



Congregational Survey Analysis Your Church

BY WARREN BIRD WARREN.BIRD@LEADNET.ORG AND SCOTT THUMMA STHUMMA@HARTSEM.EDU

Warm greetings to your church leadership team. The following report is based on a congregational survey your church took on _____.

Comparison Group

As a way of providing helpful context for your church's congregational study, many of your statistics are compared to a "study group" of 12 other churches. Here's a brief profile of that study group: In 2008 we selected twelve megachurches in an effort to typify the overall profile of America's roughly 1,250 megachurches (congregations with weekly worship attendance of 2,000 or more adults and children). *These 12 churches closely represent the national megachurch profile in terms of attendance, region, denomination, dominant race or multi-racial character, church age, whether they crossed the 2,000 mark under the leadership of their present senior pastor, and whether they are multi-site.* In terms of possible biases, all the churches have a relationship with Leadership Network, likewise, the sample is slightly larger than the average of all U.S. megachurches, and it slightly under-represents the western region. Nevertheless, we think it is as representative as a selection of 12 out of 1,250 churches could be. Here is a more specific profile of the comparison group:

Participants in the 2008 Field Study of U.S. Megachurches				
Church	1. seeker	2. traditional	3. traditional	4. seeker
Region	Midwest	Midwest	South	South
Year founded	1989	1920	1837	1978
2007 attendance	4,427	5,391	6,516	2,242
Cross 2,000 under present pastor?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Dominant race	White	Black	White	White
Percent non dominant race	18%	2%	5%	5%
Denomination	Non-denominational	National Baptist	Southern Baptist	United Methodist
Multi-site?	Yes	Yes	No	Not yet, but just about to be
Church	5. seeker	6. new wave	7. traditional	8. pastor centered
Region	Midwest	West	South	South
Year founded	1980	1996	1955	2000
2007 attendance	4,372	4,717	1,800	3,300
Cross 2,000 under present pastor?	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Dominant race	White	White	White	Black
Percent non dominant race	2%	7%	5%	2%
Denomination	Lutheran (ELCA)	Non-denominational	Presbyterian (PCUSA)	Disciples of Christ
Multi-site?	Yes	Yes	No	Yes

Church	9. traditional	10. new wave	11. pastor centered	12. seeker
Region	Northeast	South	West	Midwest
Year founded	1808	2002	2000	1976
2007 attendance	2,000	2,500	7,000	8,807
Cross 2,000 under present pastor?	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Dominant race	White	White	White	White
Percent non dominant race	10%	15%	42%	23%
Denomination	Independent Congregational	Southern Baptist	Non-denominational	Vineyard
Multi-site?	No	Not yet, but thinking about it	Not yet, but thinking about it	No

Response Rate for the Congregational Survey

We would have loved a 100% response from each church, but instead we received a wide range of participation levels. The average response rate was **58% from all 12 churches**. **The highest response rate was 98% and the lowest was 27%.**

	Congregational surveys returned	Attendance for survey	Percentage
1	1,580	4,500	35%
2	2,815	5,462	52%
3	3,011	6,514	46%
4	1,222	1,924	64%
5	1,474	3,001	49%
6	1,750	4,000	44%
7	993	1,353	73%
8	1,528	3,000	51%
9	1,431	1,458	98%
10	2,497	3,315	75%
11	2,009	7,579	27%
12	4,590	5,410	85%
Averages	2,075	3,960	58%
By comparison, here is how your church responded:			
Your Church	_____	_____	_____

Overall Profile of Your Congregation

Who responded to the survey? Unless your church's response rate is a full 100%, it is important to be cautious in drawing conclusions from the survey findings. Look over the demographic profile of your congregation below, which represents only those who filled out the survey. Ask yourself, "Does this picture line up with what we already know of the congregation's profile? Are there any major segments of the congregation missing? Who answered – and who didn't – and would that make a difference in the findings?"

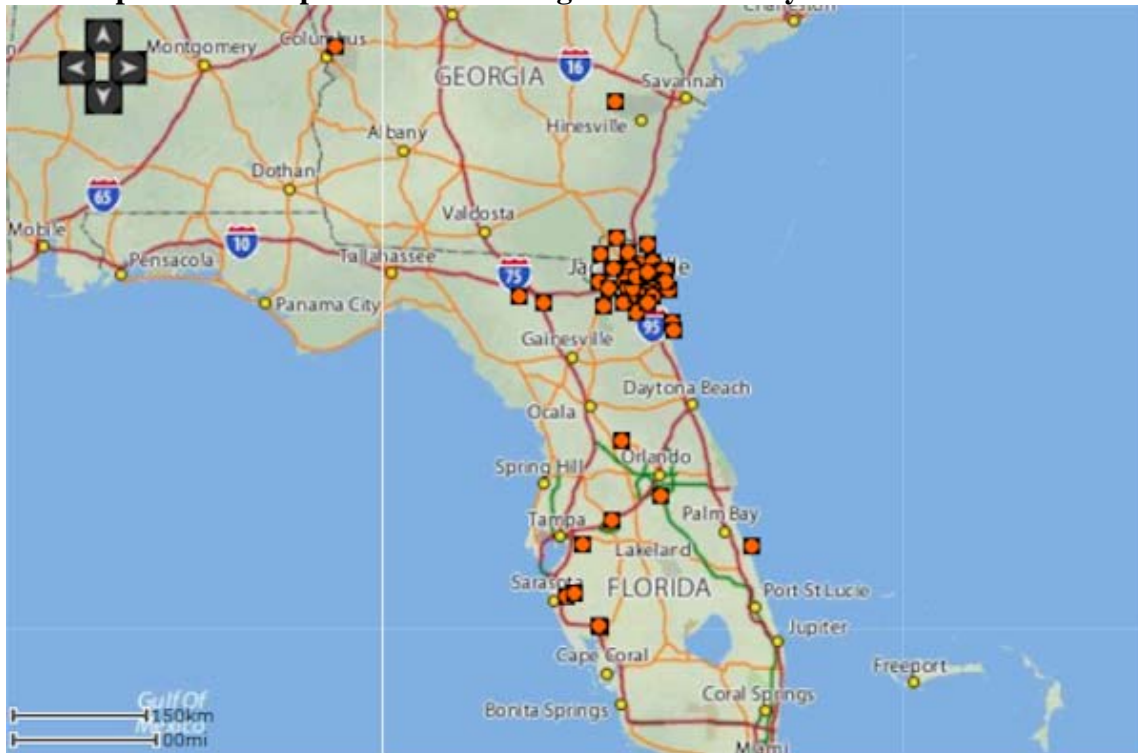
We assume, based on our years of surveying churches, that those who were present but chose not to respond are most likely visitors, very infrequent attenders, or marginally involved attenders. If you have surveys from previous years, please compare those with this profile and reflect on its adequacy before coming to any conclusions about the information within this overall report. (Note: In some of the following graphics, not all numbers will add to exactly 100% due to rounding.)

A. General Demographics of Attenders

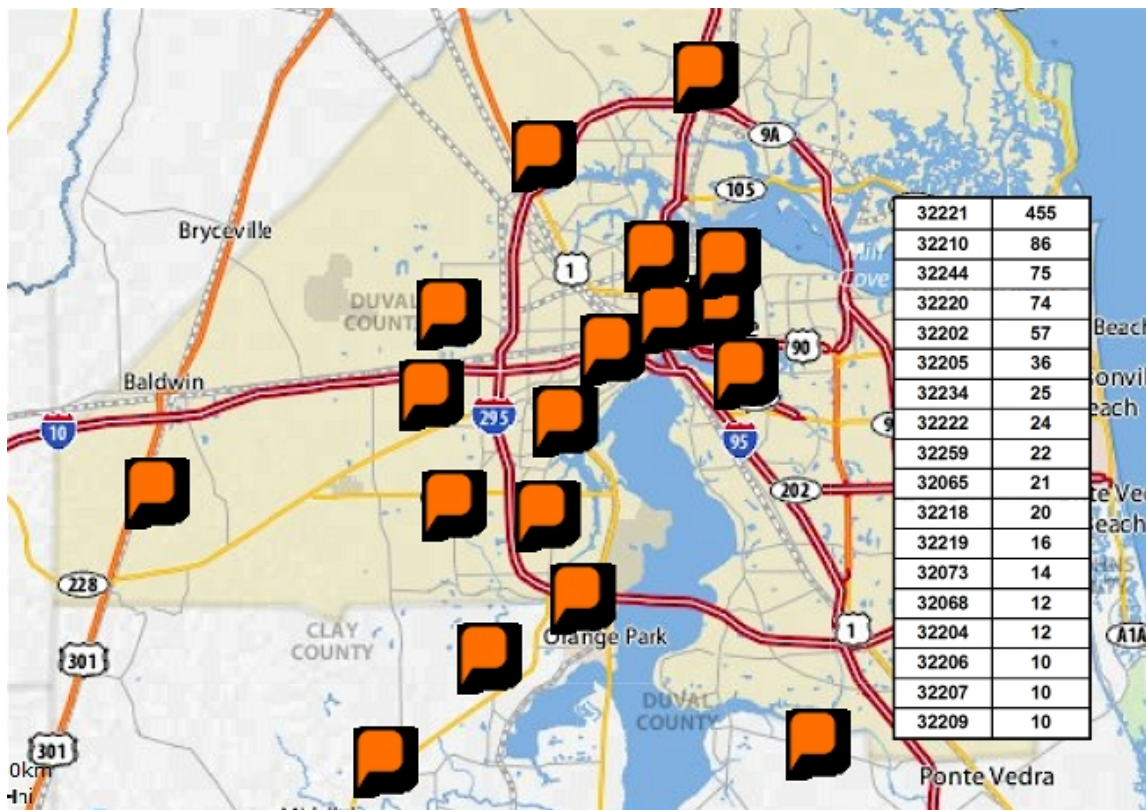
Plot of zip codes of all respondents from your church on the day of the survey, affirming that not everyone at church that day lives locally!



