



## American Baptist Churches USA

### Church Renewal & Organizational Development

#### Profile of People Who Are More Likely to Invite Someone to Church

**Question:** “Which congregational factor(s) below influence whether or not the church has a higher percentage of people who invite others to church?” If a factor is significant, it is followed by the word “yes.” The percentages relate to persons who invited someone to their congregation during the previous year of the survey, taken in 2001 among 12,000 congregations in the U.S. Overall, 46% of all worshipers in the study had invited someone to church in the previous year. The sample was representative of all congregations in the U.S.

\_\_\_\_\_ A. Gender. Yes. 50% of females surveyed had invited someone during the previous year compared to only 40% of males.

\_\_\_\_\_ B. Age. Yes. Age made a difference. People from 25 to 64 were more likely (49%) to invite someone than people younger (43%) and older (42%).

\_\_\_\_\_ C. Race. Yes. 52% of nonwhites invited someone to church compared to 44% of whites.

\_\_\_\_\_ D. Employment. Yes. The employed were slightly more likely to invite (48%) than the unemployed (44%).

\_\_\_\_\_ E. Marital status. Overall there was no difference, but analyzing church types revealed that single Catholics were more likely to invite others than married Catholics while single Protestants were less likely to invite than married Protestants.

\_\_\_\_\_ F. Income. Yes. Those who make less than \$50,000 are slightly more likely to invite than those who make more than that.

\_\_\_\_\_ G. Education. Yes. Those with no college degree are slightly more likely to invite than those with a college or advanced degree.

\_\_\_\_\_ H. Tenure with the congregation. Yes. Tenure makes a difference, but not until someone has been in a congregation for more than 10 years. 51% of people attending less than 10 years invited someone while only 43% of people attending longer invited.

\_\_\_\_\_ I. Involvement in a small group. Yes. This made a huge difference. People involved in a small group: Bible Study (66%), Sunday School (63%), or Fellowship Group (58%) were more likely to invite than someone not involved in a small group (36%).

\_\_\_\_\_ J. Holding a leadership role in the church. Yes, this also made a huge difference. Persons in some type of leadership role such as serving in a governing board, being an officer or committee member, choir member, teacher, etc. were much more likely (ranging from 63% to 69%) than those not in leadership (39%). Interestingly, being a worship leader only came in at 56%.

\_\_\_\_\_ K. Being a member of the congregation. Yes. Members are more likely to invite (48%) than nonmembers (36%).

\_\_\_\_\_ L. Financial Giving. Those who give more than 5% of their income are more likely (56%) to invite than those who do not (38%).

\_\_\_\_\_ M. Spending time in private prayer. Yes. Those who report spending time in private prayer are more likely to invite (52%) than those who do not (36%).

\_\_\_\_\_ N. Growing in one's faith. Yes. Those who report growing in their faith are more likely to invite (61%) than those who did not (39%).

### **Conclusion:**

The hunch for years was that newer people tended to invite more people to church than those who had been members longer based upon the assumption that newer members knew more unchurched people. While this is true, the "newness" does not wear off until someone has been a member for at least 10 years! The more dramatic results are that involvement trumps newness. Whether or not a person is involved in small group or a leadership role is a much better predictor of whether or not they invite others than how long they have attended. This was also confirmed through a multiple regression analysis.