

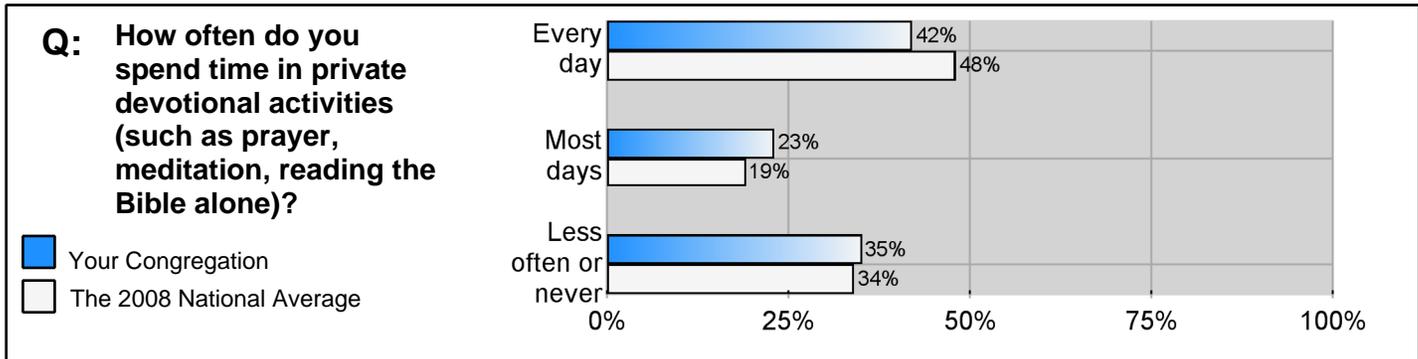


Building Spiritual Connections

Spiritual connections are made through worshippers' private devotional activities and their participation in congregational activities such as worship.

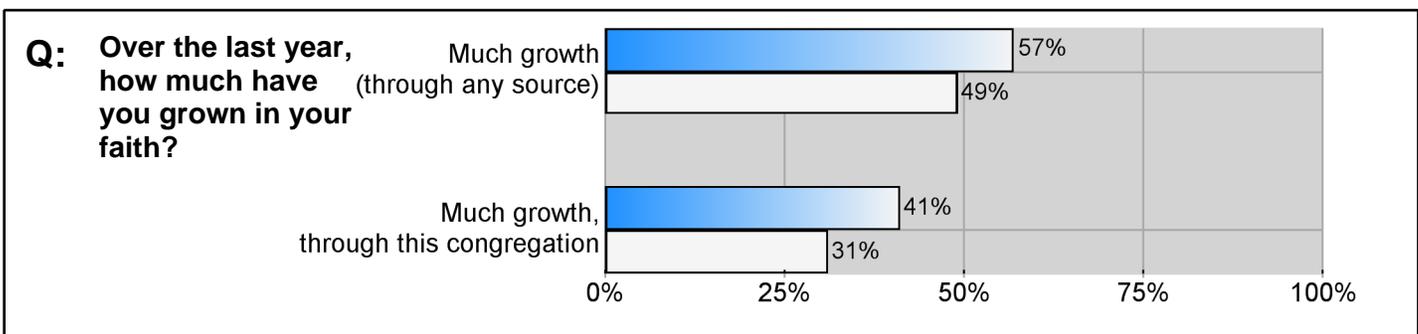
1 Private Devotions

About 42% of the people in your congregation spend time every day in private devotional activities (such as prayer, meditation, or reading the Bible alone). Your worshippers are less likely to spend time in these activities when compared to worshippers across the country (the national average is 48% who spend time every day in private devotional activities).



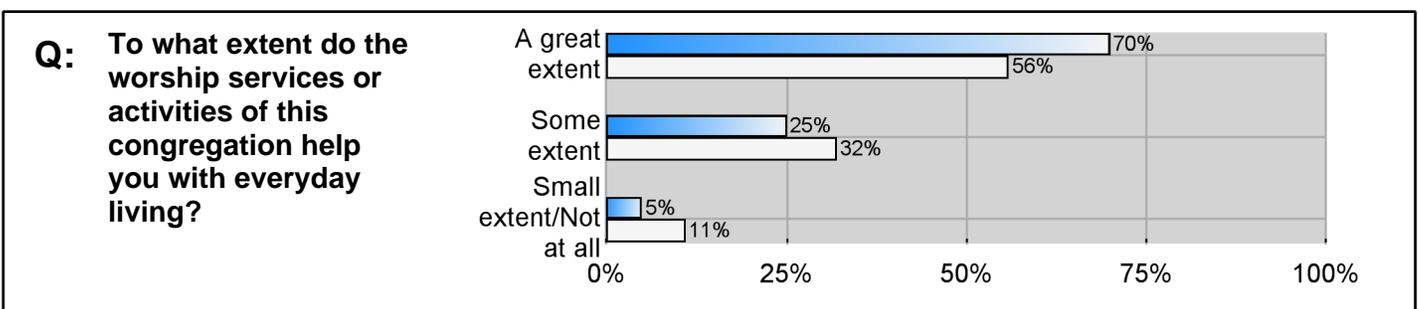
2 Growing in Faith

About half of the people in America's congregations (49%) and 57% in your congregation report they have experienced much growth in their faith over the last year, through any source. Worshipers in your congregation (41%) are more likely to say their spiritual growth comes from involvement in your congregation. Some of your worshippers reported growing in their faith through other groups (7%) or through their own activities (9%).



