

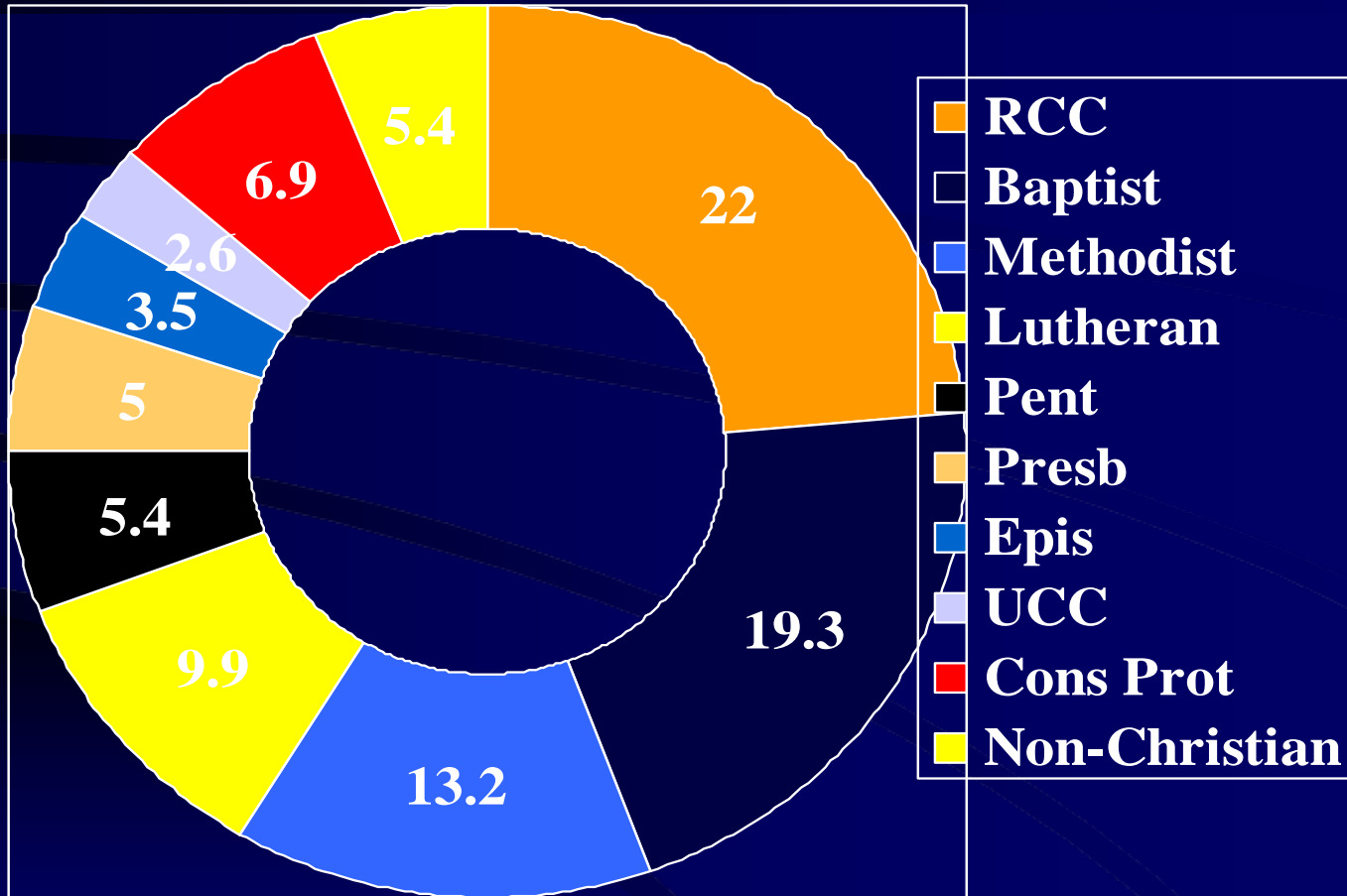
Leverage Points of Church Health and Church Growth

