011* accessed 23rd April 2012; article “Faithful critics” by Sean McDonagh in *The Tablet* 14th April 2012, Page 12.

WORLD POPULATION

The UN has updated its world population forecasts to the year 2100, estimating that the 2012 population of 7.1 billion will become 10.1 billion by then. Almost a quarter (23%) of the global population will be 65 or over by 2100.

By far the largest growth is in Africa, as the graph shows – it grows from 13% of the world's population in 2000 to 35% by 2100, if these projections prove accurate. India and China both grow but by 2100 have begun to decline as deaths exceed births.



SOURCE: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division: World Population extract, 2011.

Missions have grown, as evidenced by the number of staff, shown in the graph, though like others their numbers dropped in the early 1990s with the recession. May the Lord continue to bless their work!

SOURCE: Successive editions of the UK Christian Handbook.

Behavioural Economics

Behavioural economics draws on different academic disciplines for its work – psychology, neuroscience, anthropology and genetics. Qualitative research draws on similar disciplines although such are rarely articulated. So how can behavioural economics help leaders in their work? One instance, given in a recent paper, explains the factors we take into account when we make a decision:

Who is involved with the choice of a purchase – what my boss thinks? My wife/ husband wants? My neighbours may say? Identity issues often dominate – for example, research found that people living near each other bought cars of the same year.

How is important in terms of immediate action. Paying the parking ticket now will save paying more later. It's easy to order with that Freepost envelope. Working out how to mend that broken item may take as long as actually mending it.

When must it be done by? People are likely to procrastinate, especially if the job is awkward or difficult. I'll leave writing my will till tomorrow; I'll go to the dentist next week. The future maybe full of deferred decisions and actions.

Where is this being decided? Why is it harder to get to Birmingham from London than go from London to Paris? This is a bargain for £40 in Selfridges, but I'd never pay that for a T-shirt in a street market!

In most of these instances, we are unaware of the components of our decision making. Behavioural



economics is embraced heavily by advertisers and those who wish to plan a campaign, promote their message, brand experiences, influence communications, change behaviour and so on. It is much used by the Institute of Practitioners in Advertising, for example. We do need to be alert to the danger of being subtly manipulated in our choices and decisions as well as avoiding such pitfalls in our churches in relation to evangelism, financial giving, commitment to church activities, etc.

SOURCE: Article “Behavioural economics and qualitative research – a marriage made in heaven?” by Wendy Gordon, *International Journal of Market Research*, Volume 53, No 2, 2011, Page 174.

Youth and Church

Why do young people leave church? The Barna Group interviewed (often over their mobile phone) 1,300 young people aged 18 to 29 who had been active in church at some point in their teenage years. No single reason emerged as to why they had stopped going to church, but there were six main reasons which accounted for the experience of three-fifths (59%) of these young people:

1) *Churches seem overprotective*, that is, they found their experience of church as stifling, fear-based or risk-averse. The church was “ignoring the problems of the real world,” they said.

2) *Their experience of Christianity was shallow*. While many said that church was boring, they also said that “faith is not relevant to my career or interests,” or “the Bible is not taught clearly or often enough.” This was summed up by some who said that somehow “God seems missing from my experience with church.”

3) *Churches seem antagonistic to science*. Three young adults in every 10 said the church was out-of-step with the scientific world, or that “Christianity is anti-science.” Many have been disenchanted by the creation v evolution debate, and others were struggling to remain faithful to their beliefs and also to their calling in science-based industries.

4) *Church experience re sexuality is often simplistic and judgmental*. With limitless access to pornography, those in their 20s find it difficult to live meaningfully vis-a-vis sex and sexuality. With the age

of first marriage now in the late 20s, many find the church's expectations of chastity very difficult, even if they are more conservative than their non-church peers. If they make mistakes they “feel judged in church because of them.”