3 Help with Everyday Living

To what extent do the worship services or activities of your congregation help worshippers with everyday living? 70% of your worshippers reported that they are helped "to a great extent" by worship or congregational activities. This compares to the national average of 56% who report finding worship services or activities helpful with everyday living.

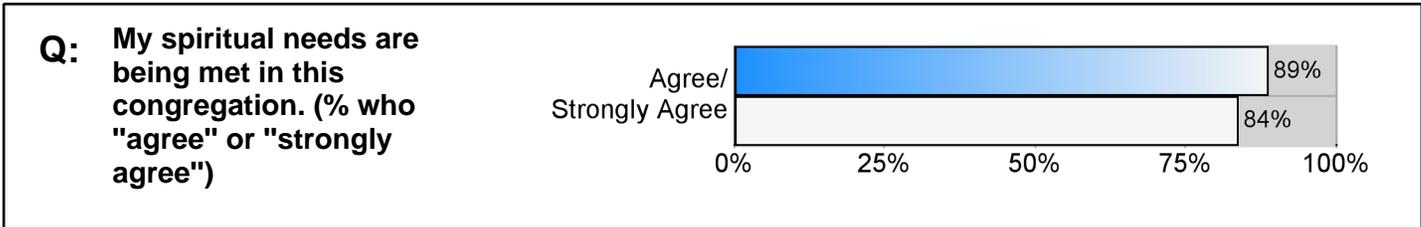




■ Your Congregation
 The 2008 National Average

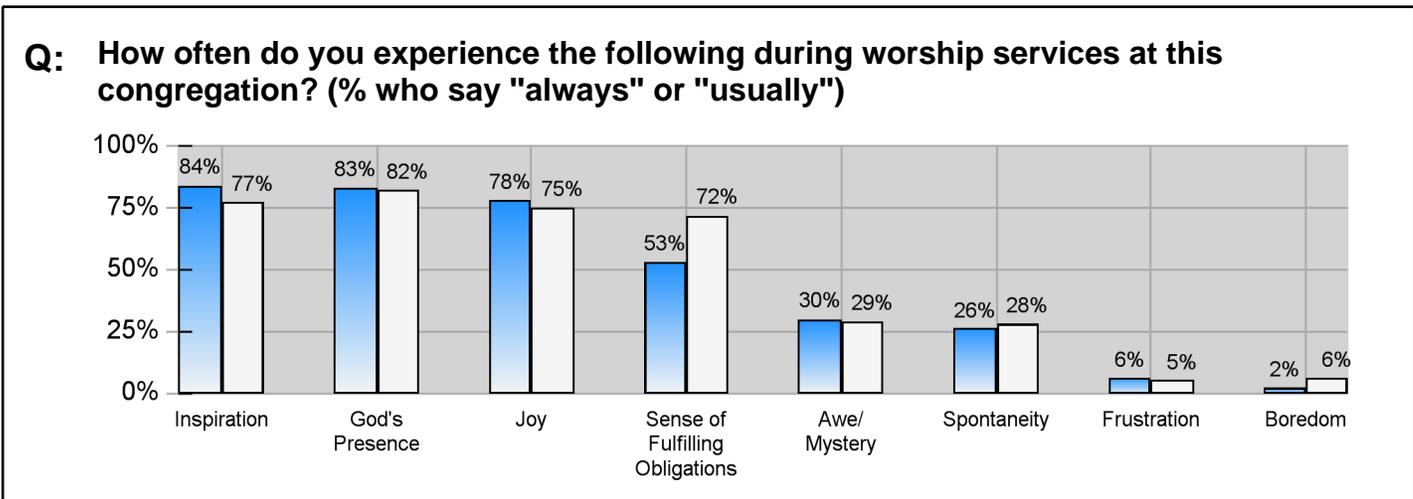
Meeting Spiritual Needs

4 Like the majority of worshipers in the U.S., 89% of your worshipers feel that your congregation meets their spiritual needs. Across the U.S., 84% of worshipers feel this way.



Worship Experiences

5 Meaningful worship experiences are central for most congregations and their members. In your congregation, the largest number of worshipers "usually" or "always" experience inspiration during worship. Fortunately, the smallest percentage of worshipers "usually" or "always" experience boredom.



Making Music

6 Worshipers in your congregation prefer the following styles of music in congregational worship: traditional hymns (64%), praise music or choruses (45%), and contemporary hymns (27%). Across the country, worshipers reported the following preferences most often: traditional hymns (56%), praise music or choruses (31%), and contemporary hymns (26%).

Q: While you may value many different styles of music, which of the following do you prefer in worship? (Mark up to two.) Responses for your congregation:

Traditional hymns	64%	Other contemporary music or songs	14%
Praise music or choruses	45%	Music from a variety of cultures	5%
Contemporary hymns	27%	Contemplative chants	5%
Classical music	17%	Sung responsorial psalms	2%
Gospel music	14%	No music	0%

Making the Connections

Review the six spiritual connections in your congregation and consider these discovery questions for group discussion:

- * What are your congregation's strengths in nurturing the spiritual lives of those who attend here?
- * What faith connections require new wiring?
- * What can your congregation offer to meet the spiritual needs of those who are not attending worship anywhere?
- * How can your congregation build on its spiritual strengths?