Dr. C. Jeff Woods

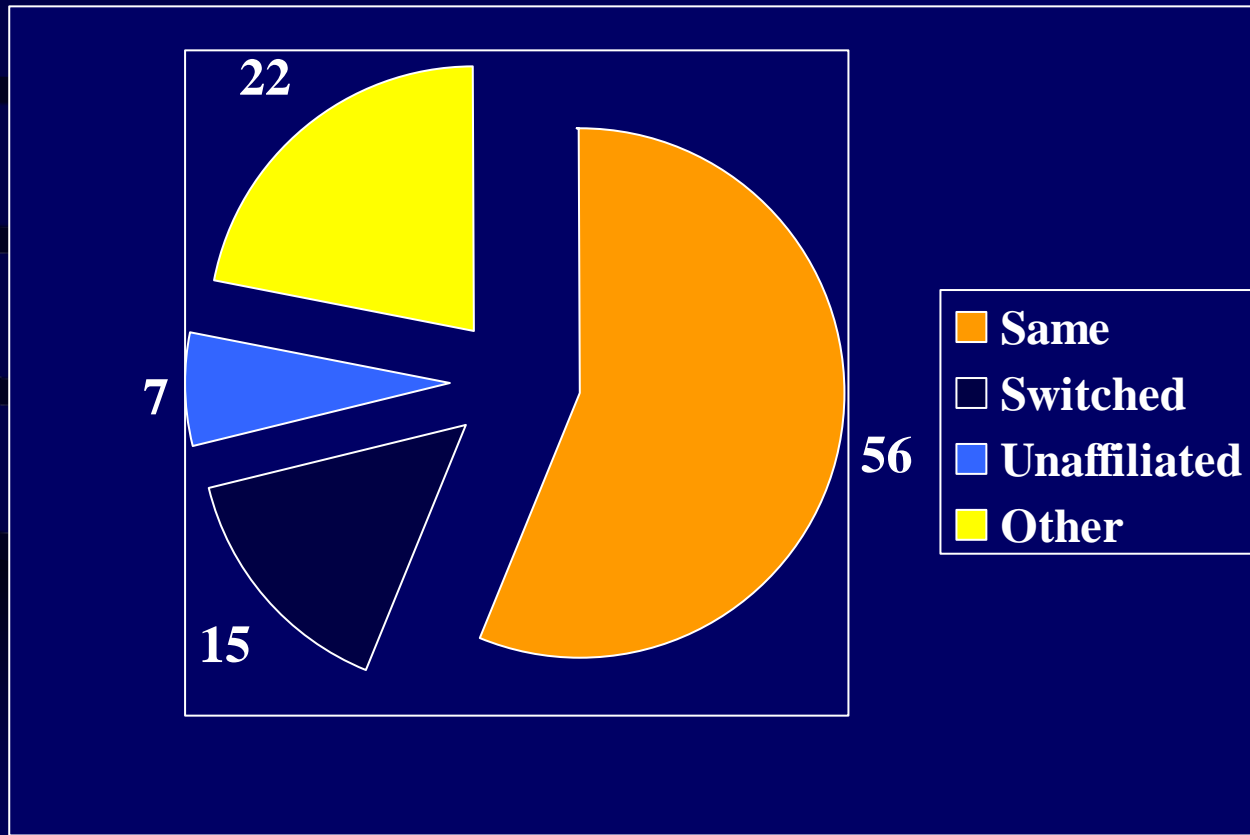
Sources of Data

- Pulpit and Pew Project
 - Lilly Funded
 - Duke University
 - ABC Rep
- Religious Research Association
- Journals
- The () indicate the name of the project
- ...LEVERAGE POINTS (5)

Denominational Groups (CLS)



Where are they now? (After being raised Protestant)

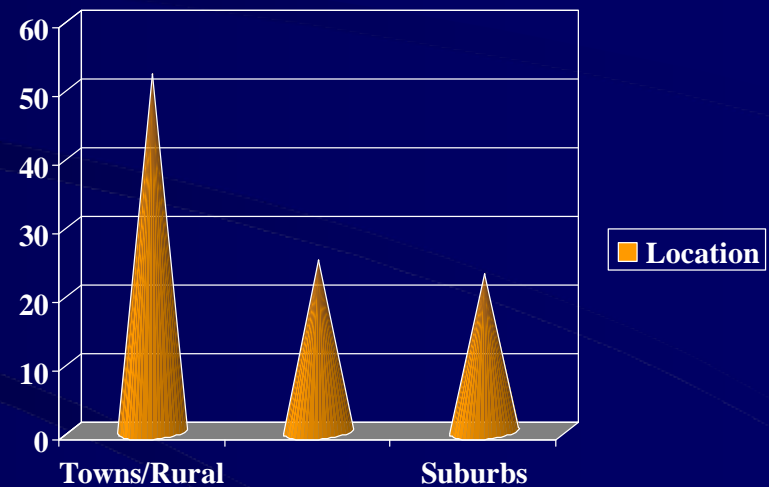


21% of those who have switched, have done so 3 or more times.