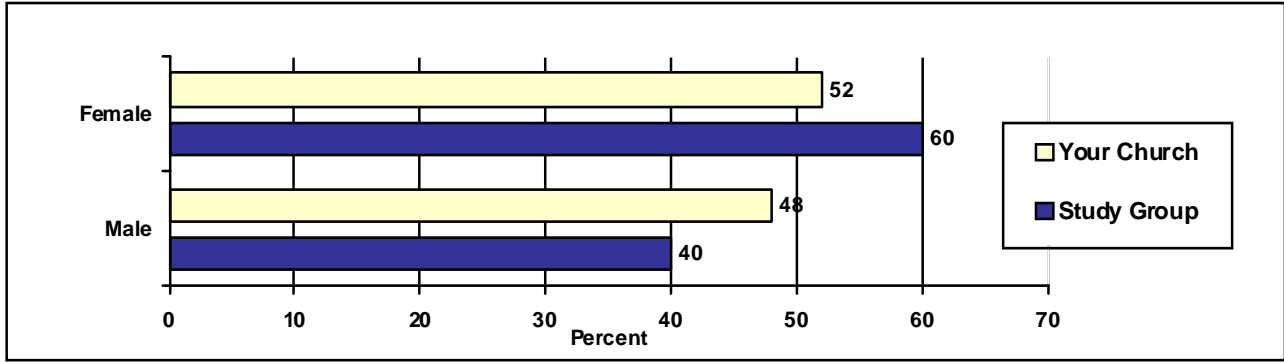
Plot of those zip codes of respondents in the larger area around your church facilities



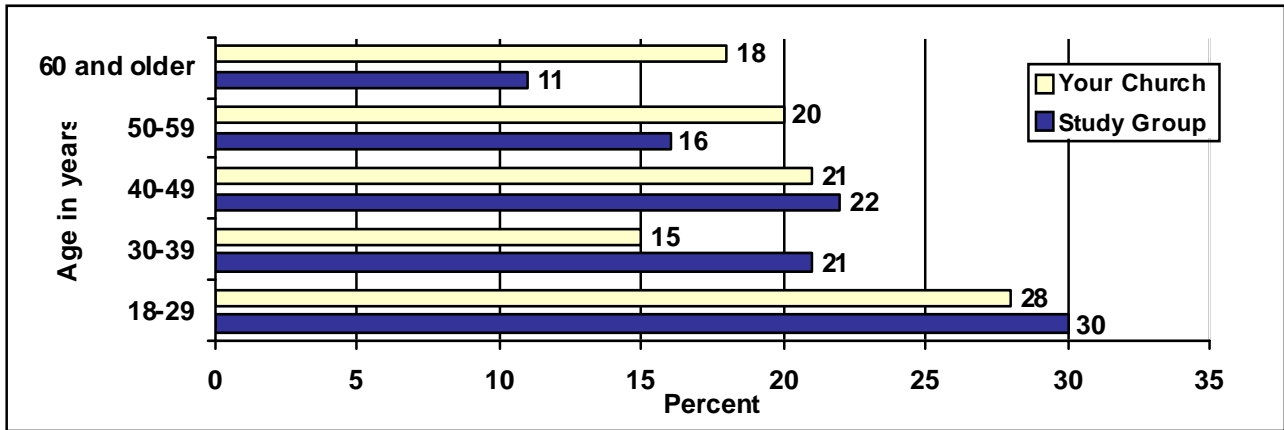
Plot of those zip codes with 10 or more respondents in them