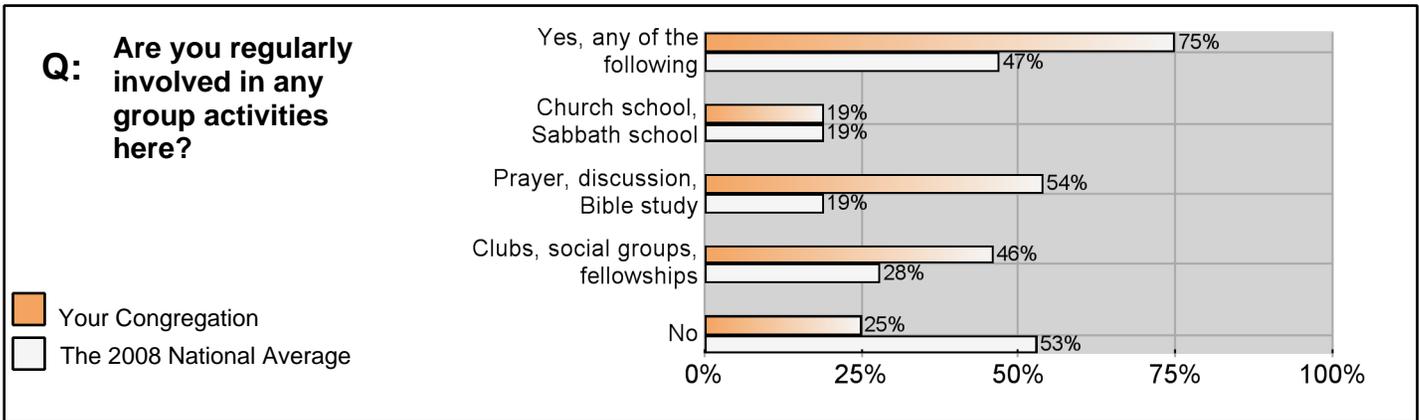


Building Inside Connections

Worshippers connect with others in the congregation through group activities (such as church school, prayer and study groups, and fellowships or clubs), serving in leadership roles, and financial support.

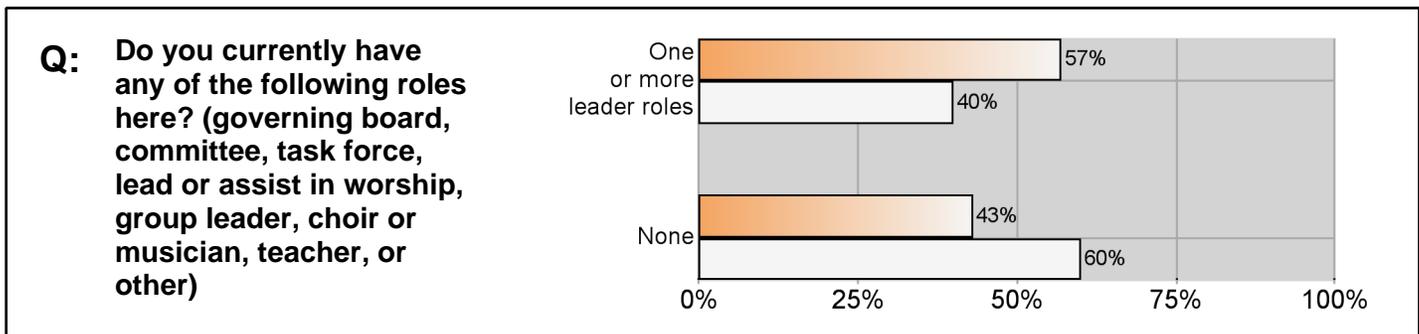
1 Involving Worshipers

How are worshippers involved in your congregation? Overall, 75% of your worshippers join in small group activities. Some take part in group activities like Sunday school, church school, or Sabbath school (19%); prayer, discussion, or Bible study groups (54%); or fellowships, clubs, or other social groups (46%). Your congregation's percentage is higher than the national average where 47% engage in some small group activity.



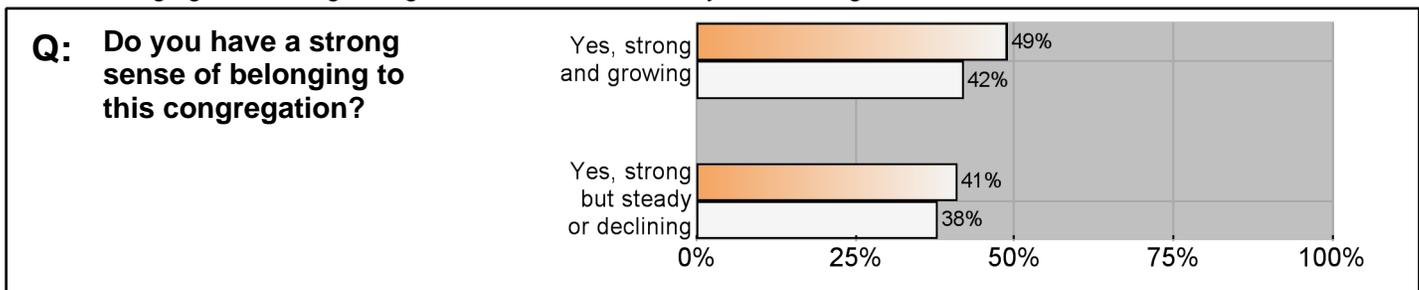
2 Involving Leaders

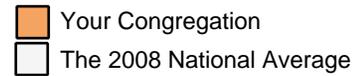
How many worshippers serve in leadership roles in your congregation? 57% hold at least one leadership position in your congregation (such as governing board, committee, choir or usher, church, etc.). About 40% of worshippers across the U.S. serve as leaders.