Pew Study, Reported 2009

Where do we find congregations?

- About half (52%) are in town & rural areas
- The remainder is split evenly between cities of 10,000+ (25%) and suburbs (23%)

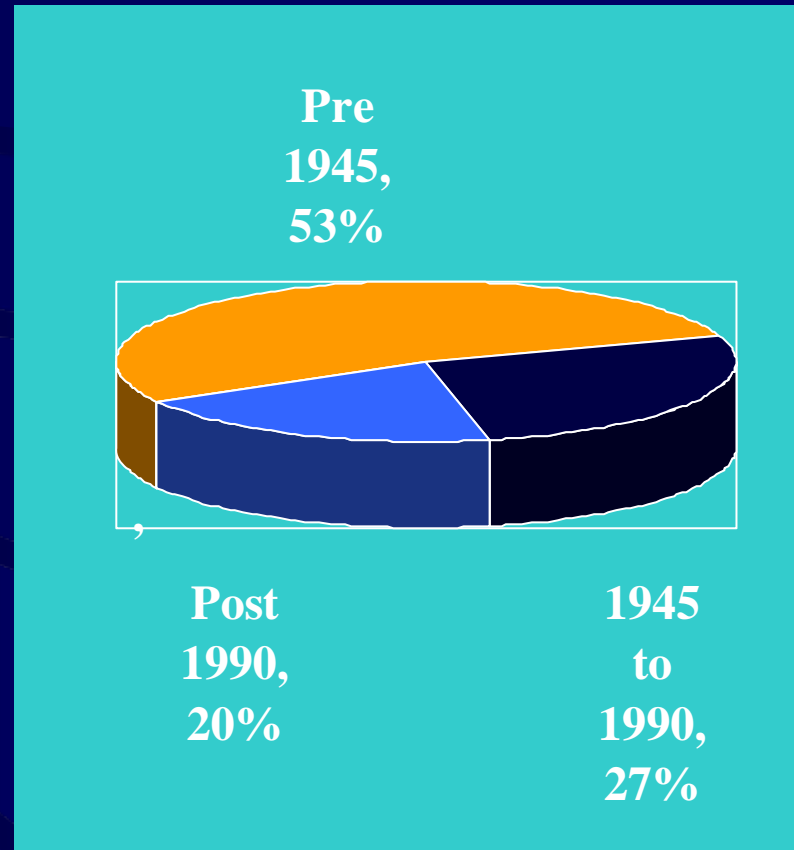


Church Attendance (Last 7 Days)

- United States – 38%
 - Religion is very important – 60%
- Canada – 26%
 - Religion is very important – 28%
- Great Britain – 18%
 - Religion is very important – 17%

When were they formed?

- About half (53%) were formed prior to 1945
- 20% (a dramatic increase) were formed since 1990
- Worship Differences?



In all denominations,
most congregations are small
(Bibby & FACT)

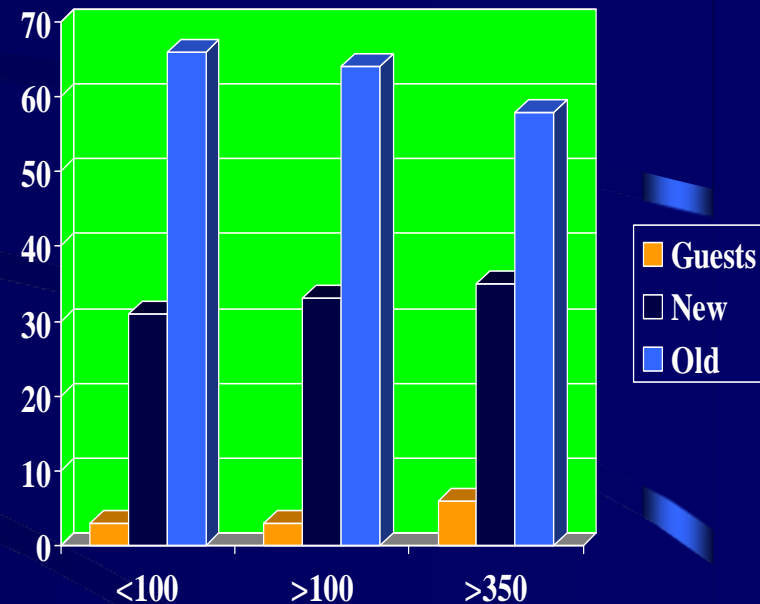
- 25% have less than 50 active members
- 50% have less than 100 active members
- 65% have less than 150 active members