5) *Christianity's claim to exclusiveness is tough*. In a society which promotes open-mindedness and tolerance, a faith which seems “afraid of the beliefs of other faiths” is difficult, and some in their 20s find they have to choose between “my faith and my friends.”

6) *Doubters find the church unfriendly*. Young adults say that the church is not a place where they can express doubts. They don't feel safe saying that Christianity doesn't always make sense to them. They also feel that when the church does respond on issues, the response is often trivial. Church “does not help with depression or other emotional problems” or those who feel marginalised.

These are significant issues, relevant for the UK church as well as the American. The usual “normal” of completing education, leaving home, finding a job, getting married and having children is no longer normal, and those in their 20s are delaying many of these till later, or are forced to do so by circumstances. In that turmoil and re-ordering, where do faith, and world view, and technology fit together? There is a danger in dismissing these problems too casually, and an equal danger of focussing on them so much that others in the church then feel excluded. Leaders need much wisdom to follow the path between these two opposites.

SOURCE: Six Reasons Young Christians Leave Church, email release by www.barna.org 2nd October, 2011.

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SNOWFLAKES

Church salaries. In the past it has not been easy to come by reliable salary figures paid to senior church managers and church administrators who are not ordained, especially if paid part-time. That information is now available in a report from the UK Church Administrators' Network (UCAN) on their website www.church-administrator.net, based on averages across 221 member churches.

Multilingual Britain. There were 3,400 passes at GCSE in 2011 in Polish, a ten-fold increase over the last 10 years. There were also 1,400 passes in Portuguese, double the number in 2002, and 2,600 in Arabic up from 1,700. Of course these were swamped by the traditional languages of French (154,000 but down from 310,000), Spanish (66,000 up from 58,000), and German (61,000 down from 122,000). Some churches arrange teaching in English for immigrants as an opportunity for a Christian welcome for newcomers.

SOURCE: Article in *The Economist*, 24th March, 2012, Page 36.

The Plain Truth is a quarterly magazine that was first circulated free by the Worldwide Church of God, but it became completely independent of the church in 1996. It now has totally orthodox Christian content. Over 90% of its readers have been taking it for at least 5 years, and two-thirds (70%) are 65 or over. Understandably therefore, it is mostly a magazine for retired people (73%), half of whom (46%) have no access to the internet. The magazine is very popular – more than 90% of recipients read most or all of it, and all its key features are well liked. Half its readers pass it on to someone else, so its ministry is extensive. If you would like to receive a trial copy, just ask!

SOURCE: *The Plain Truth*, Spring 2012, Page 21; www.plain-truth.org.uk.

Korean missionaries. According to *The Future of Global Christianity*, South Korea is the third largest sending country for missionaries in the world – coming after the United States and India. The Koreans keep much better records of their missionaries than other countries. They know exactly how many they had in December 2011 – 19,373, coming from 168 mission agencies (53% of which were interdenominational) and going to a total of 177 countries. They knew to which religious or cultural bloc each was ministering (the top two being Christian, 24%, and Muslim, 23%). 52% were male; 90% were married; 64% were ordained; 76% were full-time; 95% were graduates, and 5% had doctorates; their average age was 44 (similar to the UK), and they had served for an average of 9 years each (more than UK's 7 years).

SOURCE: *The International Bulletin of Missionary Research*, Volume 36, No 2, April 2012, Page 85.

