



21st Century Evangelicals

A snapshot of the beliefs and habits
of evangelical Christians in the UK

Life in the church?

Questions for discussion

We hope you have been able to read our recent report *Life in the church?* This handout suggests some questions and discussion starters that can be used by small groups. You might want to start by praying together and reading a Bible passage such as Acts 4:32-45 or 1 Corinthians 12.

1. What is most important to you in a church?

- 99% of evangelicals think that every church should faithfully teach the Bible as the word of God.
- 84% feel that in their church they belong to a strong, caring community
- 67% see the theology and doctrinal stance of a church as very important, compared with 8% for its denomination

- Which of these matters most to you about your church?
- Are there other things that are as vital or more important to you? Eg the worship style, location, outreach in the community or leadership style?

2. How do you think other people, especially non-Christians, perceive your church?

- 86% feel confident they could invite a non-Christian to their church and that they would feel welcomed.
- 59% say that their church is predominantly middle class.

- How might someone arriving in your community first become aware of the existence and activities of your church?
- What do you think they would they make of it?
- Think about the different groups in your community (eg an elderly carer, a working class man, a young Muslim mother, or an unchurched teenager). If they came into your church would they feel at home or uncomfortable? Do you think they would stay?
- Do you think your church is good at welcoming people? Do you make an effort to do this?
- Does your church have good relationships with other local churches and ministries?

Questions for discussion

3. Is your church going to grow?

- 70% of evangelicals expect their churches to grow over the next 20 years
- 47% had agreed or strongly agreed that their church was currently growing in numbers.
- However, only 41% were expecting growth in church attendance at the national level.

- Is your church growing, static or declining in attendance? What makes you say this?
- Are you hopeful for the future of your church? Why?
- Are you as hopeful for the future of the Church in general in this country? Why?
- What needs to be done to increase the chances of growth? What can you yourself do to help?
- How much does numerical growth of the church matter? To you? To God?

4. What issues do church leaders face?

- 84% of church leaders say they greatly enjoy their ministries
- 16% of sole church leaders and 36% of leaders in shared or team settings are female
- 68% of sole church leaders work more than 40 hours each week
- 25% of leaders agreed that "my marriage, family life or friendships suffer because of the demands of my ministry"

- What qualities, skills and gifts do you look for in a church leader?
- Do you think your church leaders are overworked and under pressure? If so what can you do to help?
- Does your church have more women or men actively involved? How can both men and women be supported and encouraged in their gifts and ministries?