Smaller congregations focus on maintenance (Bibby - Canadian)

- “Trying to keep the church going” was:
 - # 1 concern in congregations <100
 - #4 in congregations <150
 - #6 in congregations <250
 - ...Will the jar of oil run dry?

Cong size and new people (CLS)

	< 100	> 100	> 350
Guests	3%	3%	6%
New People	31%	33%	35%
Old timers	66%	64%	58%



Most of the resources are in large congregations (Carroll)

- Median congregation:
 - 100 participants
 - \$75,000 operating budget
- Median person is in a congregation of
 - 400 participants
 - \$310,000 operating budget

“Location is often overrated”

- In a study of 402 congregations in rural Missouri, nearly as many growing churches were found in declining counties (60) as growing counties (69). (Isaacson)
- Growing congregations are everywhere

Smaller congregations...

- ...May have fewer resources
- ...But can achieve the same results
- Perry Chapel Baptist Church
- FBC of Springfield

What about church vitality?



Bingo

Looking for a Quick Fix

Congregational Vitality Index (CLS – 2004, alpha = .83)

- Spiritual Growth
- Meaningful Worship
- Participation in congregation
- Sense of belonging
- Care for young people
- Focus on the community
- Share faith with others
- Welcome new worshipers (% new in last 5 years)
- Empowering leadership
- Focused on the future

Correlations with church vitality (CLS – Woolever, 2001)

- Congregational Growth (.178)***
- Average age of members (-.146)**
- % Female (.120)**
- Resource-stressed (-.092)*
 - # same house, % fspf, % 16+ not in labfor
- Resource-rich (-.093)*
 - % College degree incl adv, income > 100k,
- Population change (.069) ns
- Size (.016) ns

Cong Interests by Ethnicity

- Euro – revitalization, orthodoxy
- African-American – community transformation, worship
- Latino – Evangelism, local leadership, family, missions
- Asian – Missions, evangelism, church growth

Creating a sense of belonging (Moore – San Diego St)

- Correlations in descending order of importance...
- Spiritual gains (this cong helps me grow spiritually)
- Lack of conflict, sense of teamwork
- Involvement in leadership positions
- Utilizing the programs and services
- Religious orientation – ascent to creeds, beliefs

Empowering Others

- “Equipping Model” has its limitations
- Craig Newmark – “I see the person as a leader rather than a boss. A leader gets people to do things on their own through inspiration, respect, and trust.”
- Visionaries can be stifling; an adaptive leader works with constituents to devise projects together – Australian Journal of Public Administration