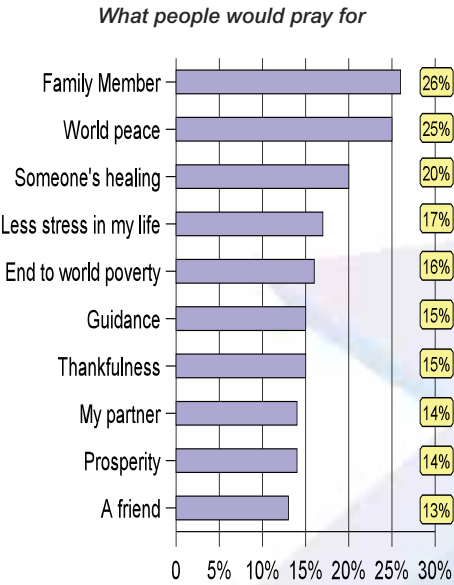


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Laotian growth. Laos is divided into 16 provinces and the Vientiane capital municipality. A 2011 visit by former mission workers found that in two of these provinces church numbers had increased from 13,600 to 19,110 in just 18 months, equivalent to growing by 25% per annum! A 2010 visit found the total of 43,500 in 12 other provinces, and this growth rate suggests that the total number of members given in *Operation World* for the Lao Evangelical Church of 56,000 has now been well exceeded.

SOURCES: Personal letter and *Operation World*, Jason Mandryck, Biblical, 2010, Page 522.

Praying. An ICM survey last March asked a puzzling question, “If you could pray alongside Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane, what would you pray for?” The top 10 answers are shown in the chart:



SOURCE: Article in the *Church of England Newspaper*, 15th April, 2012.

Rural Stress. A survey by the Arthur Rank Centre has re-inforced previous findings about rural opportunities. Clergy can be under “extreme stress” because expected to look after several churches, often without training for such circumstances, and often inadequately supported by lay people, who themselves were not always equipped for the situation. On a number of occasions such clergy were forced to take short- or long-term sick leave, thus exacerbating the problem. Positive findings included being well connected to the local community.

SOURCE: Report in the *Church Times*, 11th November, 2011.

Influence of games. Many new computers today come automatically with an internet link to the many games one can play. *RuneScape* and *War of Legends* are two of the more popular. They are set to be an influential trend because they cross generations. Two-thirds (65%) of those under 35 play games regularly as do an astonishing 99% of those under 12. The culture and outlook of such youngsters are bound to be part of what is unconsciously accepted when playing each game. Some, maybe many, churchgoers will also be included in these numbers.

SOURCE: *Performance Preview* No 2, Ernst & Young, September 2011, Page 6.



Fewer baths. About 10 years ago an article in a leadership magazine moaned about the loss of strategic thinking by managers, and rather bizarrely attributed this in part to the fact that showers were becoming much more popular, and that “long soaks in a bath” were on their way out. A recent study on behalf of Oxfam has confirmed this trend. Many household baths are now unused or used only occasionally (the study said only 5 times a month, half what it was in 2000), not primarily for environmental reasons of using less water but for time reasons because showers are quicker. 11% of households have had their baths actually taken out, usually to be replaced by a walk-in shower. Hopefully, Christian leaders are still taking baths rather than showers!

SOURCE: Article in the *Daily Telegraph*, 13th July, 2010, Page 9.

Muslim growth. Some have calculated that of the world growth of 3 billion people between 2012 and 2100, 1.8 billion of these will be born in Muslim lands. That would increase the proportion of the world's Muslim population in 2100 to 37%, against the Christian proportion of 35%.

SOURCE: Article “World Population Prospects” on www.freeworldacademy.com accessed 28th April, 2012.

HUMOUR

Why I like retirement:

Question: How many days in a week?
Answer: 7. 6 Saturdays and 1 Sunday

Question: When is a retiree's bedtime?
Answer: Three hours after he falls asleep on the couch.

Question: Why don't retirees mind being called Seniors?
Answer: The term comes with a 10% discount.

Question: Why are retirees so slow to clean out the attic or garage?
Answer: They know that as soon as they do, one of their adult kids will want to store stuff there.

SOURCE: Email from Rev David Cohen, Australia, December 2006.

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REFLECTIONS

It was a difficult and probably unique assignment given by God – “go, marry a prostitute”, or perhaps, “go, marry a woman who will become a prostitute”, since their first child was definitely Hosea’s. The country of Israel was in its final decades of existence when Hosea ministered, although God’s warnings to the nation had been largely ignored.

