

Segment B08: *Babies and Bliss*

Middle-aged couples with families and active lives in affluent suburbia

Resource: Mosaic 2021 by Experian.

Religious Experience in a Nutshell

Religious Perspective: *An important part of a healthy lifestyle*
 Common Spiritual Issues: *Feeling broken or rejected, anxieties over guilt and displacement*

Common Church Presence

- Favor personalized spiritualities
- Struggle to maintain balanced lifestyles

- Gravitate to larger, resource size churches
- Conservative, family-centered values

- Prefer short-term commitments
- Prioritize children & youth ministries



Potential Influence

Lifestyle Compatibility	Family Group B <i>Flourishing Families</i>	Frequent Neighbors
A02 Platinum Prosperity A05 Couples with Clout D15 Sports Utility Families G24 Ambitious Singles	B07 Across the Ages B08 Babies and Bliss B09 Family Fun-tastic B10 Cosmopolitan Achievers	C11 Sophisticated City Dwellers C13 Philanthropic Sophisticates A03 Kids and Cabernet F22 Fast Track Couples

General Comments:

Babies and Bliss describe themselves as both spiritual and religious. They tend to customize and personalize traditional beliefs and religious practices. The church is a part of a balanced lifestyle. They shop for churches that are child-sensitive and family friendly, and which offer a wide variety of generational programs in a single location. They tend to gravitate to large, resource-size churches ... or to small churches with healthy budgets that can afford multiple professional staff. They may change churches if there is a sexual or financial scandal, or if the children’s ministries (programs, technologies, or facilities) are dated.

Parents expect a good church to help them "cope". They may struggle to match their traditional family values with expectations in the workplace or wider society. Each parent usually has a career, although women may organize careers around homemaking and parenting. They may work from home, maintain home offices, or take extended leaves of absence for the sake of children. *Babies and Bliss* are not strong social activists, but support outreach that combines evangelism and social change. Their commitment to church is often intense for a limited time, and then they move on to volunteer in other organizations as their children grow older.

Color Key	High Priority	Medium Priority	Low Priority
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High Priorities also marked with "X" for churches photocopying in black and white.

Leadership PreferencesResource: *Spiritual Leadership* by Thomas Bandy (Abingdon Press)

Traditional		Progressive		Radical	
	Caregiver	x	Discipler		Visionary
	Enabler		Guru		Mentor
x	CEO				Pilgrim

Babies and Bliss expect the senior pastor to be a capable CEO managing multiple programs for different generations. This usually implies additional paid staff work at the church. However, they prefer a *Discipler* to an *Enabler*. Clergy do not need to be great visitors or expert counselors but do need to manage a process that leads to Christian maturity. They are good coaches and advisors and are sensitive to lifecycle stages. They are very much in tune with the ebb and flow of children and youth cultures, and with the stresses of modern parenting. They help adults solve problems, focus living, mentor younger generations, and develop a profound inner awareness of God. The senior pastor or priest is a strong, assertive leader with good business sense and a holistically healthy lifestyle. Staff lifestyles should model their generally conservative social values.

Lifestyle Connectivity

It is increasingly important for the clergy and program staff to have regular internet presence. This may be in the form of a weekly blog post, updates regarding his/her activities in congregation or denomination, or sermons or homilies posted weekly, or images of leaders active in mission. Clergy are well aware of the influence of social media and may reference websites in preaching.

Hospitality PreferencesResource: *Worship Ways* by Thomas Bandy and Lucinda Holmes (Abingdon Press)

Traditional		Modern		Postmodern	
	The Basics	x	Multiple Choices		Take-Out
			Healthy Choices		

Young families require big vehicles. Provide ample parking, and make sure there is a safe and sheltered "drop off" place to let the family enter the building. Safety guards and greeters who can help with infants and children are appreciated. Always staff the Welcome Center *during* worship, and train ushers to assist children or parents coming in and out of the worship center. Remember that churches are often prime targets for child theft ... and that these parents are very protective of their children.

The Welcome Center should stock free gifts for visitors. Greeters should include youth, and all greeters should be trained to be extra helpful and very respectful. Refreshments are varied, but clearly labeled to be sugar free, nut free, etc. Make refreshments available before, during, and after worship. Provide separate serving stations for little children that are well supervised. Provide ambient contemporary Christian.

Lifestyle Connectivity

When worshipping in-person, outdoor hospitality is particularly valued by parents with children with disabilities or vulnerable to health issues. Provide sheltered areas, with plenty of room, and a large screen monitor to view a worship service inside. If streaming worship services to multiple sites or pods, refreshments at each site can be potluck and customized to the tastes or needs of each small group. Multiple sites must be accessible for young mothers, seniors, and physically disabled. Create an opportunity for online worshippers to greet others or contribute prayer requests.