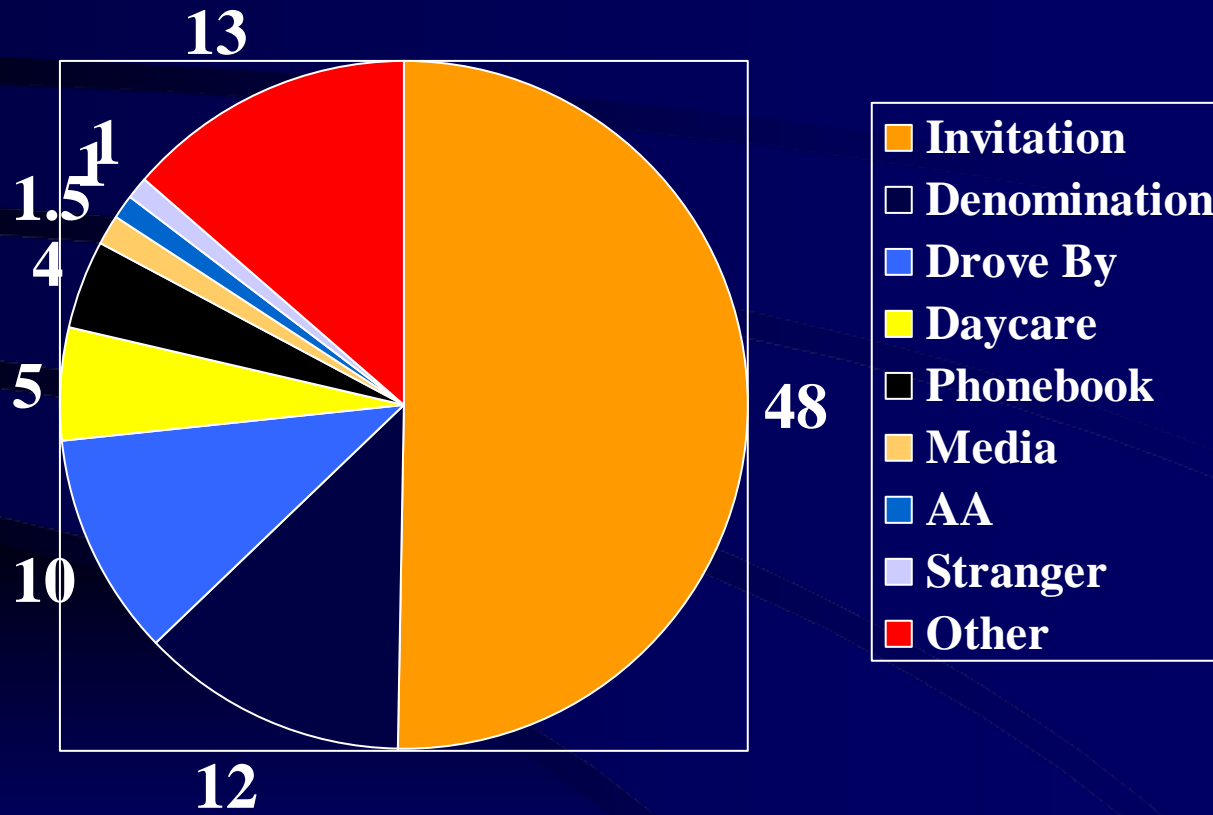
Community Involvement

- No correlation bet income & involvement in leadership or advocacy (Chang-CLS)
- Most common forms of “informal help”
 - Counseling, hospital vis., homebound, work with police, technical skills (legal, financial)
- Least common forms:
 - Before school care, transportation, ESL, housing (Ram Cnaan)

Let's talk about church growth



Why People Come (Woolever)



Why they leave (Pew Study)

	Catholic	Prot
Not yet found right religion	33	38
Do not believe that way now	20	12
Moved	9	11
Married someone unaffiliated	10	3
Death	7	7
Divorce	3	3

Opinions of the Unaffiliated (Pew)

Opinions about church	Catholic	Prot
Too judgmental, lack sincerity (How important to leaving?)	74% (55%)	76% (53%)
Too focused on rules not spirit (How important to leaving?)	73 (46)	71 (49)
Too focused on money, power (How important to leaving?)	66 (43)	64 (38)
Science disproves Religion (How important to leaving?)	32 (23)	32 (24)

A Profile of Inviters

- Female (50%); Male (40%)
- Nonwhites (52%); Whites (44%)
- Tenure <10 yrs (51%); >10 yrs (44%)
- Small group (65%); No sm grp (36%)
- Leadership role (63-69%) No role (39%)
- Also: Prayer, Giving, Faith, Membership
- Age (25-64 more likely to invite)

What doesn't work (FACT)

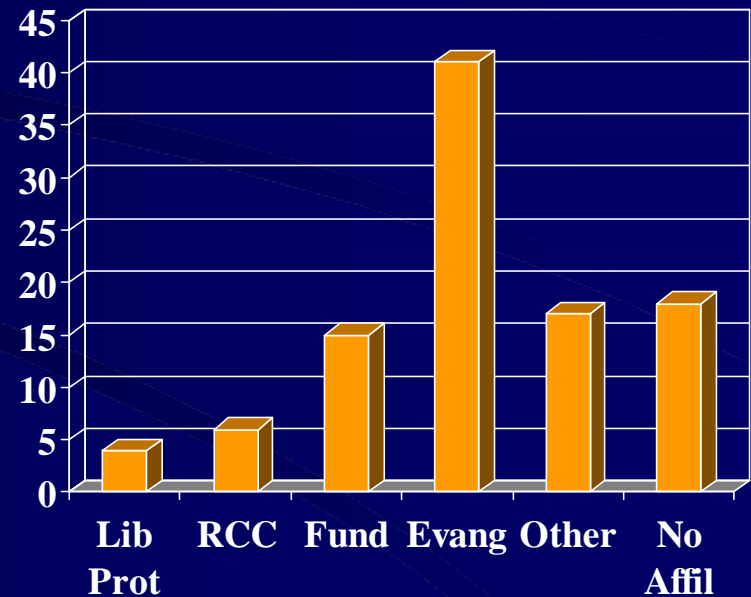
- Increasing parking lot space
- Calling a younger pastor
- Shortening the worship service
- Pastor's gender, health, day off, salary, hours
- Church's location, size, age
- Hours of training in evangelism
- Evangelistic campaigns...are like placebos
- Churches with evangelism committees (negative correlation!)