3 Belonging Here

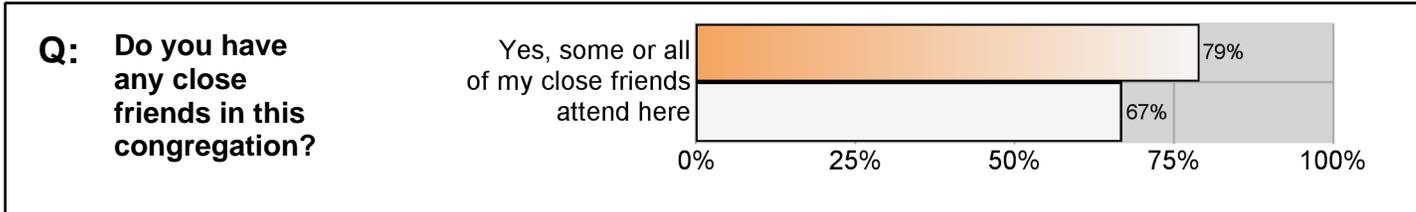
Do worshippers in your congregation feel like they belong? 90% report a strong sense of belonging to your congregation, which is greater than in the typical congregation. 49% in your congregation said this sense of belonging has been growing and 41% said it is steady or declining.





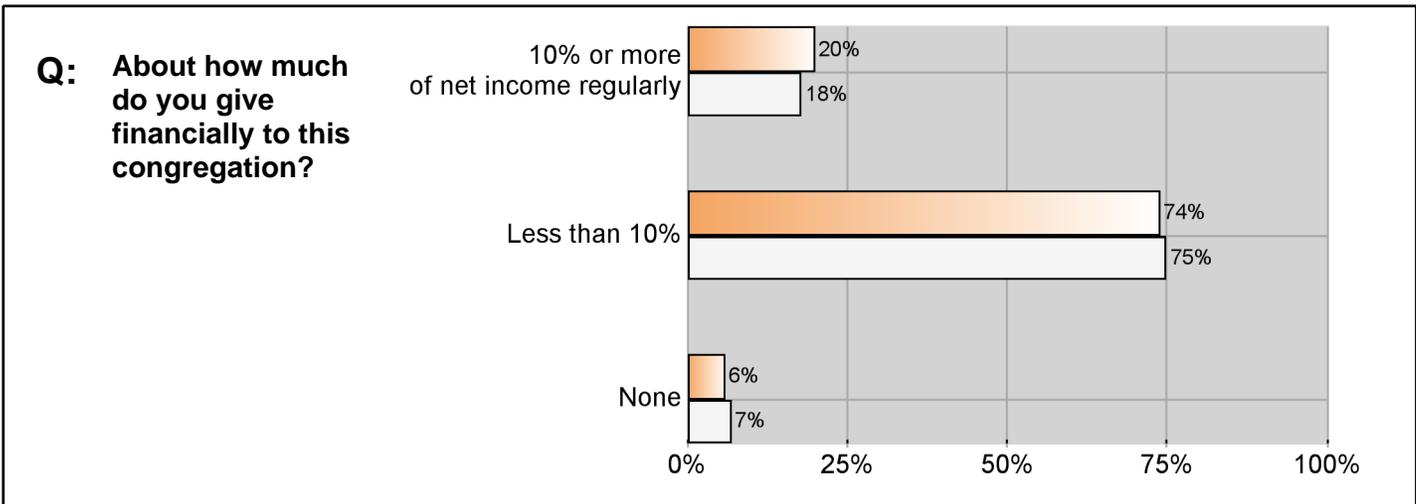
4 Making Friends

Are worshipers developing friendships with others in the congregation? About 79% of your worshipers say some or all of their close friends attend there. This is not typical of the national picture where 67% of worshipers say they have some close friends in their congregation.



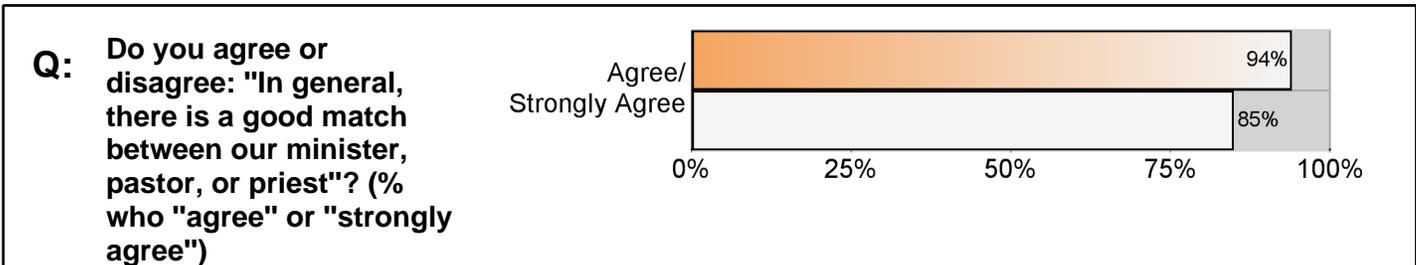
5 Giving

Financial support connects people to the congregation and its mission. In your congregation, 94% make financial contributions including 20% who regularly give 10% or more of their net income to your congregation. Nationally, 93% of worshipers make financial contributions, and 18% give 10% or more of their net income.