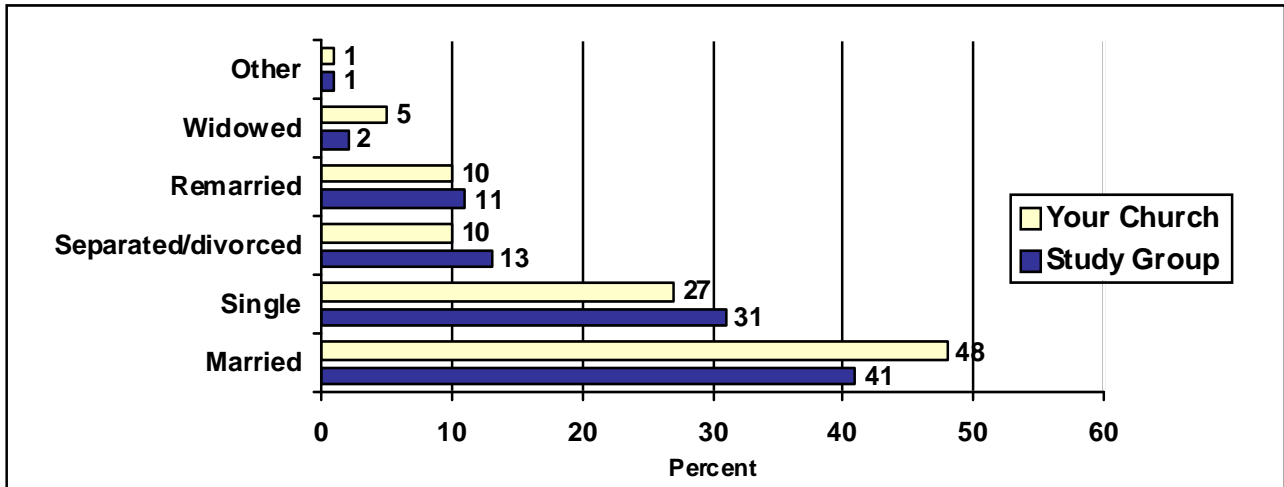
Gender



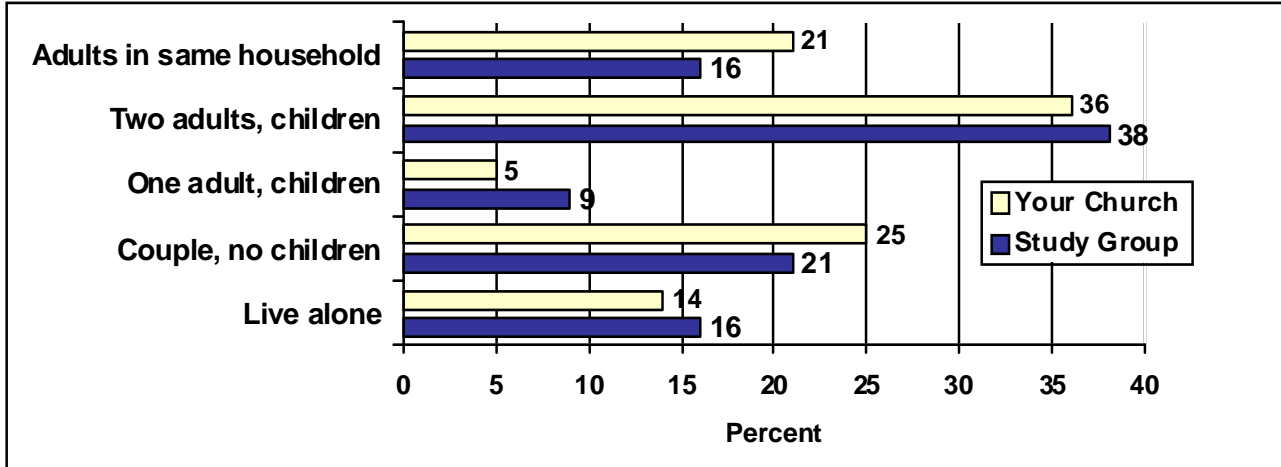
Age Groups



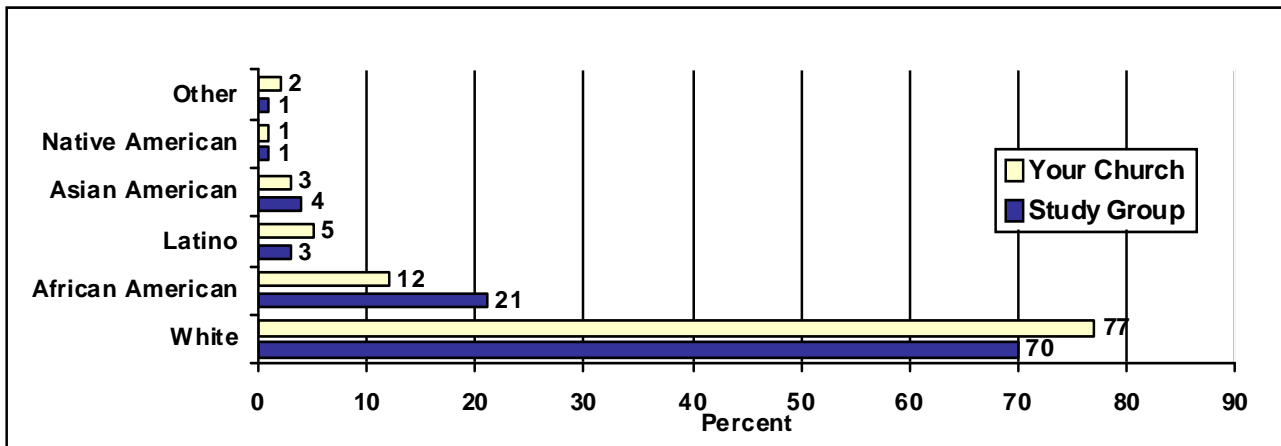
Marital Status



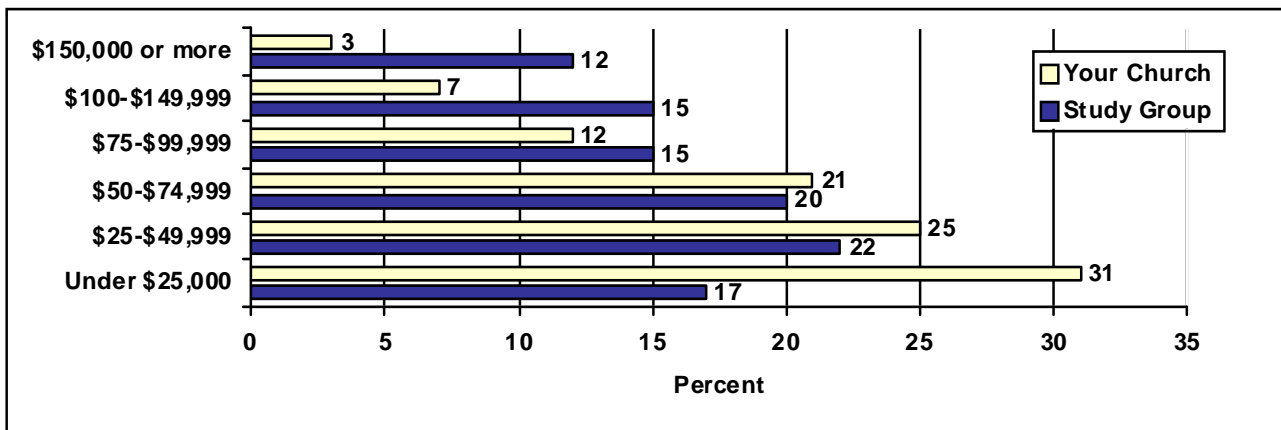
Household Makeup



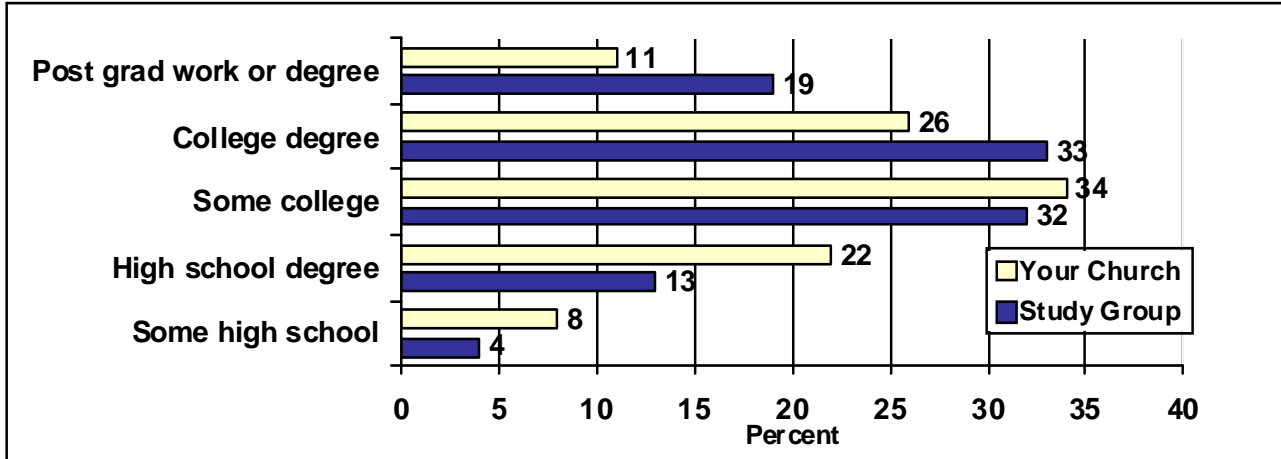
Race



Income



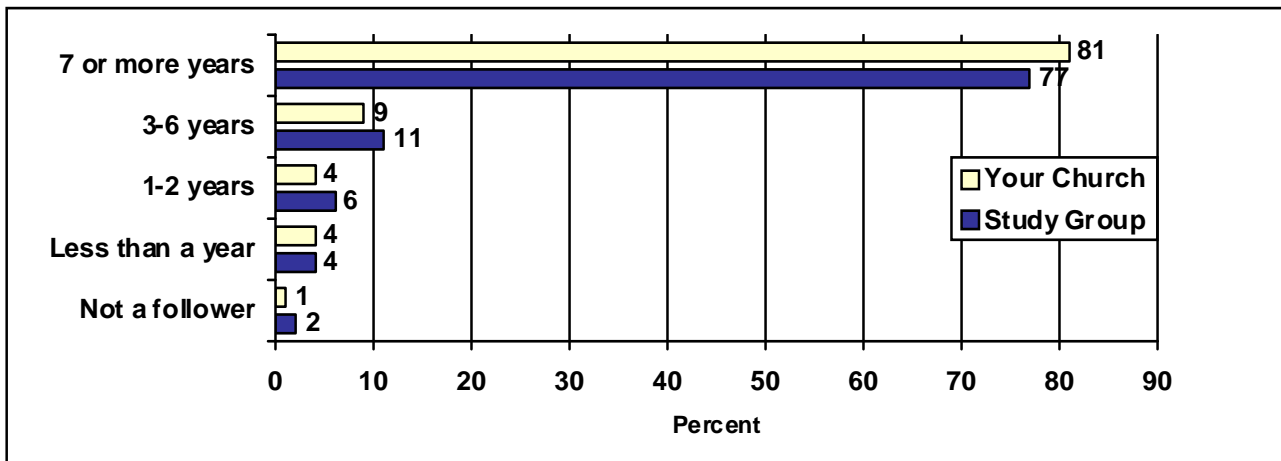
Education



B. Attenders' Spiritual Profile

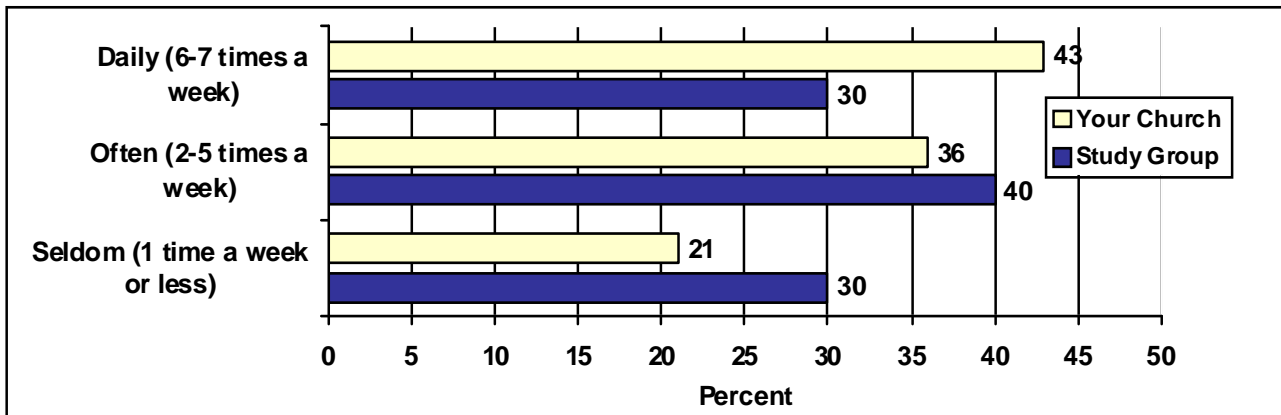
Years as a committed follower of Christ?

The actual question is: *If you consider yourself a committed follower of Jesus Christ, how long have you been?*



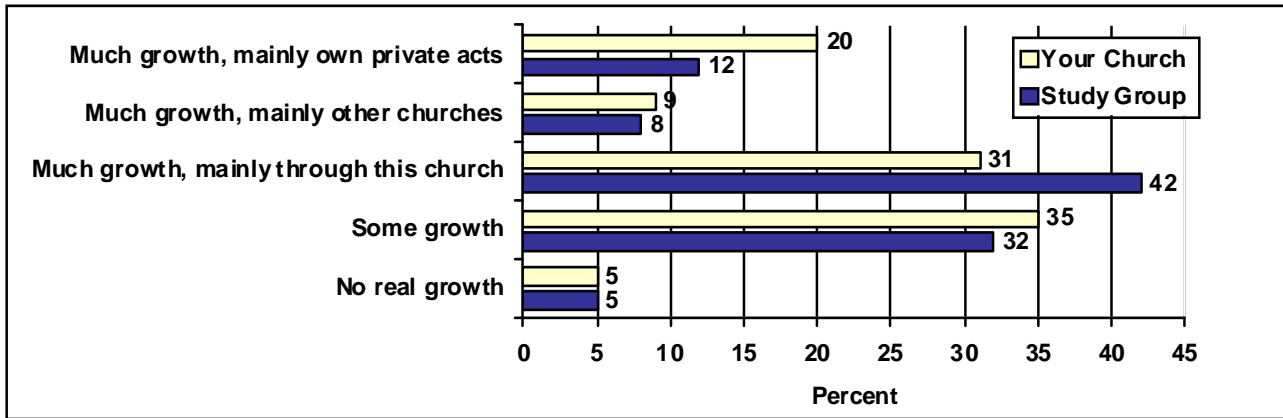
Frequency of devotional practices?

The actual question is: *In the past week, how often do you practice personal devotions (times of Bible reading and prayer)?*



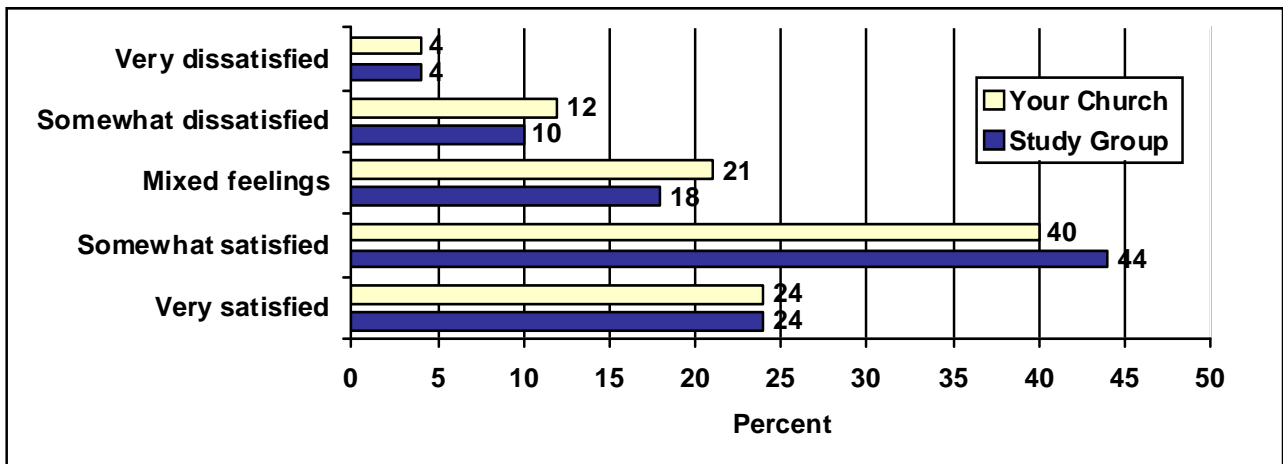
Growth in faith?

The actual question is: *Over the last year, how much have you grown in your faith?*



Satisfaction with spiritual growth?

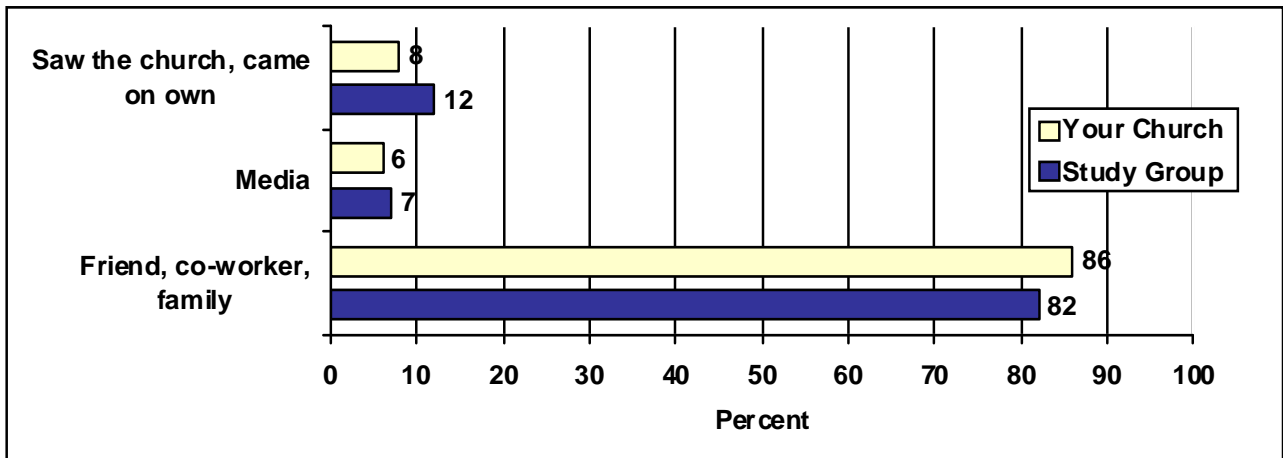
The actual question is: *How satisfied are you with your own spiritual growth?*



C. What First Attracted Them, What Keeps Them, and Why?

First exposure to this church?