Are New Paradigm Churches the answer?

- No.
- They are not reaching the unchurched.
- “church growth” with no Church Growth.
- Not enlarging God’s Kingdom.

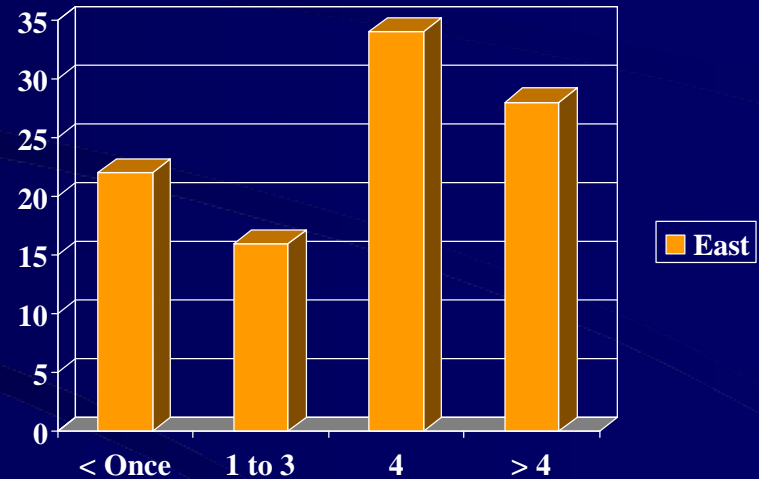
The majority of new members are not unchurched.

- Religious affiliation prior to joining (Vineyard)
 - 4% Liberal Protestant
 - 6% Roman Catholic
 - 15% Fundamentalist Protestant
 - 41% Evangelical Protestant
 - 17% Other affiliation
 - Only 18% had no prior affiliation



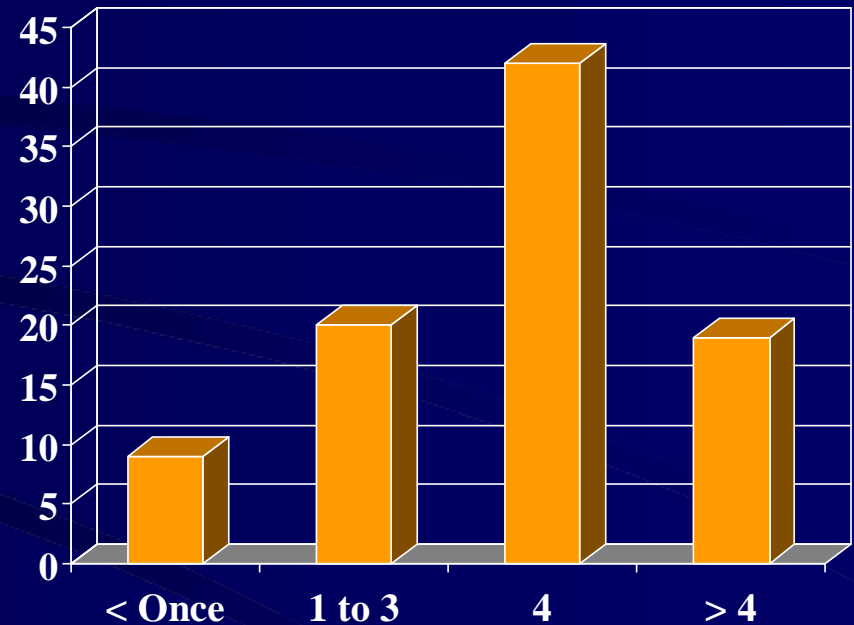
How active were the people who switched?