Worship Preferences Resource: *Worship Ways* by Thomas Bandy and Lucinda Holmes (Abingdon Press)

Traditional		Modern		Postmodern	
	Caregiving Worship	x	Inspirational Worship		Mission-Connection Worship
x	Educational Worship		Transformational Worship	x	Coaching Worship
	Healing Worship				

Families include children in elementary and middle school, and worship together for the first part of the service. If they worship in larger churches, parents may prefer to send children directly to Sunday school during worship. Worship is “traditional” in structure, relatively informal, with more contemporary music, and very inspirational. The music is usually contemporary Christian (not 70s “Praise Music”). Excellent video technology is expected, and a kind of “litmus test” for relevance and credibility. Worship is often oriented to themes rather than lectionaries but anchored in Scripture. Preaching is often very practical, coaching adults in the essentials of faith, Christian living, stress reduction, or problem solving. Preaching is often supplemented by drama or video and may be linked to ongoing small groups.

Lifestyle Connectivity

Babies and Bliss make health and safety for children a priority, and since they may already work from home and are comfortable with virtual communication, they value online worship. However, merely live streaming video of a worship service may not hold their attention for long. Online worship should be more professionally produced and edited. Parents may well sleep in Sunday morning and watch later in the week. Provide on-demand devotional material for the Christian year (for all ages) and encourage family devotions. Households that cherish Eucharistic observances frustrated by virtual worship, and value the blessed sacraments brought to their homes.

Education Preferences Resource: *See, Know, and Serve* by Thomas Bandy (Abingdon Press)

Form		Content		Grouping	
	Curricular	x	Biblical	x	Generational
x	Experiential		Topical		Peer Group

Babies and Bliss are well educated, but certainly not passive intellectuals. They rely on a variety of technologies and are often “lateral thinkers” (solving problems by indirect and creative means rather than step-by-step logic). They prefer experiential methodologies of learning that are creative, interactive, and use diverse media. The content should be Bible stories with a strong moral thread, and teaching may be organized around themes rather than the Christian Year. Sunday school classes follow the pattern of public-school grades, but some activities will intentionally gather different age groups. Teachers are well trained. Teens may still gather in a large “youth group” but tend to function in small groups oriented around special interests (sports, games, service, music genres, etc.). Small group affinities and the mentoring ability of specially trained youth ministers will be more important than any specific curriculum. Youth leaders are expected to be strong mentors and role models. Some families in this lifestyle segment may have opted out of the public education system for home schooling, or they may look for churches that offer a private Christian academy. They want to interface Sunday school education with the overall goals and resources of their educational preferences for their children.

Lifestyle Connectivity

Online education is probably even more important than online worship. More parents are “home-schooling”, and families are more likely to do home-based Sunday school as individual families or as clusters or pods. Create a library of internet resources. Be sure to include coaching for parents who are now primary Christian educators for their children. Consider re-deploying Sunday school teachers as itinerant tutors who can rotate among pods to enhance at-home Christian education.

Small Group Preferences

Resource: *See, Know, and Serve* by Thomas Bandy (Abingdon Press)

Leadership		Focus	
x	Trained Leader	x	Curriculum Study
	Rotate Leaders	x	Shared Affinity

Babies and Bliss adults (both women and men) will opt for midweek small groups as the preferred method of Christian education. Busy family lifestyles often create a strong need for intimate bonds of peer friendships. Groups specifically for men and women, couples, or parents with special needs are common. Support groups for parenting, marriage enrichment, or death of a loved one are popular. Recovery groups may be more difficult to establish, and individuals may choose to go outside the church. Adults prefer groups with trained leaders who are accountable to the senior pastor or designated staff person. The leader is particularly adept managing conversations, encouraging shy people, and overcoming personality conflicts. Small groups can be very informal or highly structured. They may be based on some shared enthusiasm (sports, camping, etc.) or on a Bible Study curriculum. Covenants are usually short term, and adults self-select the topics, times, and leaders that interest them.

Lifestyle Connectivity

Many small groups already interact through social media when they are not together face to face, and the transition to virtual small group participation is not that hard. However, it does require extra training for small group leaders. New or enhanced conferencing platforms are being developed, so stay ahead of the curve. Small group leaders often become primary pastor caregivers to the participants and their families.

Outreach Preferences

Resource: *Strategic Thinking* by Thomas Bandy (Abingdon Press)

	Personal Need	Readiness to Volunteer
Basic Survival		
Health and Wellness		x
Quality of Life		x
Addiction Intervention		
Interpersonal Relationships		x
Human Potential	x	
Salvation and Human Destiny	x	

Babies and Bliss are generally happy with their status quo. Their challenge is to balance work, family, and personal time. Social service is often a lower priority in life, unless it connects with a stage in the child development (e.g., Boy Scouts or Girl Scouts) or can become a vehicle to shape the moral character of the next generation. Personally, they are very interested in any program that helps them explore their potential as human beings (gift discernment, personality inventories, career choices, etc.). People in this segment are most likely to become active in outreach ministries related to quality of life (particularly physical or mental fitness), and support camps, amateur sports, and learning competitions. They also support social services that improve the quality of life in their neighbourhoods (crime prevention, safety, and local environmental concerns). They support outreach ministries for youth that shape responsible interpersonal relationships. They have limited spare time for committees and are more likely to *participate* than to *lead*. They are more likely to offer in-kind donations (like food, equipment, etc.) than direct financial support.

