

# Surveys for Mission

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## Appendix B - Casuals

Casuals are those people who only attended once during the ten week survey. Some may be new and experiencing the churches and their services for the first time. A few may be occasional churchgoers who attend when their employment, family or personal circumstances permit. Others, however, may be people who are starting to disengage from the church. This latter group are often difficult to perceive in the maelstrom of church life and the complexity of attendance patterns.

Church consultants indicate that a single minister can only effectively pastor 150 people including children. Bishop Steve Croft suggests that this includes a maximum of only 100 adults. Above this level the minister can no longer carry the whole parish and everything that goes on in his or her head. There are simply too many pastoral needs to track, too many events to manage and control, too much going on. The result is that as new people join the church others leave at an equal and balancing rate. Furthermore, an additional minister adds no more than 30% to this capacity as many of the relationships are duplicated (*Ministry in Three Dimensions*, 1999, Darton, Longman & Todd: London, p 196).

Following a detailed study of church leavers Dr Philip Richter and Prof. Leslie Francis in *Gone But Not Forgotten: Church Leaving and Returning*, (1998, Darton, Longman & Todd: London, p 145) wrote

“One of the most disconcerting findings from our questionnaire survey was that 92 per cent of leavers reported that no one from the church had talked with them about why they were attending less frequently, during the first six weeks after their church going dropped off.”

During extensive research amongst church leavers Dr Alan Jamieson found that for most people the process of leaving a church was not a quick and easy exit. In *A Churchless Faith*, (2002, SPCK, p 32) he wrote

“The vast majority of those who were interviewed did not leave their church suddenly. In fact they indicated a gradual process of reflection, questioning and withdrawal which lasted many months or years prior to their decision to leave. They drifted out of the church, often realizing only in hindsight that they had left. Because of the nature of church participation it is possible to drift out on a trial basis, or change your attendance patterns to the point of being increasingly less regular at church events. It is the voluntary nature of church participation and the potential reversibility of the decision that makes such an imperceptible leave-taking possible. A number spoke of a process of feeling dissatisfied, questioning and reducing their participation over a long period of time followed by a reduced frequency of church attendance to the point that they woke up one morning deciding they wouldn't go to church again. This was usually after not attending for some considerable period of time. In this sense it is a gradual drift to the point of a retrospective decision that they have in fact left.”

In consequence, recognising those who are casuals may be viewed as an important area of pastoral strategy for the local church.

## 1.0 The number of casualties at each weekly service

<b>Christ Church</b>		<i>Wk 1</i>	<i>Wk 2</i>	<i>Wk 3</i>	<i>Wk 4</i>	<i>Wk 5</i>	<i>Wk 6</i>	<i>Wk 7</i>	<i>Wk 8</i>	<i>Wk 9</i>	<i>Wk 10</i>
Sunday	8.00am	1		1			3	1			1
Sunday	10.30am	3	2	8		1	4		4	3	1
Sunday	6.30pm			1							
<b>St Michaels</b>		<i>Wk 1</i>	<i>Wk 2</i>	<i>Wk 3</i>	<i>Wk 4</i>	<i>Wk 5</i>	<i>Wk 6</i>	<i>Wk 7</i>	<i>Wk 8</i>	<i>Wk 9</i>	<i>Wk 10</i>
Sunday	9.00am									1	
Sunday	10.45am	2	5	4	3		2	3	5	2	3
Sunday	6.30pm				1		1				2
Wednesda	10.30am				1				2		1
Tuesday	3.30pm	12				7				17	

## 2.0 Age profile of casualties at each service

<b>Christ Church</b>		<5	5-10	11-15	16-24	25-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70-79	80+
8.00am										3	4	
10.30am		4	1	3	1		5	3	5	2	2	
6.30pm									1			
<b>St Michaels</b>		<5	5-10	11-15	16-24	25-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70-79	80+
9.00am								1				
10.45am		2	1		4	3	6	5	1	2	3	2
6.30pm							1		1	2		
10.30am										1	1	2
3.30pm		11	11		1	2	9		2			

### 3.0 Statistical characteristics of casual attendees

	<11yrs	11-24yrs	25-39yrs	40-59yrs	60-79yrs	80yrs+
Only attended Messy Church	22	1	11	2		
Spouse/Partner attends more regularly				4		
Other household member attends more regularly	1	2	5	4	6	2
Attends alone			3	8	10	2
Attends alone with children (i.e. without spouse/partner)			11	2		
Performs a role at worship services				3	2	
Performs a role other than at worship services			1			
Attends a group meeting				2	1	1
Is an Electoral Roll Member			4	9	11	3
Attended during an earlier survey		2	5	5	4	1
Potential wedding candidates						
Potential baptismal parents						
Other unknown factors						
<i>Total</i>	23	5	40	39	34	9

#### 4.0 Sequential order

In the previous table some casual attendees are included under more than one heading. However, if the different criteria are dealt with sequentially in the order shown and attendees are included only once the results are as indicated in the table below

	<11yrs	11-24yrs	25-39yrs	40-59yrs	60-79yrs	80yrs+	Total	%
Only attended Messy Church	22	1	11	2			36	33%
Spouse/Partner attends more regularly				4			4	4%
Other household member attends more regularly		2	2		6	2	12	11%
Attends alone			3	8	10	2	23	21%
Attends alone with children (i.e. without spouse/partner)			3	1			4	4%
Performs a role at worship services								
Performs a role other than at worship services			1				1	1%
Attends a group meeting								
Is an Electoral Roll Member			2		3		5	5%
Attended during an earlier survey		1					1	1%
Potential wedding candidates or baptismal parents								
Other unknown factors	8	5	4	4	1		22	20%
Total	30	9	26	19	20	4	108	