- In prior year
 - 22% <Once a month
 - 16% 1-3 times a month
 - 34% 4 times a month
 - 28% > 4 times a month



As a child

- 9% <Once a month
- 20% 1-3 times a month
- 42% 4 times a month
- 19% > 4 times a month



Mild Correlations (Hadaway)

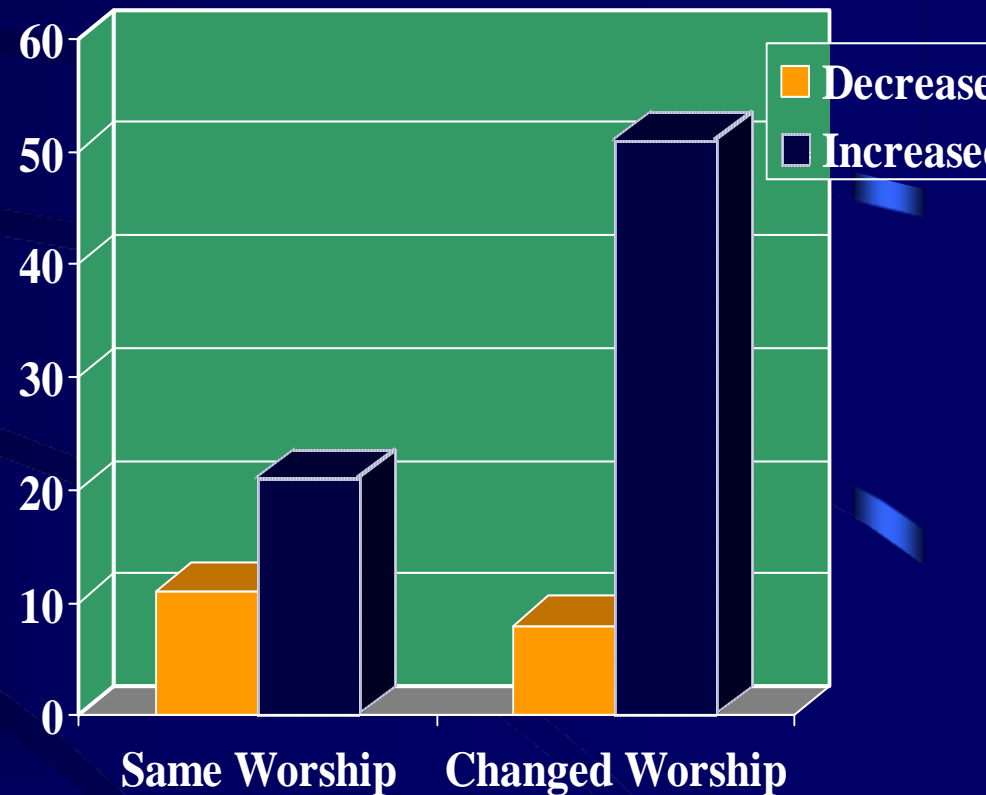
- Laity involved in recruitment (.14)
- Appropriate level of conflict (-.13)
- Age of small groups (-.11)
- Tenure of the pastor (.10)
- Shared Leadership Style (.18) (Chang, 2008 data)
- Involvement in a peer learning group (.13)

Is contemporary worship the answer?