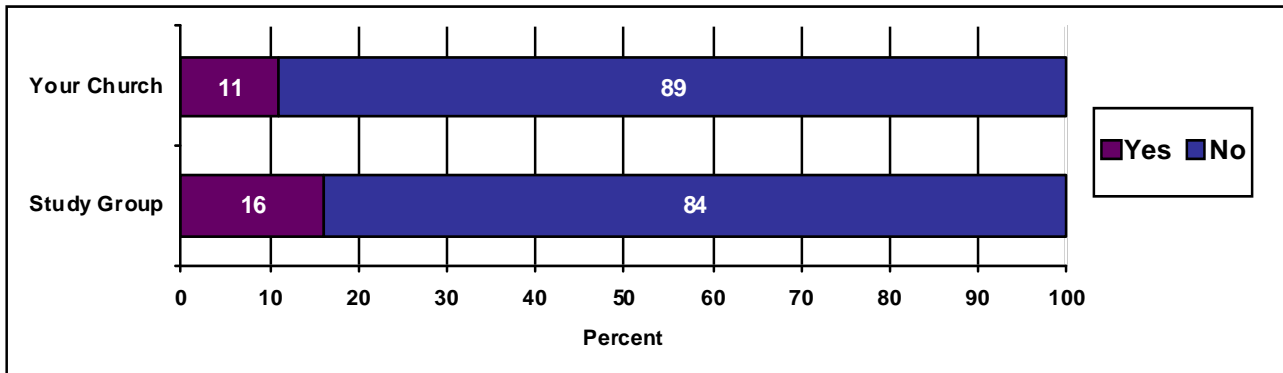
The actual question is: *How did you first find out about this church?*



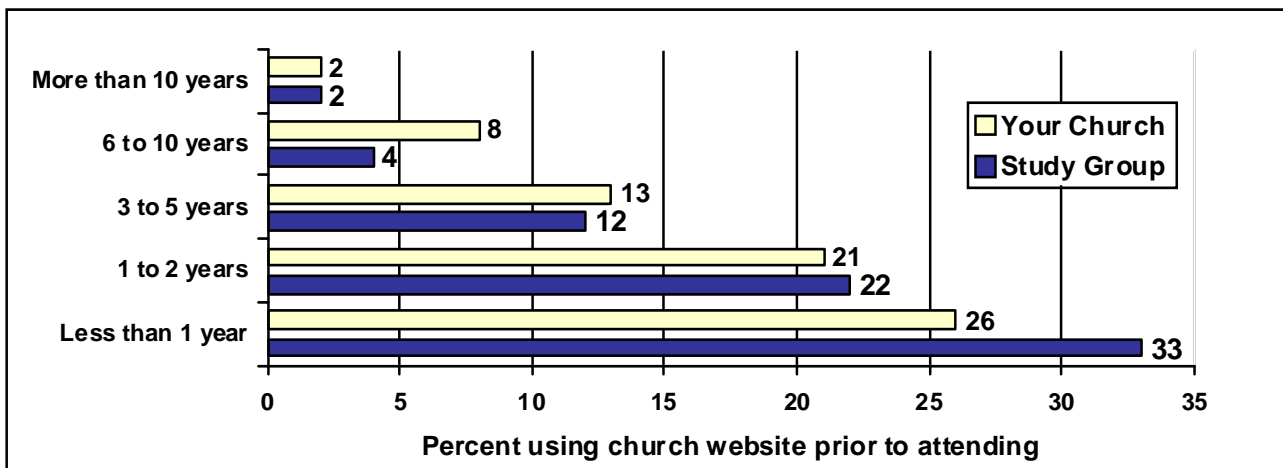
Visit church website before you came?

The actual question is: *Did you look at the church's website before your first visit to the church?*

It is analyzed in the next two illustrations.

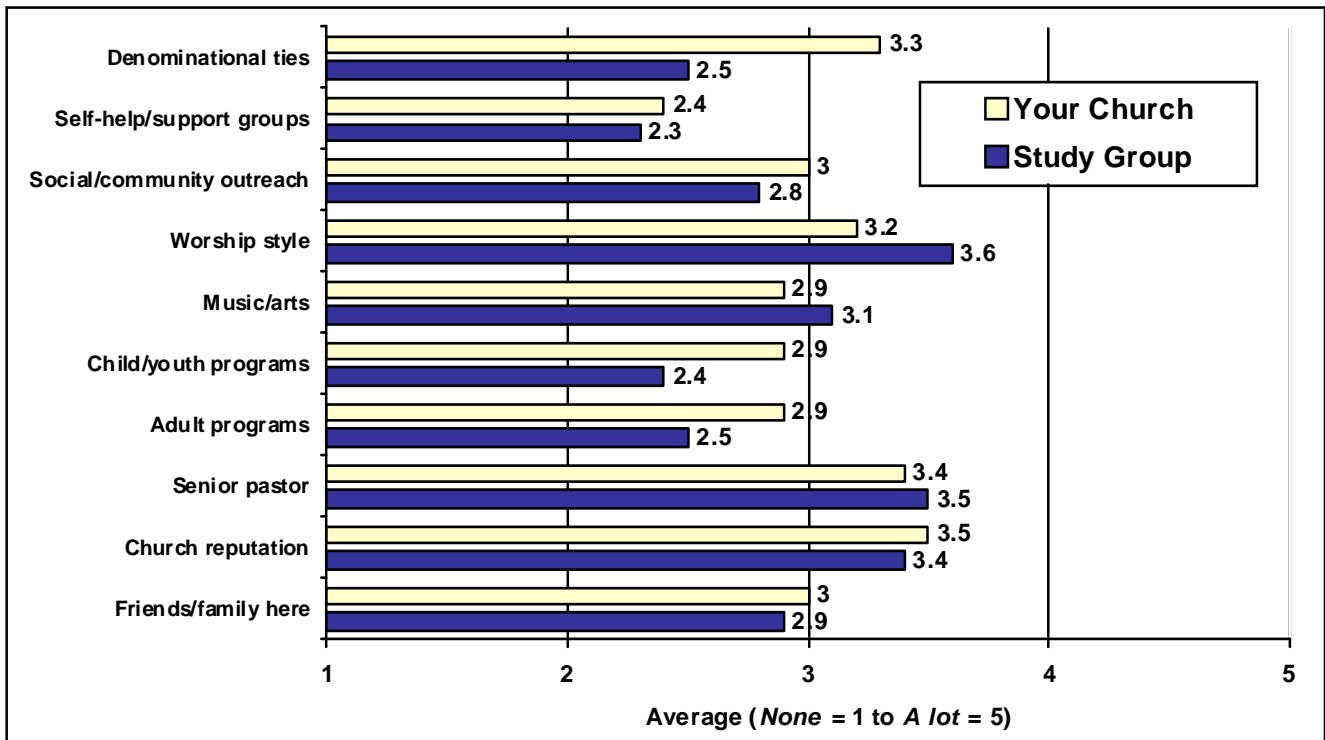


The predictable trends is that the newer the attender, the more they used the church website before their first visit. Here is how it breaks down for your church:



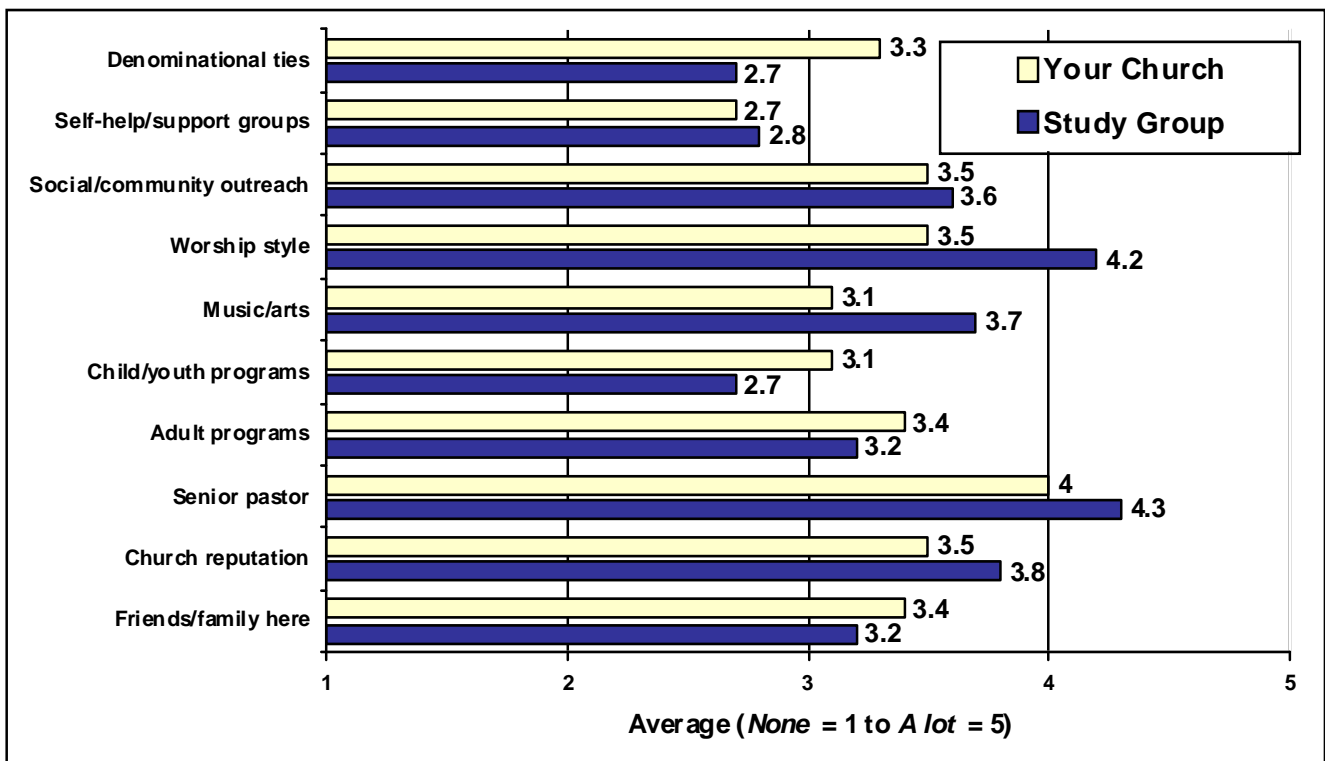
What first attracted you to this church?

The actual question is: *How influential were the following in bringing you to this church "initially" (when you first began attending)?*



What keeps you here now?