6 Being a Team

Do worshipers feel there is a connection between leaders and worshipers in your congregation? Nearly all worshipers in your congregation (94%) agree with the statement "In general, there is a good match between our congregation and our minister, pastor, or priest." Across all worshipers in the U.S., about 85% agree with this statement.



Making the Connections

Review the six inside connections in your congregation and consider these discovery questions for group discussion:

- *What are your congregation's strengths in this area?
- *What connections inside your walls need attention and maintenance?
- *How can your congregation build on its relationship strengths?

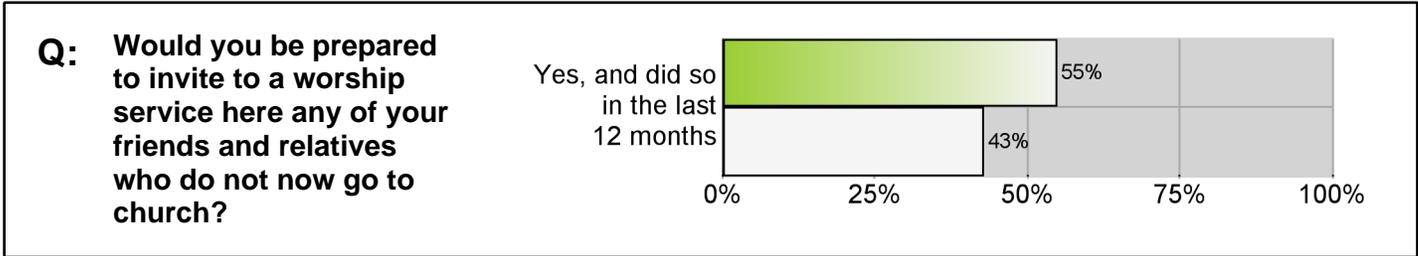


Building Outside Connections

How does your congregation connect to the community and non-members? Outside Connections consist of inviting others to attend, caring for neighbors, and welcoming new people.

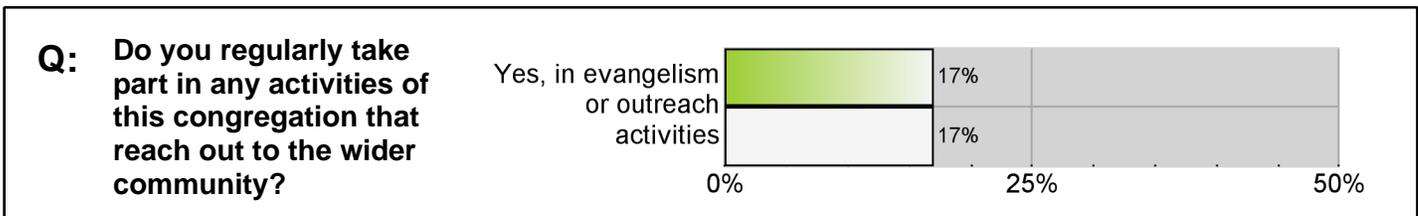
1 Inviting Others

1 Do your worshipers invite others to attend worship services? In the past 12 months, 55% invited a friend or relative who does not attend a congregation to your worship services. This is greater than the average congregation where 43% asked someone to attend worship services.



2 Reaching Out

2 How many worshipers contribute to your congregation's outreach or evangelism efforts? In your congregation, 17% join in these types of activities to reach out to the wider community. This percentage is similar to the national picture where 17% report being involved in evangelism or outreach activities.

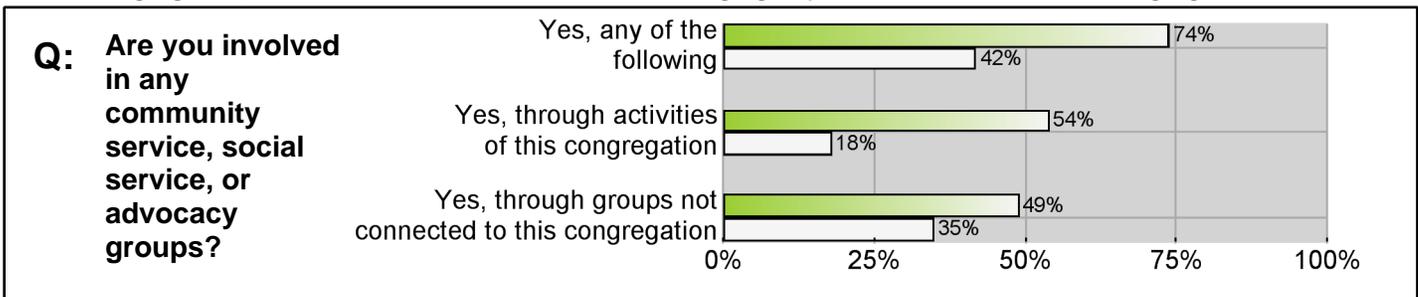


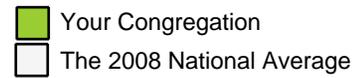
3 Your Congregation's Inviting Activities

3 From a list of 15 possible activities, a typical congregation reports using 6 strategies to reach out to non-members in the previous year. The most common strategies are: mailing newsletters, keeping a web site for the congregation, and encouraging members to invite new people. Your congregation listed no outreach strategies.