What was certain was that Israel had departed from the divine pattern of living. They had appointed leaders outside of God’s purposes, they had fashioned their own gods, and had produced their own version of religion. As can be seen below, such trends have not been confined to the 8th century BC.

The General Overseer of the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG), Pastor E A Adeboye, wrote, “The reason God made me General Overseer is because I am the least among you. God chooses things that are considered insignificant. The mere fact that God made me General Overseer means I am less than you; I am not as wise, I am not as intelligent, I am not as capable. Otherwise, He wouldn’t put me here and it is because I am nothing that I have to depend on Him for everything.” Such a humble self opinion may, perhaps, help to explain why the RCCG is the fastest growing denomination in the UK.

Israel had fashioned a system whereby their leaders were answerable only to themselves, and some churches and Christian organisations today seem to run on similar principles. In the councils of leadership there can often be no meeting of minds, still less of wills, and the danger is that the senior leader instead of being followed goes for a walk by him/herself.

Hosea told Israel that God had rejected the calf they had made (8:5), a symbol of “brute strength and sexual potency that a corrupt society tends to idolize”, idols which are with us today. Pastor Rod Woods of the City Temple in Holborn says, “We are a society saturated with sex,” typified by the fact that 82% of men watch porn for 2 hours every week, and 65% of women for 20 minutes.

Israel had produced a system of religion which included child sacrifice, which Derek Kidner explains was a concern to “get it right rather than getting themselves right.” An important study by the Willow Creek Church in Chicago in 2006 found that even the pillars of the church, in positions of leadership and Christian standing for many years, could have a growing cynical detachment from matters of faith, ceasing to sense God’s closeness in worship, with a slackness in prayer and depth of commitment, content with “getting it right” rather than “getting themselves right.”

Hosea’s warning sounds across the centuries – “they sow the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind” (8:7) – and is still true for us. Yet he also sounded God’s heartcry, “How can I give you up, Ephraim?” (11:8). However estranged or distant from Him, He yearns for us to return to our “first love.”

SOURCES: Article in *Sunrise*, by Pastor E A Adeboye, Spring 2010, Pages 4-7; *The Message of Hosea*, Derek Kidner, IVP, 1981, Page 81; *FutureFirst*, Dr Rod Woods, April 2011, Page 2.

Challenges of an increasing and an older population

It is well known that British society is both growing larger in numbers as well as growing older. It is growing larger for two main reasons – the number of immigrants coming into the country, and the increasing number of older people, especially those aged 75 and over, as the graph indicates. The first reason is numerically much more important than the second.

Immigration

The Government Actuaries’ Department has to estimate the net number of immigrants as part of its forecasting work. It has used a figure of 200,000 a year for the next few decades, its highest estimate yet. Of the 10.9 million increase in the population between 2010 and 2035 (63.2 million to 74.1), nearly half, or 5.1 million, will come from net migration. Of the remainder, two-fifths (40%) will come from the 2.3 million natural changes (births less deaths) arising from the immigrants. Many immigrants are of child-bearing age, and have their children here. Three-fifths (59%) of the immigrants into Britain are from India and Pakistan and the large majority of these are allowed to stay permanently, many of these having large families.

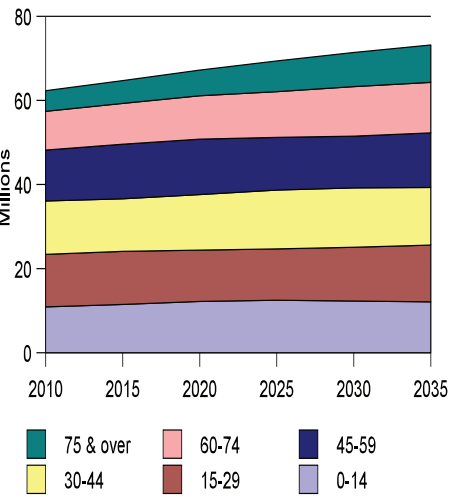
The natural change expected in the basic British population is only 3.5 million people, just a third of the total actual increase expected.