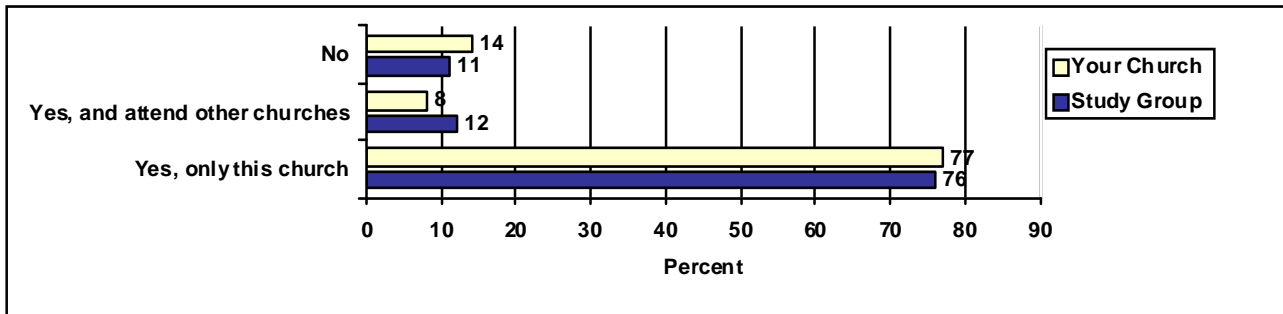
The actual question is: *How influential are the following in keeping you here "now"?*



D. What's Their Current Involvement In This Church?

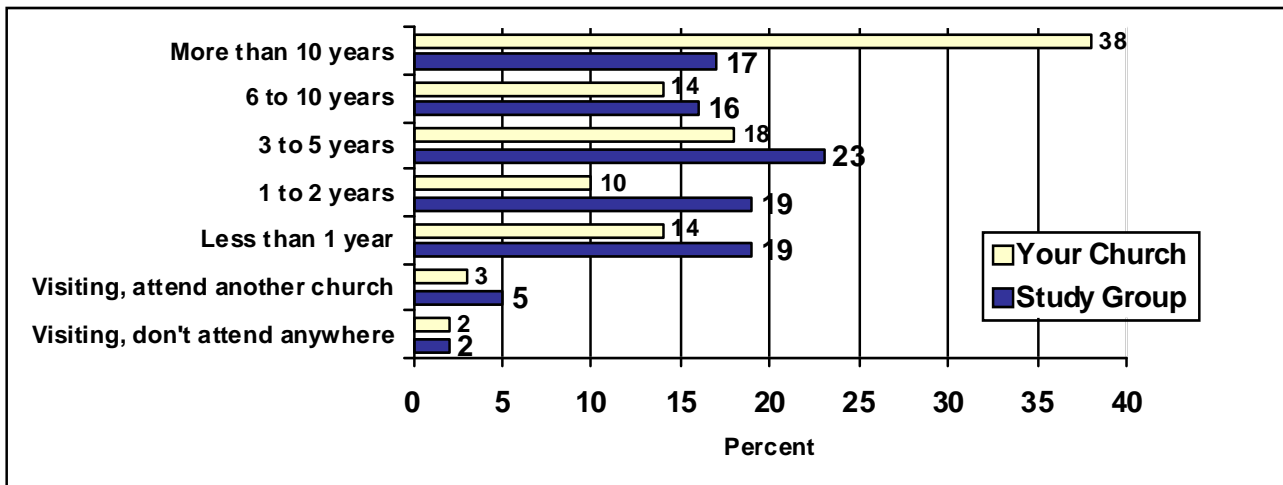
Church home here?

The actual question is: *Do you consider this church your home church?*



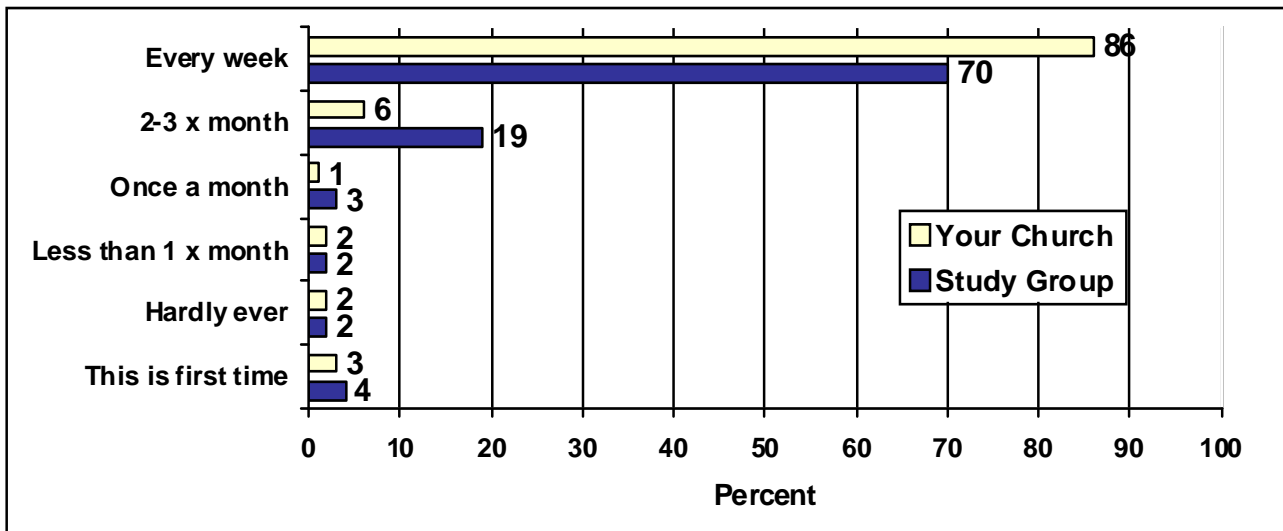
Length of attendance?

The actual question is: *How long have you been going to church services (worship) or activities at this church?*



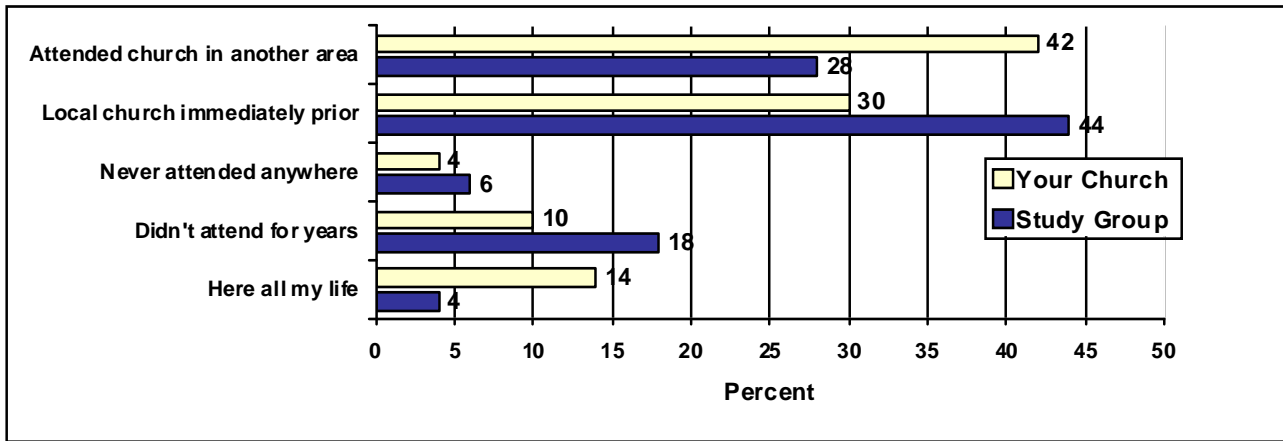
Frequency of worship here?

The actual question is: *How often do you go to church (worship) services at this congregation?*



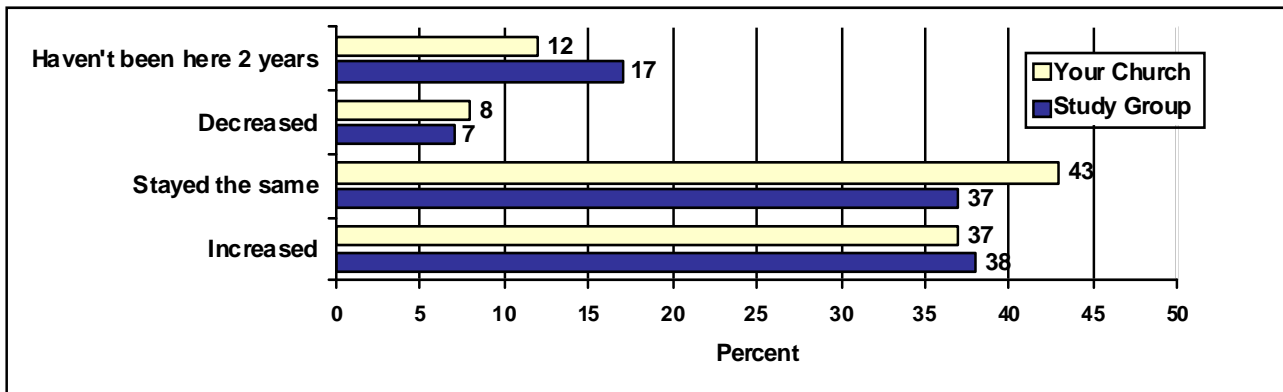
Any previous church connections?

The actual question is: *Before you started coming to this church, were you participating at another church?*



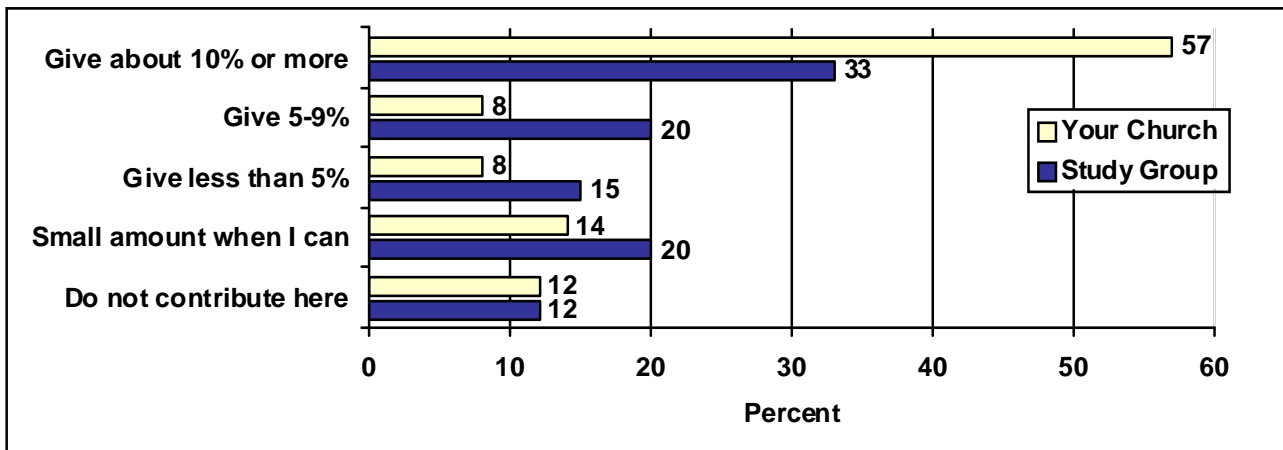
Change in participation?

