

Segment B07: *Across the Ages*

Flourishing couples and multi-generational families living in a wide range of lifestyles in 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

- Church membership important
- Value life-cycle Celebrations
- May be irregular attenders
- Compare current church to Congregational Roots
- Avoid radical ideas and changes
- Harmony a high priority



Potential Influence

Lifestyle Compatibility	Family Group B <i>Flourishing Families</i>	Frequent Neighbors
A01 American Royalty K37 Wired for Success O53 Colleges and Cafes I32 Steadfast Conventionalists	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:

Across the Ages households often contain multiple generations, or older couples living close to children and grandchildren. Church membership is important, especially for life-cycle celebrations like baptism, confirmation, anniversaries, and special occasions like Christmas and Thanksgiving. However, regular church participation may be less important. Church competes with other family priorities as well as fitness, travel, and home-based or outdoor activities. Many have roots in the community where they have raised children, and they tend to be loyal to the same family-oriented church. They may have traditional family values, but they are usually open to other races and cultures and may reflect multi-cultural and multi-lingual community transitions. Social media and email keep them in touch with extended families, a broad spectrum of friends, and church events and pastoral messages.

Across the Ages tend to be loyal to denominations, but often avoid extreme ideologies or radical program changes. The church mission statement is deliberately vague and generic to encompass a variety of religious points of view. You might expect interesting debates about religion, philosophies of life, and worship styles ... but harmony will be a high core value.

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		Discipler		Visionary
x	Enabler		Guru		Mentor
x	CEO				Pilgrim

Across the Ages may have been in residence 10 years or more and have deep community roots. They appreciate long-term pastoral relationships. The pastor or priest knows family names (if not first names) and welcomes 20-somethings returning home. The staffing strategy includes visitors and counselors, as well as educators and musicians. Clergy are approachable and sociable. They have versatile preaching skills and can design different kinds of worship services. They are capable administrators and cautious financial managers. Clergy network locally especially with hospitals and nursing homes, and actively participate in denominational and ecumenical activities. If pastors are not too demanding, *Across the Ages* will support them through thick and thin. They will honor their day off and provide adequate budgets for vacation and continuing education.

Lifestyle Connectivity

It is increasingly important for the pastor and 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.

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

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

Across the Ages value personal relationships and family ties. Provide lots of parking and hearty welcomes. Families may greet as a team. They must be very friendly, but generally refer questions to a welcome center or staff. The building and facilities must be accessible and child friendly. It may be helpful to provide sheltered drop-off entrances and storage space for strollers, wheelchairs, etc.

Refreshment choices may be intentionally indulgent (lots of sugar and caffeine), but these people are also health conscious. Provide allergen alerts. Coffee and tea need not be especially brewed, but flavor shots are welcome. Older generations may frown on taking food into the sanctuary or worship center, so expanded space in the back of the room may be provided to stand or sit at tables. If there is more than one service Sunday morning, make sure that strong fellowship is offered in between. The church may be big, and generations of the same family may worship in different services, but everybody likes to reunite over refreshments. Repeat urgent announcements during coffee hour, or digitally update information in a Welcome Center.

Lifestyle Connectivity

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 PreferencesResource: *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				

Across the Ages prefer to "blend" worship services, but increasingly there are different expectations for worship that go beyond musical style. They may contrast worship options as "traditional" and "contemporary", but the interpretations of those terms vary considerably. One service may be more educational, with expository preaching and more formal liturgy. But another option may be more about coaching Christian lifestyles, and the space may be less formal to encourage interaction.

All worship should be upbeat and inspirational, although this may challenge churches to provide quality options in music and image. Eucharist or Holy Communion may be simpler. Younger generations expect to emerge with practical tips for work, play, relationships, etc. Older generations expect to emerge with renewed energy and optimism. Holy days and holidays like Christmas, New Year's Day, Valentine's Day, Mother's Day, Easter, and Thanksgiving are important family times when worship will bring families together. Baptism and Confirmation, along with other life-cycle celebrations, are important. Set aside budget for significant worship events.

Lifestyle Connectivity

These multi-generational households generally prefer personal presence, and each generation values fellowship on-site. However, they are protective of younger and older generations, and will watch worship via internet. At least one Sunday service should be recorded and available the following week. If possible, edit recorded worship to delete lengthy transitions and announcements, and add images of people. Many households will appreciate the blessed Communion elements delivered to their homes.

Education Preferences

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

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

Across the Ages spans generations, topics, and learning methodologies. The best plan is to offer as many choices as possible. Maintain a strong Biblical reference point but explore both practical and theoretical topics. Guest speakers and ecumenical cooperation are welcome. People in this lifestyle segment are generally well educated, and many have liberal arts experience as well as specialized training. Lay academies, seminars, lectures, and other forms of adult continuing education are possible. Build a lay continuing education budget to support volunteer training, and send people for training to camps, retreat centers, and other short-term programs.

Lifestyle Connectivity

Virtual education is increasingly important in both public and church education. Provide virtual Sunday school resources that mirror what is going on in the classroom. Provide additional coaching resources for parents teaching children at home or in a multisite or pod. If possible, train some Sunday school teachers to become tutors who can visit sites or pods monthly to provide additional support.