Such may continue to feed antagonism against foreigners, will increase pressure on schooling and hospitals, and perhaps fuel resentment about unobtainable employment for native people. It does, however, also provide opportunities for churches to reach out in community schemes, to help with language learning, adjustment to British culture, and personal friendship.

Ageing factors

There are myriads of factors to consider with the problems of an ageing population. Health, leisure, commerce, transport, home support will all be impacted as well as social life and friendships, and the ability to engage in church activities for Christians. Take one very simple indicator of this: the percentage of European households who have an internet connection. Currently this is 79% for those under 30, 63% for those in their middle age, dropping to 35% for those aged 65 to 74 and just 18% for those 75 or older. Quite apart from an increasing number of purchases, just taking these percentages 20 years ahead, will mean the large majority of the population will become connected.

Population by age-group, UK, 2010 to 2035



While the percentages with a broadband connection are smaller, the general trend is similar. The world today is all on the screen – a billion Facebook members this year! – and what will it be tomorrow? Electronic communication is the norm.

Ageism is already perceived as a threat by some, and there are expressions of age prejudice. 15% of the English population feel “old age” starts at 50, 23% at 60 and 17% at 70, with an average of 59 years. 40% of those 65 or over had no friend aged under 30, and 34% of those under 25 had no friend 70 or over – a danger of society splitting into two groups, something that 40% of those 65 and over also thought could happen. The church is an integrating force and its comprehensiveness may be needed more than ever in the years to come.

Mirrored by the churches

Inevitably, the trends and structures in the population as a whole will be mirrored to some extent in the churches, especially the number of people over 75 years of age. An expert scrutiny of one small denomination showed that with a third of the Quakers now over 75 (three times the population proportion) it seemed very likely that few would be left by 2035. Larger denominations like the Methodists or the URC face similar problems.

One estimate for the Church of England suggested that total Sunday attendance in 2035 might only be half what it had been 30 years earlier. While the Pentecostals and Orthodox are expected still to be growing then, all others will be declining. This may make it difficult or even impossible for churches to play their part, put resources where they are needed, and help in the communal life around their centres of worship, quite apart from the energy and resources needed to proclaim the Good News.

SOURCE: *Populations Trends*, No 146, Winter 2011, Pages 32-34; private email correspondence; *Religious Trends* No 7, Christian Research, Swindon, Table 12.5.1; Special Eurobarometer 362 E-Communications, Eurostat 2011; *Attitudes to Age in Britain*, 2010/11, by Daniel Sweiry and Maxine Willits, Dept for Work and Pensions; *The Migrant Journey*, Research Report 57, Home Office, August 2011, Page 36.

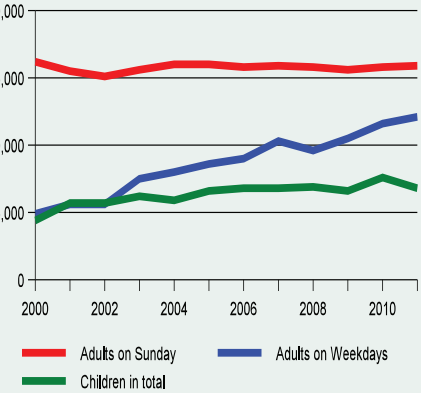
Cathedral Attendance 2011

Anglican Cathedrals collectively attract just over 1% of the total numbers attending church on any given Sunday – to one decimal the percentage is 1.2%. For just the Church of England this percentage is 4.3%. Thus in 2011, an average 34,800 adults and children attended a Cathedral service each week.