The actual question is: *How has your participation in this church's activities changed in the last two years?*



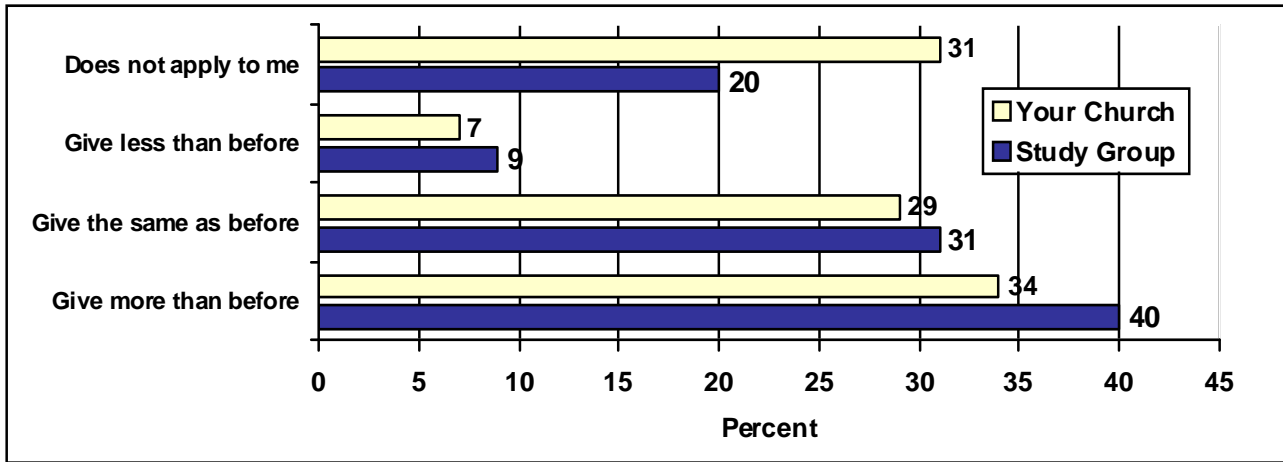
Level of financial giving here?

The actual question is: *About how much do you give financially to this church?*



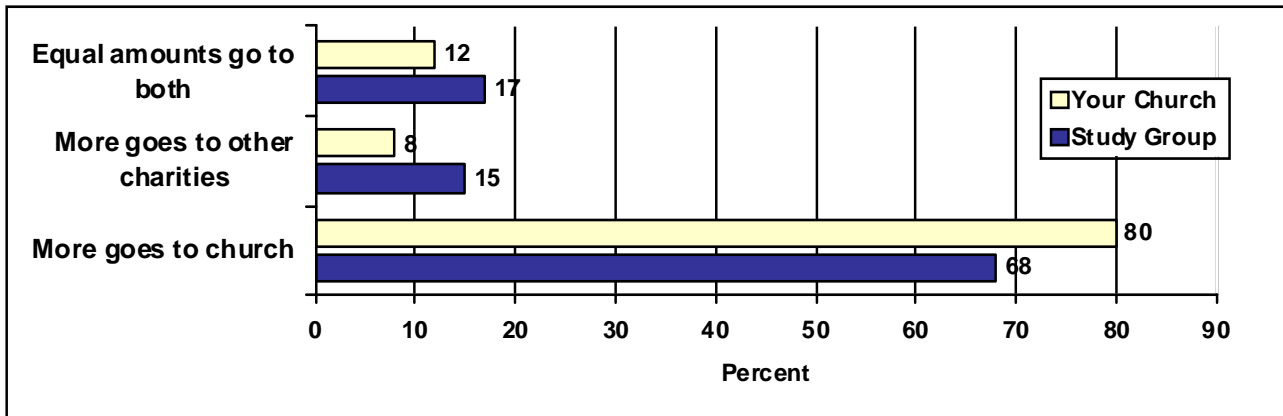
Level of financial giving compared to previous church?

The actual question is: *How does your answer compare to the last church you regularly attended?*



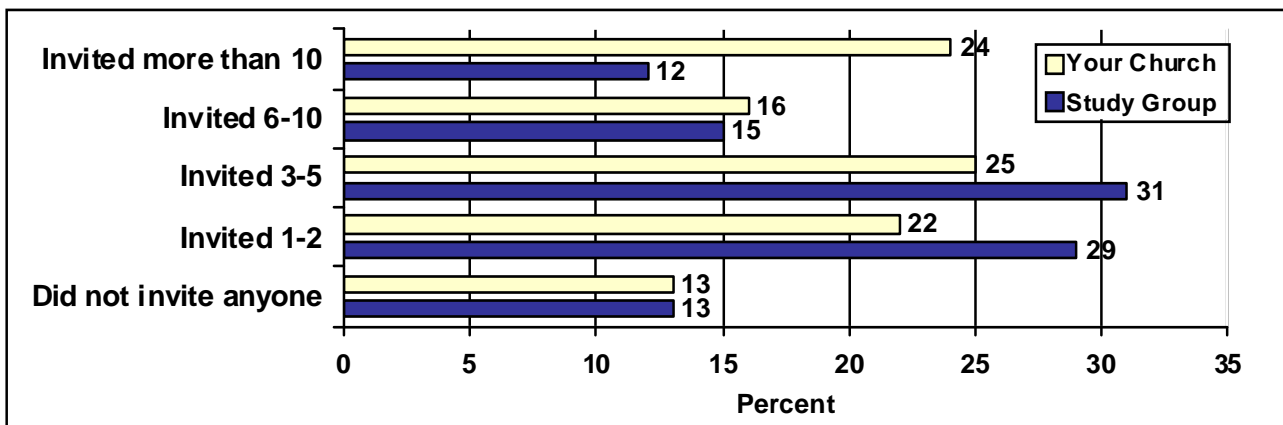
Giving to church compared to outside causes?

The actual question is: *What's the comparison between what you give financially to this church, and what you contribute to other causes/charities?*



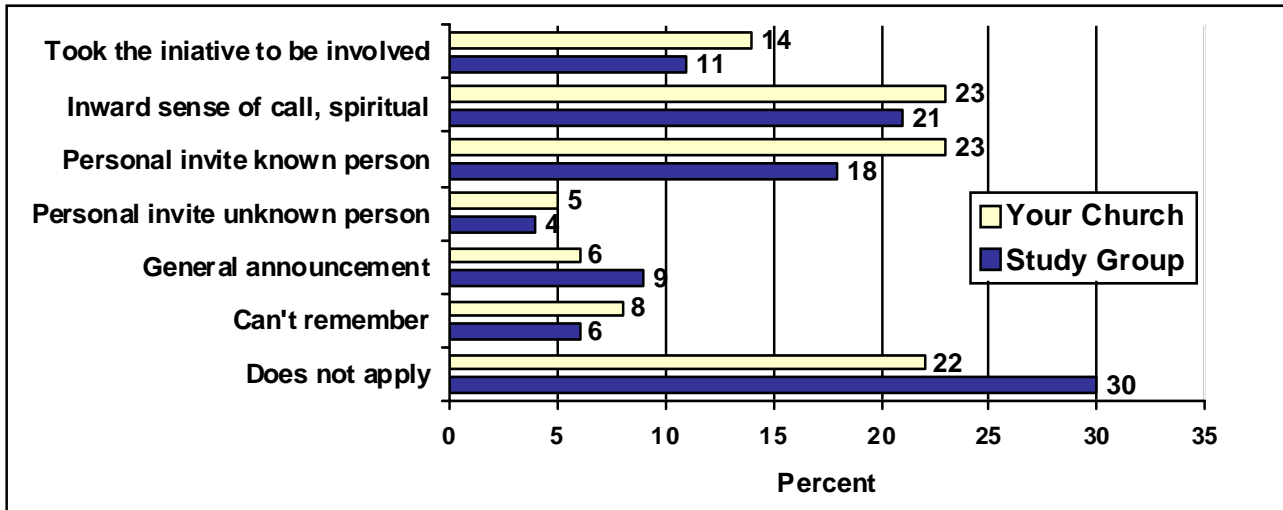
Inviting others to this church?

The actual question is: *During the past year, roughly how many people did you invite to your church? (Include people you invited even if they did not accept the invitation.)*



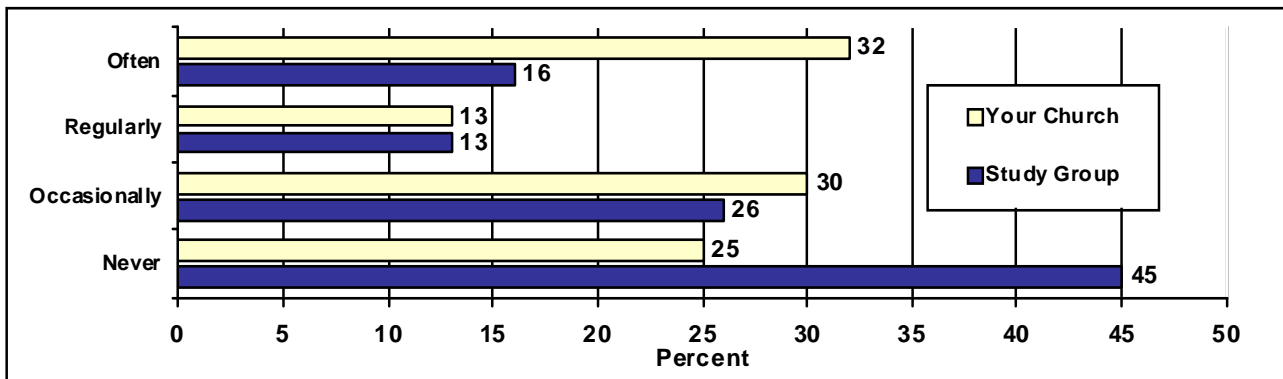
Shift from spectator to participant?