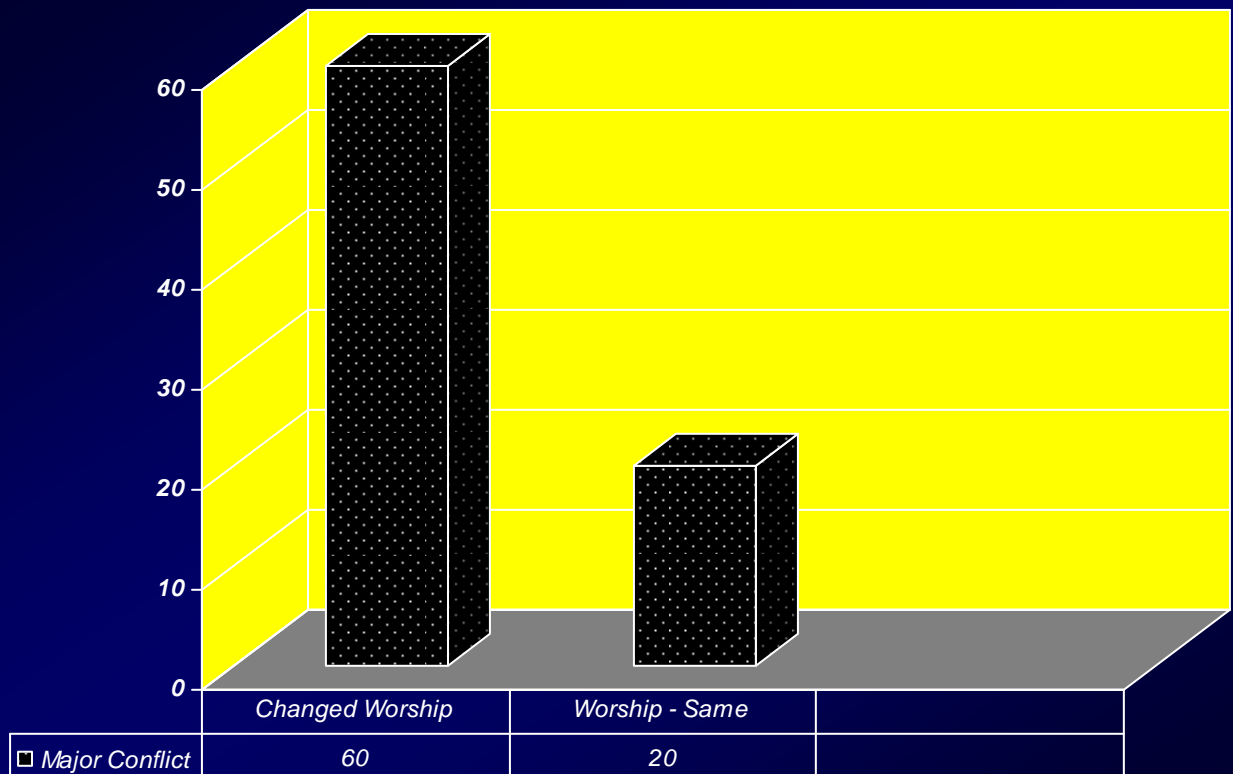
- Sort of. (Roozen)
- “Uplifting worship” correlates with growth
- But, there is a wide variety of uplifting worship styles

Changing your worship style

- Congregations with same worship style in the last five years
 - 11% decreased
 - 21% increased
- Congregations that changed worship style in the last five years
 - 8% decreased
 - 51% increased

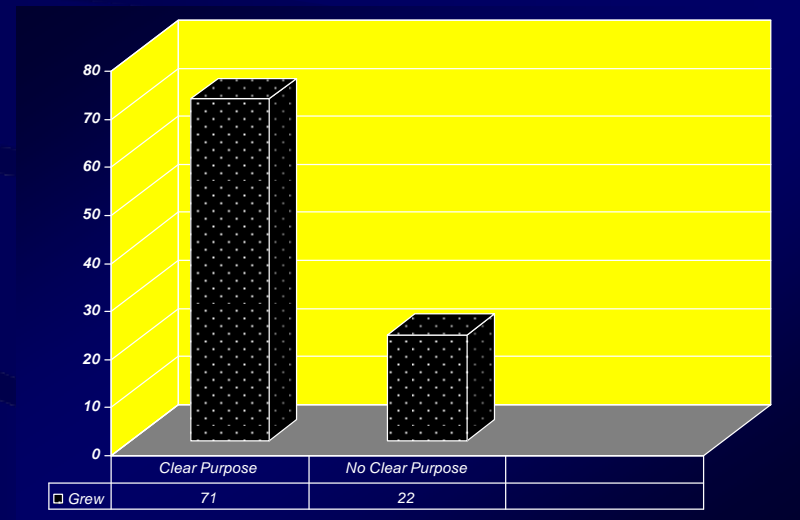


But, be ready to pay the price...



Is “vision” the answer?

- 71% of congregations with a clearly articulated purpose grew (FACT)
- Only 22% of congregations without a clearly articulated purpose grew (FACT)



But, the real issue is alignment

- Only 29% of congregations report strong commitment to a clear vision (CLS)
- Only 44% of congregations report strong compatibility between programs and vision (CLS)

Five key variables

- The **invitation (1)** will get them there
- **Worship (2)** and **focus (3)** will bring them back
- A sense of **belonging (4)** and **empowerment (5)** will build community...
- ...And send them outward

Questions and Comments