Three-fifths (57%) of the adults attended on a Sunday rather than a midweek service, while for children it was the reverse, with two-thirds (68%) attending a mid-week event rather than coming on a Sunday. Overall, as the graph shows, fewer children attended in 2011 than in 2010, but 2010 may have been an exceptional year, as the general trend in child attendance is increasing.

Adult attendance has been increasing, and 2011 attendance is 33% more than in 2000. Child attendance has also been increasing, and has gone up 55% in the same period, but this is based on smaller numbers. The graph shows adult attendance broken down between Sunday and Midweek attendance. Sunday attendance has been static over the past decade, whereas the Midweek attendance has grown by nearly half as much again (147%). Child attendance is similar – Sunday static and Midweek growing.

Numbers of Adults and Children attending Cathedral Services 2000-20011



Why is the Midweek attendance growing? Is it just the convenience of a more suitable time? The Church Commissioners have launched a detailed research project, one part of which focusses on ascertaining why Cathedral attendance has seen such growth since the turn of the century, and its results are awaited with interest!

SOURCES: Annual statistics and website, Research and Statistics Dept., Archbishops’ Council.

These may be helpful

Books and reports received

“Empirical Research”, Leslie Francis, specifically in the context of religious education, as one chapter in larger book. Details from leslie.francis@warwick.ac.uk.

“Work-related Psychological Health among Clergy serving in the Presbyterian Church” (USA), Leslie Francis et al, *Review of Religious Research*, Vol 53, 2011.

“How Anglican Clergy perceive Freemasonry”, Tania Ap Siôn et al, *Journal of Contemporary Religion*, Vol 26, No 2, May 2011.

“Implicit Religion and the Quest for Meaning”, Emyr Williams et al, *Implicit Religion*, Vol 14, No 1, 2011.

“The Personality Profile of Male and Female Anglican Clergy engaged in Multi-parish Rural Ministry”, Christine Brewster et al, *Psychology of Religion*, Vol 33, 2011, Page 241.

“The School Short-Form Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory”, Peter R Hills et al, *Canadian Journal of Social Psychology*, Vol 26, No 1, 2011.

WOMEN AND CHILDREN WORLDWIDE

Save the Children compiled a report “State of the World’s Mothers” in 2011 which contained statistics about key features of women’s health, educational and economic status and children. It listed the details country by country, and the following table summarises these, each country weighted by their current population, by continent. Their report covered 80% of the world’s nations, but 97% of the world’s population. Not every small country has the administrative network to collect or supply these statistics.

The Table shows, as might be expected, a worse situation in the developing (Third) world than in the developed (First) world. Africa is by far the continent which is behind the rest of the world in these respects. Overall world life expectancy for women is over 70, but across Africa it is only 57, largely due to the ravages of AIDS. About three-fifths of women globally use modern contraceptive devices for family planning, but in Africa less than a quarter do so, either because they are unknown, not available or cannot be afforded.

Education is considered to be a key for successful nations as they struggle economically. Typically girls spend 12 years in school across the world (16 in developed nations), but only 9 on average in Africa. While in developed countries over 90% of children are in secondary school, this is much less true in Africa and Asia where the average is closer to 60%. Partly this will reflect inability of parents or relatives to pay, but also partly lack of suitable opportunity, as well as cultural differences in the role of girls and women in society.

Women’s wages worldwide are roughly only half those of men, and Asia is the continent where this is worse, partly because the ratio is so low in India where population is a quarter of the entire continent of Asia and where the ratio is only 0.32.

The differences in under 5 mortality rate across the globe are enormous. From an average of 10 children in every thousand (or 1%) in developed countries, the ratio is more than 10 times this in Africa, where 11% of children die before their fifth birthday. Even in Asia the proportion is much higher – at 4% – again partly because it is so high in India (7%). Access to clean or safe water is available for at least 90% of the world’s children, except again across Africa where it is only 65%. Children’s health inevitably suffers.