4 Serving the Community

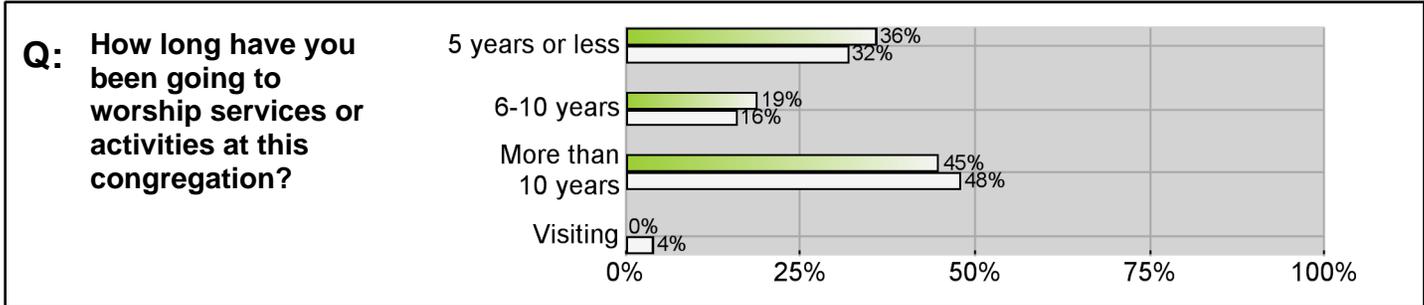
4 Are your worshipers involved in any community service, social justice, or advocacy activities? 74% of your worshipers take part in service or advocacy activities. About half join in community service activities organized through your congregation (54% in your congregation take part in such groups). About half of your worshipers (49%) participate in social service or advocacy groups not connected to your congregation. This is greater than the national average for all U.S. worshipers where 18% overall get involved in service or advocacy through their congregation, and 35% serve their communities through groups not connected to their congregation.





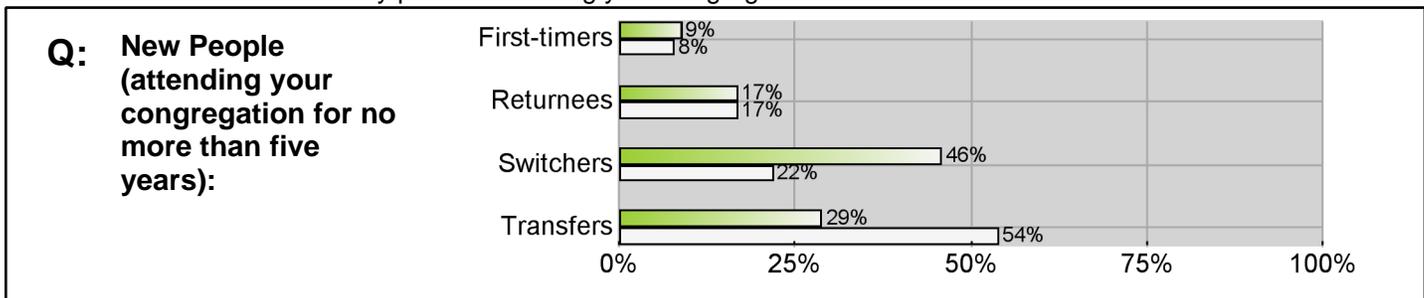
5 Welcoming New People

How many new people attend your worship services? About 36% of those attending worship services at your congregation have been coming for 5 years or less. Nationally, about 32% of all worshippers report attending 5 years or less. Visitors make up 0% of your worshippers. This compares to a national average of 4% of worshippers who are visitors.



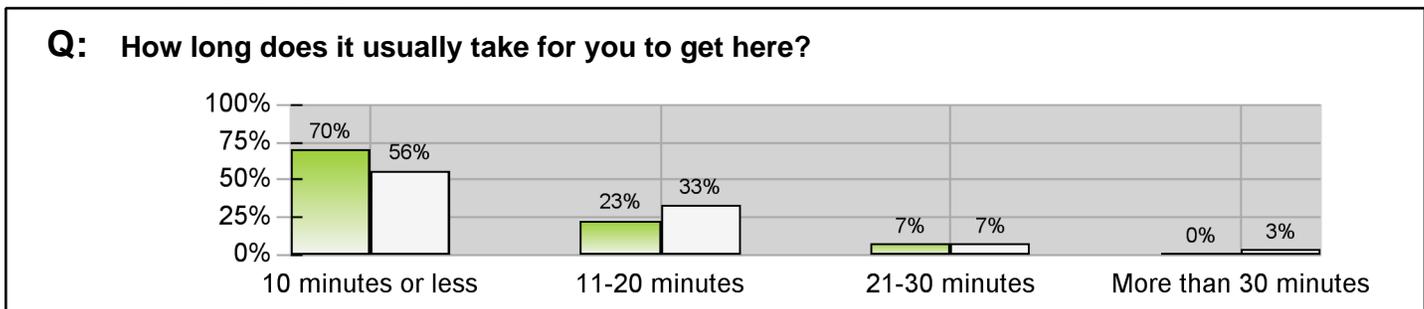
6 Knowing New People

What type of faith background is typical of the new people in your congregation? New people (those attending five years or less) come from 4 different faith backgrounds: first-timers (9% in your congregation), those who have never regularly attended anywhere; returnees (17%), those who are coming back after not attending anywhere for several years; switchers (46%), those who participated in another congregation with a different faith tradition; and transfers (29%), those who were participating in another congregation of the same denomination immediately prior to attending your congregation.