Small Group Preferences

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

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

Across the Ages like variety. They respond well to small groups at diverse times, places, and contexts. Affinities may range from passive to active. Increasingly, groups tend to be short term and scheduled in the fall or winter months. Participants expect clear start and finish times. Affinities related to hobbies, sports, crafts, music, sports, and technologies will be the easiest to start.

Groups usually focus on building or deepening friendships and sharing some activity or topic, but they may not have high aspirations for theology and can be hesitant to practice rigorous accountability. Groups often tolerate eccentric behavior to avoid conflict that could have repercussions back home. Larger churches may deploy part- or full-time staff to manage small groups, train small group leaders, and intervene if things get out of hand.

Across the Ages believes that youth are the future of the church and are passionate about youth groups. Increasingly, multi-generational mission trips are central to the youth ministry. The single, large youth group is morphing into a variety of different kinds of small youth groups to match community diversity. Groups for younger participants usually require a trained (often paid) leader, but affinity groups for adults may well rotate leadership.

Lifestyle Connectivity

Small groups for younger generations should include an active social media component. This may include texting or other forms of instant messaging and becomes the primary method to share news or personal updates. Older generations may use slower platforms (Facebook, etc.) or email.

Outreach Preferences

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

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

Across the Ages spans generations, and any number of outreach ministries may capture their imagination. If there is a major, ongoing outreach ministry, it often involves discovering human potential (marriage and family counseling, career development, gifts discernment, etc.). The more culturally diverse households can be bridgebuilders and encourage racial reconciliation ministries. People in this segment often describe themselves as "green" and are passionate about recycling and environmental issues. Many forms of "depot" ministries excite them (food banks, clothing redistribution, refinishing furniture, etc.). People in this lifestyle segment are less likely to give money to any charity or outreach project in which they do not have some personal stake. Mission usually has local impact, even if it is on a global scale. The older generations may serve on governing boards, and occasionally advocate causes. Younger generations prefer to be involved hands-on.

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. Younger generations more active in hands-on mission will use various social media to communicate and coordinate.

Facility Preferences

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

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

Across the Ages is an unusual lifestyle segment that combines modest or informal appearances and cutting-edge technologies at the same time. Similarly, they tend to gravitate to traditional ecclesiastical facilities which incorporate post-modern technologies. The video screens and audio systems, seating options and special effects may sometimes jar traditional sensibilities, but the juxtaposition of old and new mirrors family structures that include old and young. A contemporary education wing might be grafted onto a 19th century sanctuary; or a historic manse might be converted into a modern pre-school center.

Nevertheless, the symbols are usually well-known signs of Christendom. People in this lifestyle segment link status to family success. Therefore, they often pay for stained glass, renovated rooms, and other technologies as memorials. Technologies to regulate heat and air conditioning, light and fresh air, and facilitate handicapped access are important. People will dig deeper to make emergency repairs to the building. The interior is usually more

important than the exterior. It is more important to honor members and be in familiar surroundings than to impress strangers passing by.

Lifestyle Connectivity

These households tend to be progressive in their use of technology, but not necessarily on the cutting edge. They prefer technology that has been proven to be reliable, versatile, and confidential. Internet access is increasingly important. Church offices should have hardware regularly replaced and software regularly updated. Television monitors are common throughout the building for announcements, directions, etc.

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
	Designated Programs & Mission Projects		Lifestyle Coaching & Family Financial Planning

Across the Ages support the church as if it were an extended family. Family members tend to pool their incomes to support the percentage giving of the entire household. Member households give to unified budgets. They are low risk takers and set aside money for emergencies. They invest in creative ideas only when there is a sound strategic plan. At best, they sustain excellent programs and reduce overhead costs. At worst, they allow finance committees to control program development and mission investment. Make sure that financial managers are credible spiritual leaders and active participants. Be deliberate to include different age groups in financial management.

Churches take stewardship very seriously. They have a year-round plan that often includes every member visitation. Pledges may be made by individual and/or household. They prefer a stewardship program that goes beyond asking for money, coaching members to set lifestyle priorities and link philanthropic giving to Christian financial planning.

Lifestyle Connectivity

Money management (spending, investing, debt, etc.) should be quite transparent and available on church websites. Multiply ways members can donate to the church online. Provide digital resources to help individuals and family in debt management and financial planning.

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
	Mobile SMS	x	Email	x	Social Media		Text Message	x	Email	x	Social Media

Across the Ages households tend to rely on communication methods that are a compromise between young and old. Email and the most popular social media (like Facebook, Instagram, etc.) are common. Younger generations may rely more on instant messaging among themselves. Church participation, however, is often more traditional. Households still value printed bulletins and newsletters and verbal announcements, and seniors appreciate personal visits by the priest or pastor (by appointment). As online worship grows in importance, households may watch live or recorded services, but they may not seek out other religious programming.

Lifestyle Connectivity

Churches tend to adapt to changing technologies and communication methods more slowly than the individual member households. However, environmental, and financial concerns combined with the increasing mobility of households, are accelerating the demand for high quality, regular digital communication. Churches should be proactive anticipating these changes in their budgets and leadership training.