The Report paints a sober picture although one the basic facts of which are widely known. Its value in giving these (and many other) statistics is to put quantitatively the measure of deprivation that is seen in many countries and especially across the continent of Africa. We need to be grateful for the advantages of health, affluence and education that living in the Western world affords us and to be generous in helping those in so much need of the basic fabric of life which we often take for granted.

SOURCE: *State of the World’s Mothers*, 2011, Save the Children, downloadable from their website.

Measures of Development for Women and Children, by Continent, 2010

Continent	No of countries	Total population (mns)	Women			Children		
			Femal life expectancy at birth (years)	Using modern contraception %	Expected no of years of female schooling (years)	Ratio of estimated female to male earned income	Under 5 mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)	Secondary school enrollment (% of total)
Europe	38	680.1	80	58	16	0.61	7	96
North America	17	541.6	80	66	16	0.55	14	90
Oceania	3	26.0	83	71	21	0.69	6	100
Total 1st World	58	1,247.7	80	62	16	0.59	10	93

Continent	No of countries	Total population (mns)	Femal life expectancy at birth (years)	Using modern contraception %	Expected no of years of female schooling (years)	Ratio of estimated female to male earned income	Under 5 mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)	Secondary school enrollment (% of total)	Access to safe water (% of population)
Africa	50	1,059.8	57	23	9	0.52	109	57	65
Asia	49	4,127.1	71	60	11	0.49	42	68	88
South America	12	396.8	77	65	14	0.58	6	92	94
Total 3rd World	111	5,583.7	69	53	11	0.50	52	68	84
TOTAL World	169	6,831.4	71	55	12	0.52	44	72	86



Providing Facts for Forward Planning

SNIPPETS

1) Three-fifths (58%) of UK teenagers aged 13 to 19 have access to the internet in the privacy of their bedroom.

2) The average number of friends on Facebook in 2012 by those aged 13 to 16 was 450, compared with 1,000 for 22 year olds and just 20 for those 50 or over.

3) The World Values Survey showed that the percentage of the general global public who pray daily was 19% for the richest and 33% for the poorest.

4) People in the UK consider themselves Christian if they were christened or baptised (72%) or if their parents were Christian (38%).

5) Half of the UK population (49%) do not think that Jesus is the Son of God, and one in 25 (4%) doubt He even ever existed!

6) In 1900 (British population 41 million) 156,000 people died before the age of 1; in 2000 (population 60 million) 128,000 people died before the age of 65.

7) On average, human beings sleep 8 hours a day, a horse 3 hours, a dog 10 hours and a lion 14 hours.

SOURCES: 1 and 2) Items in *Christianity* magazine, March 2012, Page 22; 3) Taken from *Vista*, Issue 9, April 2012, Page 2; 4, and 5) Survey by the Richard Dawkins Foundation for Reason and Science quoted in *Plain Truth*, Spring 2012, Page 11; 6) *Third Age Matters*, Spring 2012, Page 47; 7) *National Geographic* magazine, July 2011, Page 26.

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Israeli Statistics

by Rev Lisa Battye, St Paul’s, Kersal Moor, Salford

General facts

People are often surprised to discover that Israel is only 290 miles long and between 9 and 85 miles wide¹, approximately the size of Wales, and that it has only 7,850,000 inhabitants, of whom 75% are Jewish, 21% are Israeli Arabs, and the remaining 4% are others. *The Global Atlas of Christianity, 2011*, gives the figure of 160,000 Christians in Israel, 2% of the population, increasing at the rate of about 3,000 people per year.

The country has arid desert in the south and green, hilly, arable land in the north. 70% of the population are concentrated on the coastal plain. Israel has a unicameral parliamentary democracy with 120 seats in the Knesset, a Prime Minister and an elected figurehead President.

Education is free up to the age of 18 and compulsory from the age of five, and over 50% of Israelis between the ages of 20 and 24 are enrolled in further or higher education. Average life expectancy is 79 years (men) and 83 years (women).