7 Getting Here

Do worshippers come from the immediate community or do they travel some time in order to attend? The largest percentage of people in your congregation take 10 minutes or less to get to the services. Nearly all of the people in your congregation (93%) travel 20 minutes or less to attend services. Across all American congregations, 89% arrive in 20 minutes or less.



Making the Connections

Review the seven connections with the people and the community outside your congregation and consider these discovery questions for group discussion:

- *What are your congregation's strengths in the areas of social care, evangelism, and advocacy?
- *Is your focus what you expected it to be?
- *Are there gaps in your community connections? What walls do you need to break down or open up?

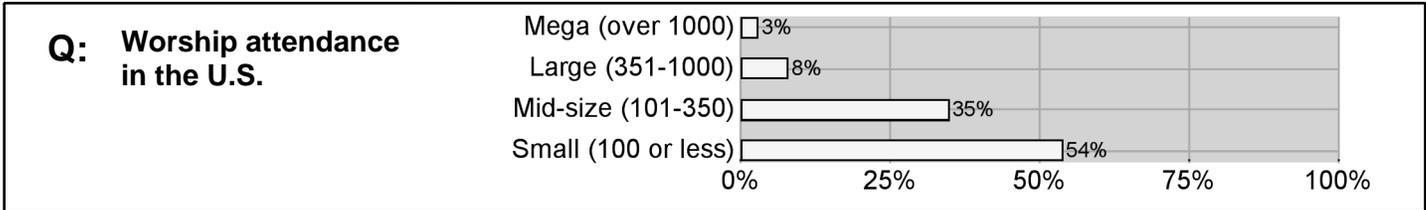


Building Identity Connections

Worshippers have an individual identity based on their age, education, and other factors. Worshipers also have a congregational identity that includes what they value and their dreams for the congregation's future.

1 Your Size

Small congregations dot the landscape, but most worshipers find themselves in large congregations. Your congregation is mid-size with an average of 264 attendees. The chart below shows where your congregation fits in the size picture of all congregations.

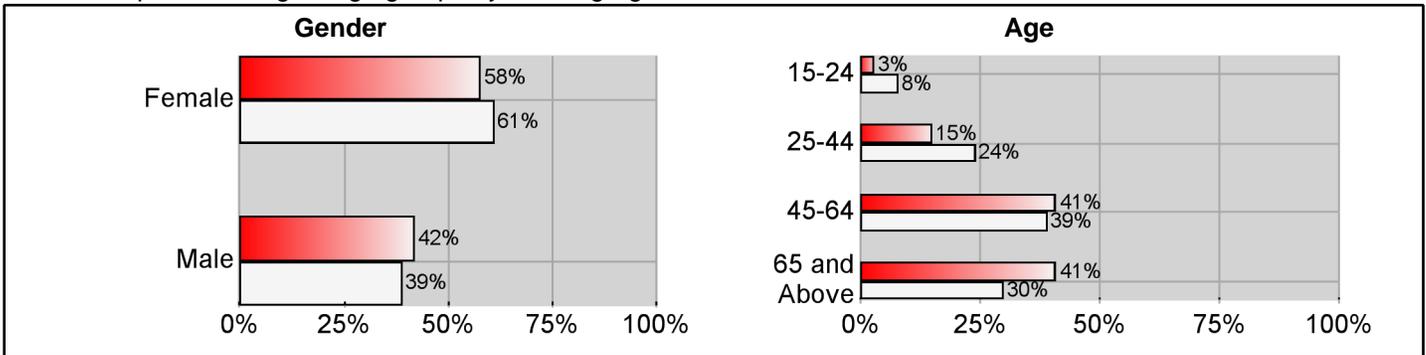


2 Your Gender Profile

Who makes up your congregation? There are fewer men (39%) than women (61%) in most congregations. Women outnumber men in your congregation (58% are women).

3 Your Age Profile

In most congregations, those aged 45-64 make up the largest group (39%). The average age of worshipers in your congregation is 59. This is older than than the national average of 53. People in the age range of 45-64 comprise the largest age group in your congregation.

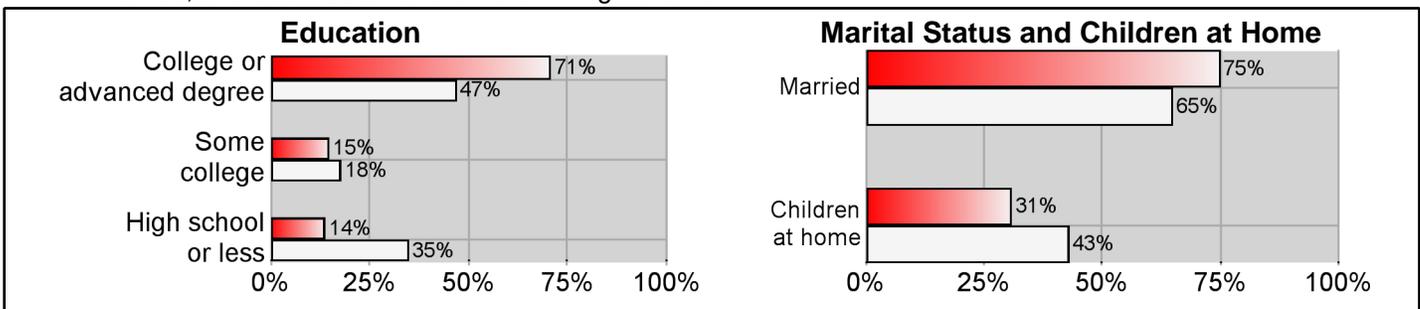


4 Your Educational Background

Worshippers in the U.S. tend to be well-educated. The U.S. Census shows that about 23% of people across the country hold at least a college degree. Among worshipers, the figure is 47%. In your congregation, 71% report a college or graduate degree.