The actual question is: *What was the first step that moved you from spectator to active participant at this church?*



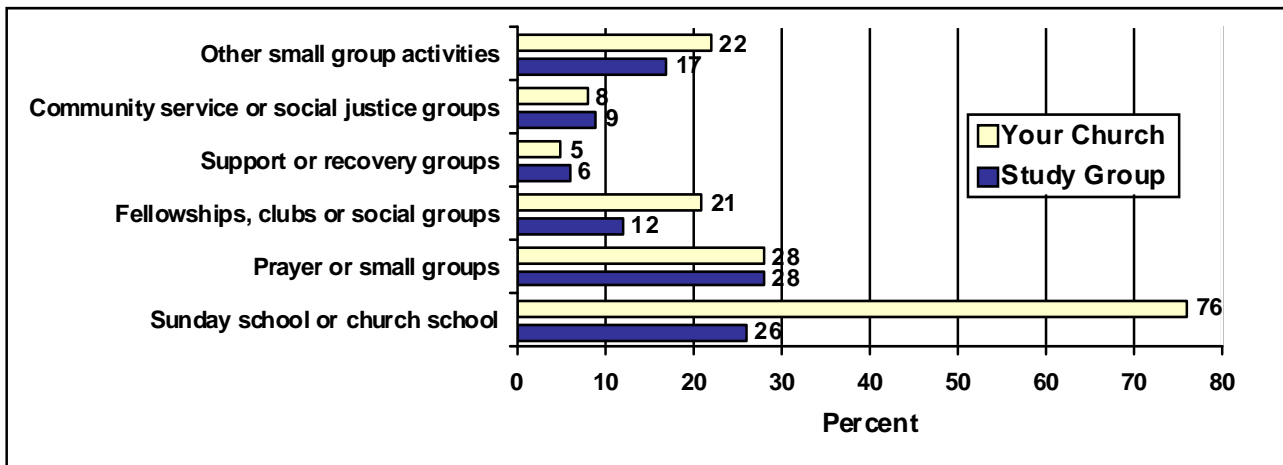
Volunteering at this church?

The actual question is: *In a typical month, how often do you volunteer in any capacity at this church?*



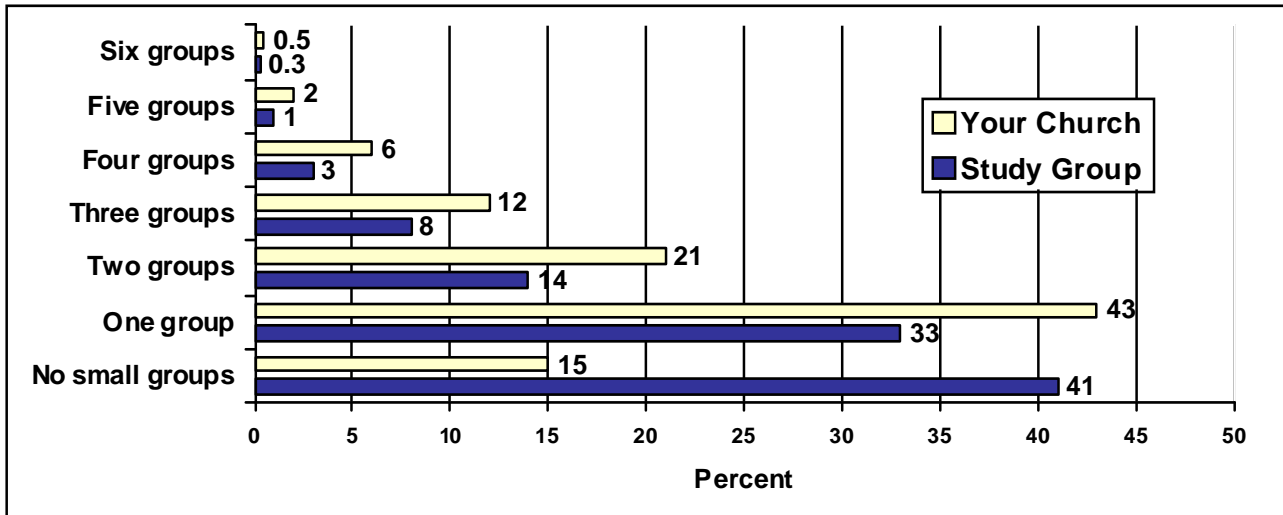
Small group and other involvement?

The actual question is: *Are you regularly involved in the following group activities at this church? (Fill in all that apply)*



How many groups are you part of?

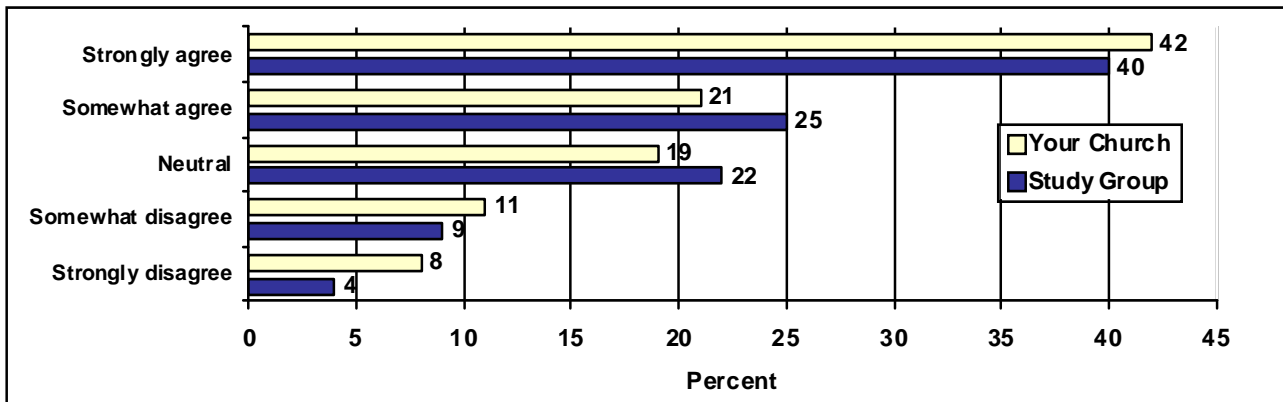
The actual question is listed immediately above. This graphic shows the sum of all the groups attenders are a part of based on our statement: "*Fill in all that apply*".



E. How Do They Assess Their Experience with This Church?

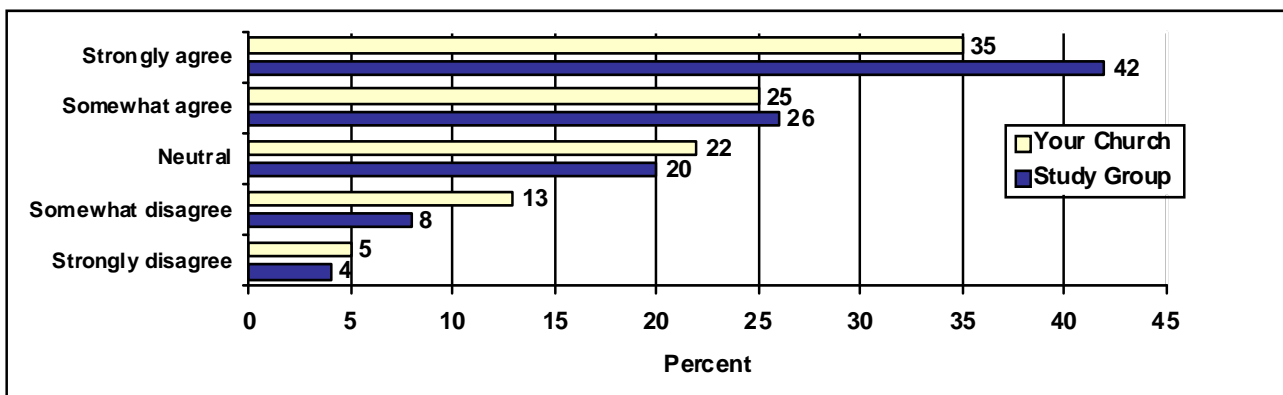
Have you developed a sense of belonging?

The actual statement is: *I have a strong sense of belonging to this church.*



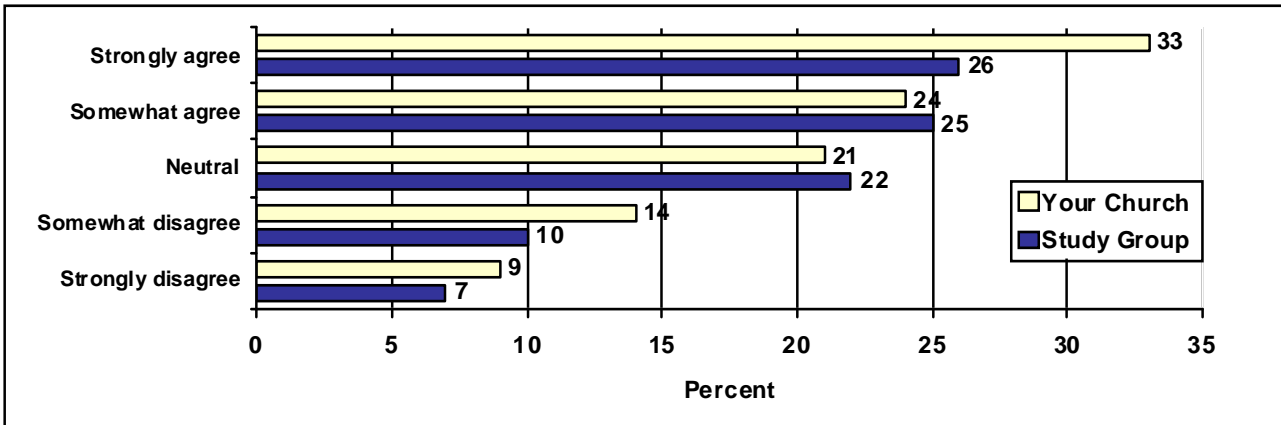
Do you feel encouraged by this church to get involved with it?

The actual statement is: *This church makes a strong effort to help me get involved in the activities and life of the church body.*



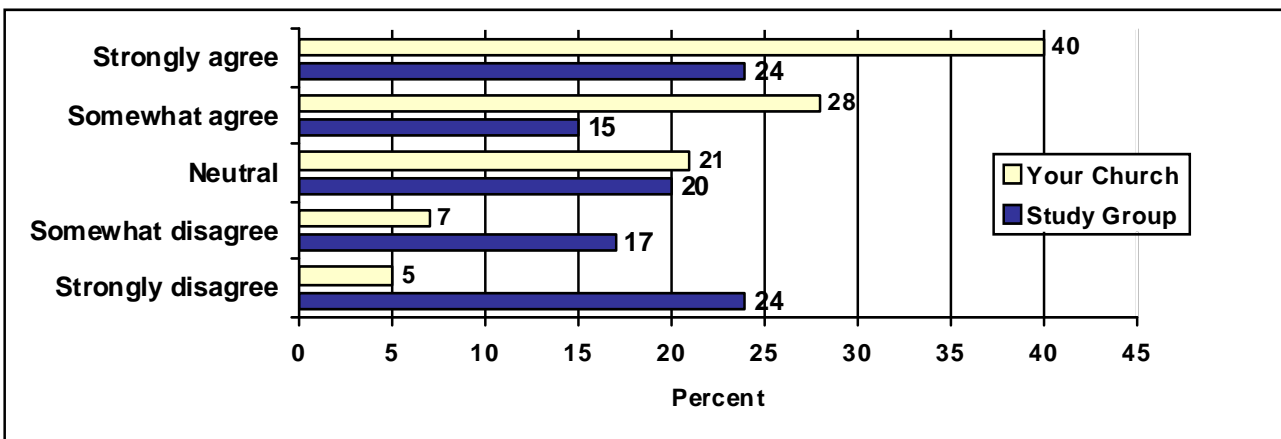
Do you feel encouraged by this church to find and use your gifts?