Lifestyle Connectivity

Outreach ministry always has a strong internet presence. This includes websites offering images, updates, and links to mission partners, and which identify decision-makers and investment strategies. Parents often want to supervise their children's access to the web, so make sure that any links provided are with reputable organizations.

Facility Preferences

Resource: *See, Know, and Serve* by Thomas Bandy (Abingdon Press)

Property		Technology		Symbolism	
	Ecclesiastical		Modern	x	Classic Christendom
x	Utilitarian	x	Postmodern		Contemporary Post-Christendom

Babies and Bliss have very active families. Well-designed, utilitarian space is preferable to adapt to changing generational needs. An internal coffee house may be a priority over large kitchens. They are less motivated to preserve ecclesiastical facilities and maintain old equipment, regardless of memorial status, and prefer flexible, multi-purpose spaces that can incorporate traditional Christian symbols. They tend to be frugal about everything in the budget ... but indulgent enough to make facilities "state of the art". Technologies to regulate heat and air conditioning, light and fresh air, and facilitate handicapped access are important. However, these people tend to be frugal money managers, and will always look to cut costs for labor to install technologies or build structures. They are more likely to spend extra money to develop athletic fields and gymnasiums, or to manage church camps. The safe location and quality of space for the nursery, Sunday school, and youth rooms are extremely important.

Lifestyle Connectivity

Sacred space is being replaced by sacred "talismans". This is a shift from traditional Christendom to contemporary symbols. These are portable symbols (household decorations, personal wear, etc.) that have special religious significance. These may help center family devotions. These households value postmodern technology, and churches should take advantage of this to provide online images, symbols, and inspirational music and video.

Financial Preferences

Resource: *See, Know, and Serve* by Thomas Bandy (Abingdon Press)

Giving Target		Giving Method	
x	Unified Budgets & General Funds	x	Informed Philanthropy & Pledging
x	Designated Programs & Mission Projects	x	Lifestyle Coaching & Family Financial Planning

Babies and Bliss households have significant combined incomes, but they also have high family expenses. They are very careful about most spending, although they do indulge their children and themselves. *Experian* suggests that they are savvy investors and protect their children's financial future. In the church, they are more likely to invest in trusts or foundations related to leadership development than property maintenance. Capital campaigns always need to have a strong missional component. Leaders must set benchmarks for giving.

They invest in a church in the way that they invest in non-profits and schools. They appreciate stewardship campaigns that coach them to make better lifestyle decisions, and dislike churches that make them feel guilty. They will readily take a seminar on Christian family financial planning but are reluctant to participate in an "every member" canvass. *Babies and Bliss* usually pledge to a unified budget as a household rather than as individuals. They can be very generous to local churches, but denominational policies can negatively impact their financial giving. They may opt for designated giving to micro-charities rather than give to denominational missions.

Lifestyle Connectivity

These households are often already making financial donations online, and already expect financial statements and investment strategies to be available digitally. The longer these households stay away from on-site worship and education, however, the more hesitant they become supporting overhead expenses for unused properties. Provide more choices for designated giving for local ministry programs and global missions.

Communication

Resource: *Mosaic E-Handbook* by Experian

Communication in Daily Living					Communication in Church Participation						
	Broadcast/Streaming TV		Direct Mail		Radio		Live/Recorded Video		Print and Paper		Announcements or Visits
x	Mobile SMS	x	Email	x	Social Media	x	Text Message	x	Email	x	Social Media

Babies and Bliss navigate the internet constantly. They quickly “tune out” verbal announcements and often eliminate them from worship. Church communicators may not catch them at home and must rely on websites to distribute resources and provide information. Even cell phone conversations may need to be replaced by texting. They migrate seamlessly from email, to website, to chat room and other social media. If you do connect with them on the phone, you may often hear keys tapping and endure gaps of silence as they respond to incoming messages. These people are interested in personal spirituality. Texting a "thought for the day" helps keep them connected with the church. Store devotional resources on websites that can easily be downloaded wherever and whenever needed.

Lifestyle Connectivity

These households may not be the earliest adopters of new technology, but they have already shifted to virtual personal communication. However, they may need coaching to learn conferencing software to participate fully in meetings and small groups; or to create home theaters for the family to participate in online worship.