History

Historically there has been a Jewish presence in the Holy Land for thousands of years, particularly which influenced the 1947 UN vote that Israel should become a Jewish homeland, urgently needed for surviving Jewish refugees of the atrocities of the Holocaust in Nazi Europe. Unfortunately the UN decision was not accepted in the region, and the Hamas and the Palestinian Charters still retain the destruction of Israel as their objective.²

When the State of Israel was declared and the fledgling state was attacked by the armies of surrounding countries ¾ million Palestinian Arabs became refugees and were never assimilated by the countries to which they fled. At the same time more than 850,000 Jews were forced out of Arab lands, becoming refugees who have since been assimilated in Israel and elsewhere.³

Minorities

There are many Arab students at Israeli Universities and Academic Colleges. There are Arab members of Parliament (even one in the Cabinet), Arab Justices of the Supreme Court, Arab Professors in Universities and Arab Heads of departments in hospitals and universities. The Bedouin Arabs, a nomadic, tribal people living in the southern deserts of Israel, are being helped to develop solar energy.

One College has a department for handicapped students. Women have parity with men in almost all fields and are prominent in public life, even as President of the Supreme Court and the Speaker of Parliament. There is a major place of worship in Haifa, Northern Israel, for the Baha’i faith often persecuted in Islamic countries.

Israel and the disputed territories

Media attention is most often concerned with Jewish ‘settlements’ in the Palestinian Authority area, where there has been an ongoing Jewish presence for many years. They represent just over 2½% of the population in those parts. Israel wants peace, and without terrorism and intimidation there is no reason why Jews and Arabs should not live peacefully side by side in the West Bank in the same way that they do in other parts

of Israel where ordinary Arabs enjoy a higher standard of living than anywhere else in the Middle East. The strength of grassroots longing to live in peace in both Israel and the disputed territories is seen in a very long list of joint Arab-Israeli projects.

In contrast, Christians in Palestinian areas are in danger from Islamic extremists resulting in the dramatic exodus of Arab Christians from the areas under Palestinian control in the last ten years due to Islamisation of their schools and in political life.



Meanwhile, the principle of equality for all Israeli citizens, regardless of religion, ethnicity, gender or sexual orientation is protected by Israel’s Supreme Court. This is upheld rigorously, as seen most clearly in Israeli tolerance of the growth of the Messianic Jewish (Jewish Christian) community within Israel over the last 30 years – from approximately 250 in 1980 to between 10,000 and 15,000 in over 200 congregations in 2008.⁴ The state’s tolerance of this contrasts sharply with the gross persecution that indigenous Christians are currently receiving in many other Middle Eastern countries.⁵

In its short 64 year history this tiny state has had the right to claim it is “A light to the nations.” Israel’s agricultural projects have helped many Third World countries,⁶ and Israeli technology has benefited the rest of the world disproportionately. It has been responsible for mobile phones, voice mail and Pentium computer chips and has been a world leader in medical research, particularly in the fields of Multiple Sclerosis, Cancer, Cystic Fibrosis, and Alzheimer’s disease. Israel is quick to share its knowledge with other countries, especially in disease prevention in Africa and China. Israel is also at the forefront of humanitarian projects when natural disasters strike, for example, in Haiti, and in humanitarian projects such as with children.

Conclusion

The best way to learn about Israel is to visit, ideally with a Christian Pilgrimage which many testify as “a life-changing experience.”

NOTES
1) *Israel: Frequently Asked Questions* Published by BICOM (Britain Israel Communications and Research Centre) BCM Box 5708, London WC1N3XX
2) www.fas.org/irp/world/para/docs/880818a.htm
3) www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jewish_exodus_from_Arab_lands
4) www.cbn.com/CBNnews/407/139.aspx
5) www.rescuechristians.org/2012/02/19/middle-east-christians-have-become-regular-targets-for-islamic-thugs/
6) www.moag.gov.il/agri/files/agriculture/index.html