The actual statement is: *Church leaders encourage me to discover and use my gifts and skills for ministry and service.*



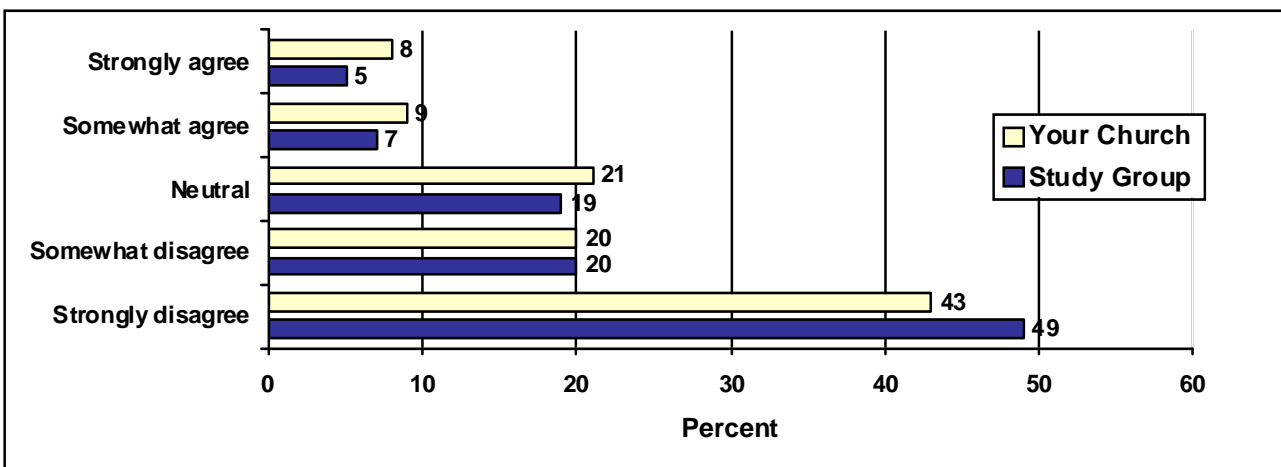
Do you feel encouraged by this church to serve the wider world?

The actual statement is: *This church has encouraged me to serve the wider community, nation and world.*



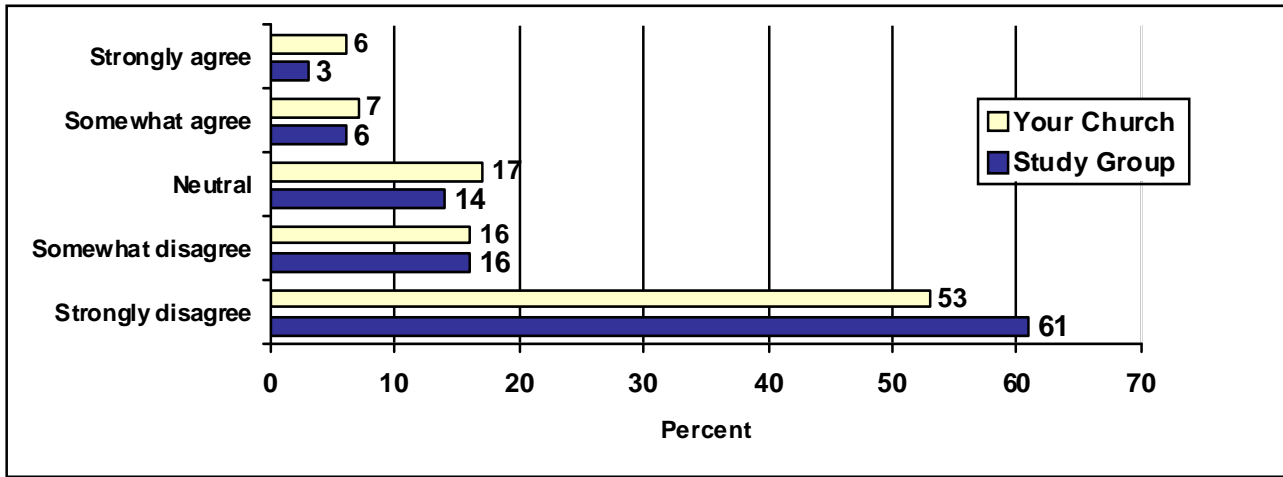
Do you feel this church is *not* training you for leadership by the church?

The actual statement is: *This church has not made a strong effort to train, develop or coach me in how to be a better leader in the church.*



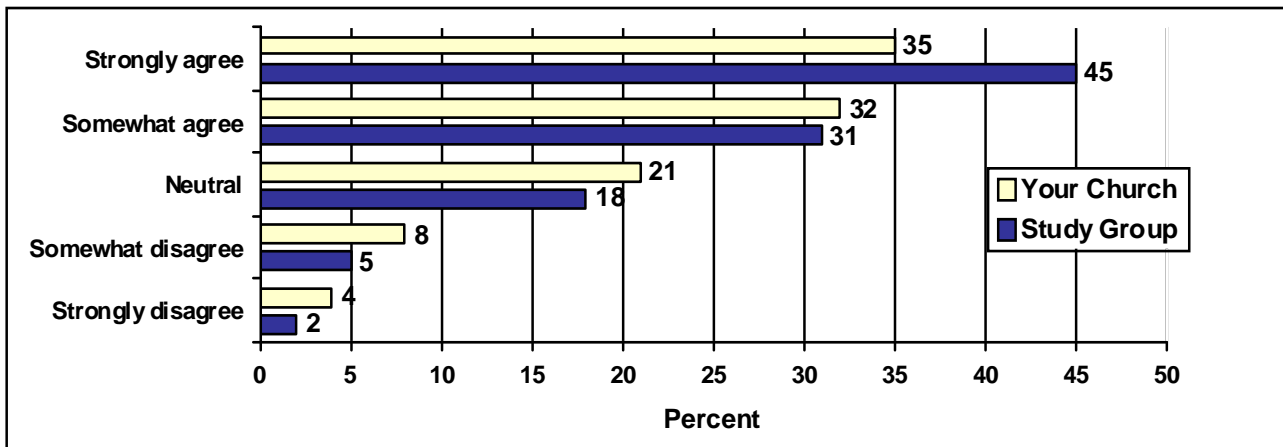
Does being in a large church hinder spiritual growth?

The actual statement is: *Worshipping at a large church hinders my spiritual growth.*



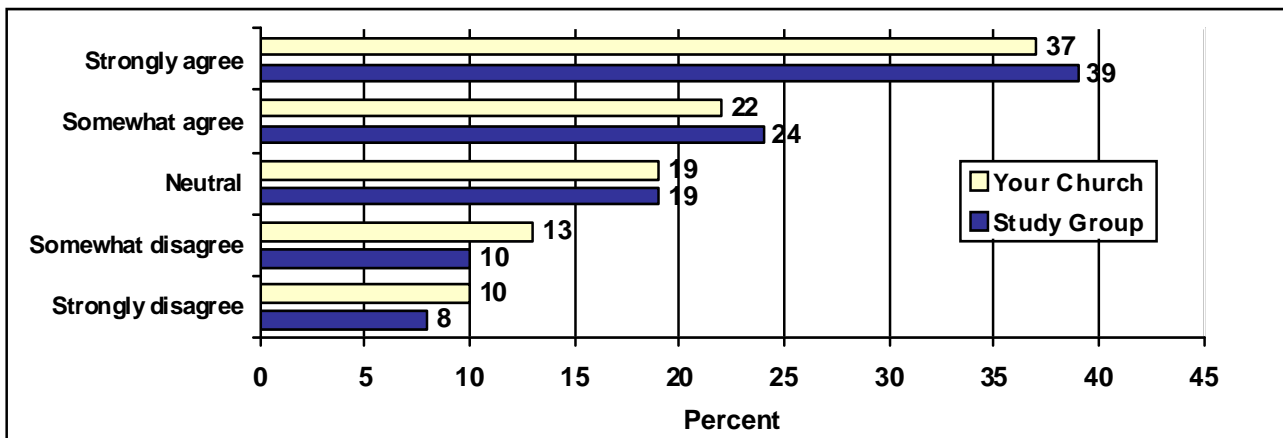
Are your spiritual needs are being met by this church?

The actual statement is: *My spiritual needs are being met in this church.*



Are your experiences of God connected to this church?

The actual statement is: *A recent time when I FELT closest to God was directly connected to a ministry or activity of this church*



Conclusion

The tables on the previous pages offer a fascinating picture of Your Church. You had a superb response rate from your congregation, which greatly increases the accuracy of this profile.

In some ways you're quite different from the other churches in the study – you have a higher percentage of men, your average age is a bit older, you have a higher percentage of the congregation involved in small groups including Sunday school, your congregation feels more encouraged to serve the wider world, etc. Yet in other ways you're very similar, such as seen in the final table on the previous page (on experiencing God) where there is little difference between your church and the study group.

Our encouragement is that you prayerfully review the entire report asking, “What is the most important learning from this report?” and “Which characteristics of our congregation *surprise* us the most?” Rank the top 3 or 4 surprises. Comment on why each one surprises you. You might find it helpful before you look at certain responses to guess what your church will say, such as what first attracted them and what keeps them.

Next, go through each section again asking: Is any leadership action needed in response to each of these characteristics? How satisfied or pleased are we with how people replied?

- A. General demographics
- B. Spiritual profile
- C. What first attracted people, what keeps them, and why
- D. Current involvement in this church
- E. How they assess their experience with this church

Finally, consider sharing this profile with several people, such as perhaps the entire staff or the church board asking them similar questions about what they see and learn. There's a lot of helpful information contained in the tables (and also in the raw data, if someone in your church wishes to analyze it further).

Leadership Network has other resources that might be of interest or help to you. For example, you might consider, for further general comparisons, the report *Megachurches Today*, by Warren Bird and Scott Thumma, which represents input from 400 megachurches (available free at www.leadnet.org/megachurches). Also see the book *Beyond Megachurch Myths* by Scott Thumma and Dave Travis (Jossey-Bass, 2007).

If we can be of further help, please do contact us. We wish you God's best as you make disciples of Jesus Christ who love God and love one another.



Warren Bird
Leadership Network
Dallas, TX, www.leadnet.org



Scott Thumma
Hartford Institute for Religion Research
Hartford, CT, www.hartfordinstitute.org

research conducted and compiled by Scott Thumma (sthumma@hartsem.edu) and Warren Bird (www.leadnet.org)
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