

Group L: *Blue Sky Boomers*

Middle-class baby boomer-aged households living in small towns

Resource: Mosaic 2021 by Experian.

Religious Experience in a Nutshell

Religious Perspective: *Always take time to smell the roses and appreciate what you have*

Spiritual Issues: *Feelings of regret, anxieties about meaninglessness and death*

Common Church Presence

- Mid-size, low expectation churches
- Intimacy, consistency, predictability
- Evolutionary (not revolutionary) change
- Reliant on lay leadership
- Spirituality is related to nature and wellness
- Seek a lifestyle of prayer and generosity



Potential Influence

1 st Tier Group Compatibility	Family Group L <i>Blue Sky Boomers</i>	2 nd Tier Group Compatibilities
C Booming with Confidence E Thriving Boomers H Bourgeois Melting Pot	L41 Booming and Consuming L42 Rooted Flower Power L43 Homemade Happiness	J Autumn Years N Pastoral Pride Q Golden Year Guardians

Communication

Resource: *Mosaic E-Handbook* by Experian

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

General Comments:

Blue Sky Boomers often participate in churches with traditional family values and middle-of-the-road attitudes. Some have intentionally relocated to get away from the problems of city life. Others continue to live in the urban neighborhoods of small and medium size cities where they can take advantage of entertainment venues, restaurants, education, and health care. They are loyal to the denomination in which they raised their children but tend to assume that the local congregational customs they left behind should be normative for the new congregation they now join, or that the local customs they observe should be standard for the denomination as a whole.

They all like the intimacy, consistency, and predictability of a church. The church often feels like an extended family. It is often unnecessary to clearly define the core values, beliefs, and mission of the church because these are assumed in the general homogeneity of the church. New members always say that the “feel right at home”.

The most well-loved clergy just seem to “fit in” and are the embodiment of church identity. There may be friction at every change in pastoral relationship and it may take five or more years to regain momentum for church growth.

Blue Sky Boomers enjoy the slower pace of life in a rural areas, small towns, or older neighborhoods in medium-sized cities. They are content with their standard of living, but these days the middle class is struggling, and they are anxious to protect their standard of living. The programmatic and stylistic priorities of the church often reflect the seniority of church membership. They are grateful for what they have, and do not feel great urgency to acquire new things, upgrade to new technologies, or make lifestyle adjustments to suit anyone else.

Although people in this group are generally conservative in their social, political, and religious attitudes, they rarely go to extremes. They are usually open to gender equality, generational differences, and cultural diversity, but are more readily persuaded by positive role models than information or education. They are ready to try something new if it is evolutionary rather than revolutionary, proceeds by consensus rather than hierarchy, and does not entail too much risk or cost. It is important for the choir to perform well, but even more important that singing is fun, sincere, and personal. Their need for intimacy is greater than their quest for quality. Their desire to support personal and spiritual growth is more important than perfection in programming or professional training.

They don't want the church to grow too big, or make too many changes, and lose the intimacy and harmony that they enjoy now. They may experiment with large regional churches, but often complain about being lost in a crowd. They prefer to worship with 100-300 people at the most. The church is large enough for inspirational worship, but small enough to know everyone's name. Unfortunately, the critical mass required to sustain a church is going up, and these lifestyle segments are often worried about the survival of their church.

Many of their churches are on the fringes of urbanization, as households relocate further from city traffic, pollution, and crime. Their towns and neighborhoods may be experience significant demographic change. And some communities may experience a seasonal influx of part-timer residents. These social pressures can unsettle the homogeneity of the congregation and create a two-tiered fellowship of church “insiders” and “outsiders”. Many of their churches are part of a circuit or in small towns where it is difficult to find a full-time minister, so they tend to be self-reliant. Leadership is often taken by lay people who are highly respected for their wisdom and faith maturity.

Leadership is often provided by newly ordained or retired clergy who have a clear sense of calling and love for parish ministry. *Blue Sky Boomers* can be very supportive to young clergy, mentoring their professional growth and caring for their young families. They can be very supportive of older or retired clergy, accepting their limitations and caring for their well being. However, clergy must have diplomatic skills, work through consensus, and believe in evolutionary (not revolutionary) change.

Spirituality is important to most people in these lifestyle segments, and for many this will be expressed through the love of nature, a passion for wellness, personal support for friends, and acceptance of strangers. They may be sporadic in church attendance, but since they are usually outdoors hiking, boating, cycling, bird watching, and surrounded by natural beauty they still feel close to God. Spirituality may also be expressed through an emotional attachment to the church building, local church tradition, and meaningful symbols from their childhood. Spirituality and sentimentality often blend together.

Their quest for God is often motivated by anxieties over emptiness, meaninglessness, and aging. The emerging world of speed, flux, and blur may create anxiety about moral absolutes and religious certainties for themselves, their children, or their country. They may also be driven by a sense of regret over acts of commission or omission in their personal lives, or the success or failure of their marital and parental roles. Forgiveness, acceptance, reconciliation, and community harmony are important in their spiritual lives. They seek the presence of Christ as a healer, guide, and promise keeper. The image of Christ as the True Vine, faithful followers as the branches, and individual potential as the blossoms resulting from grace (John 15:1-7) gives them hope for the future. For some, this faith is internalized as a feeling of peace and serenity. For others, faith is externalized in material success.

They are most cautious when it comes to church property and stewardship. They protect church architecture and preserve heritage. They dislike aggressive fundraising campaigns, and don't want the clergy to talk too much about money. They like to monitor the finances of the church and can be generous donors to the church

budget and outreach ministries, but they also prefer to keep the record of giving strictly confidential. The bottom line is never quantifiable in money, membership, program relevance. The bottom line is that they understand faithfulness as a lifestyle of thankfulness and generosity. The church is an oasis that faith is a journey.