5 Your Household Types

Most worshipers in America are married, and this is true in your congregation as well. Overall, 43% of worshipers have children living at home, more than the results for your congregation (31%). Again, worshipers differ from typical Americans. The U.S. Census indicates that only 52% of the population in this country are currently married, and about 33% have children living at home.





What You Value

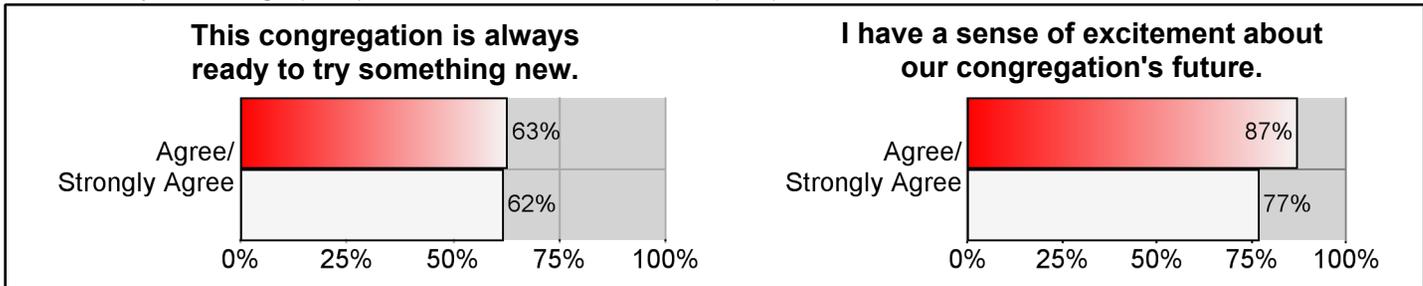
6 What does your congregation value? Your worshipers most value sermons, preaching, or homilies; wider community care; Bible study groups; Holy Communion; and traditional worship or music.

Q: Which of the following aspects of this congregation do you personally most value? (Mark up to three responses.) Responses for your congregation:

Sermons, preaching, or homilies	62%	Social activities	16%
Wider community care	39%	Contemporary worship or music	12%
Bible study groups	36%	Openness to diversity	9%
Holy Communion	31%	Reaching the unchurched	8%
Traditional worship or music	24%	Prayer ministry	7%
Ministry for youth	20%	Adult education	2%
Care for one another	20%	Congregation's school/pre-school	2%

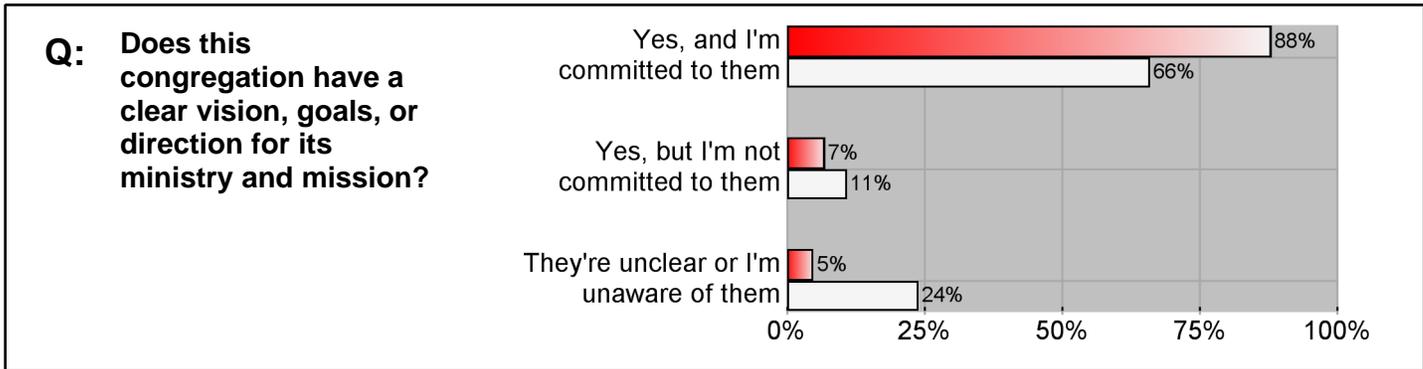
7 Seeing Possibilities

How open is your congregation to change and new directions? Many worshipers in your congregation (63%) feel the congregation is always ready to try something new. Nearly all (87%) also express a sense of excitement about the congregation's future. Many worshipers in other congregations describe their congregation as willing to try new things (62%) and excited about the future (77%).



8 Committing to the Future

Does your congregation claim a clear vision, goals, or direction for its ministry and mission? Nearly all worshipers in your congregation believe there is a clear vision or direction for the future (95% say yes). However, some are not sure that the vision is clear or that it exists (5%). The national average shows that most worshipers believe their congregation has a clear vision for the future (77%).



Making the Connections

Review the eight identity connections in your congregation and consider these discovery questions for group discussion:

- * Who are you as a congregation? Who can you become?
- * How do these pictures compare to how you like to think of your congregation?
- * Are you having an identity crisis?
- * How can you build on the strengths of your identity?