

**Segment P61:*****Simple Beginnings*****Singles and single-parent households with modest incomes in city apartments**

Resource: Mosaic 2021 by Experian.

**Religious Experience in a Nutshell**

Religious Perspective:

*God is good, and life will get better*

Spiritual Issues:

*Feelings of loneliness, anxieties about displacement and abandonment***Common Church Presence**

- Faith is important
- Often with Roman Catholic leanings
- Personal and family devotion
- Mobile and difficult to track
- Strong roots in country of origin
- Optimists and risk takers

**Potential Influence**

| <b>Lifestyle Compatibility</b>  | <b>Family Group P<br/>Cultural Connections</b>  | <b>Frequent Neighbors</b>   |
|---|---|---|
| K39 Metro Fusion<br>I31 Hard Working Values<br>I32 Steadfast Conventionalists<br>I33 Balance and Harmony<br>M45 Growing and Expanding<br>O52 Urban Ambition | P56 Mid-Scale Medley<br>P57 Modest Metro Means<br>P58 Heritage Heights<br>P59 Expanding Horizons<br>P60 Striving Forward<br>P61 Simple Beginnings | H26 Progressive Potpourri<br>J36 Settled and Sensible<br>K38 Modern Blend<br>N49 Touch of Tradition<br>R66 Ambitious Dreamers<br>R67 Passionate Parents |

**General Comments:**

Faith and church are important to *Simple Beginnings*. One reason they go to church regularly is to set a good example for their children and receive a religious and moral upbringing that is difficult to accomplish at home. The church helps them keep perspective and life in some kind of balance. They can meet and make friends and find some extra food and practical help to make ends meet. Despite their preoccupation to make money, people in this segment will volunteer for a good cause. Their liberal attitudes motivate them to join a protest movement or support important economic reforms.

*Experian* suggests that these singles and single-parent households are among the poorest in the country. About two-thirds speak Spanish, and many others are African American. They are unhappy with their status, and even though family is important they will sacrifice family time to get ahead. They work hard at whatever jobs they can find and are all about economic success. Affluence is a way to gain the respect they crave. The boundary between “theology of material success” and “theology of unconditional grace” can become blurred, but their intention is to always be faithful to God.

| <b>Color Key</b> | <b>High Priority</b> | <b>Medium Priority</b> | <b>Low Priority</b> |
|------------------|----------------------|------------------------|---------------------|
|------------------|----------------------|------------------------|---------------------|

*High Priorities also marked with “X” for churches photocopying in black and white.*

**Leadership Preferences**Resource: *Spiritual Leadership* by Thomas Bandy (Abingdon Press)

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

*Simple Beginnings* expect clergy to offer strong personal support to individuals and families. Clergy are sensitive to the life cycles of birth, adolescence, adulthood, and death and are very sincere in all sacramental acts. They are respected as representatives of God and the wider church. They are frequent counselors and advisors. They do not need to be a great preachers or expert teachers, but good communicators person-to-person or leader-to-group. They are role models for spiritual life and moral behavior. Clergy are good care givers. They visit in homes, schools, hospitals, and other institutions They can discern when to be compassionate and when to be strict and are reliable whenever there is a family crisis or personal emergency. They have solid administrative skills since the volunteer infrastructure of these churches may be weak or inconsistent. They manage various programs or non-profit agencies that are hosted or directed by the church, and they maintain strong networks with the church hierarchy and social services. The bottom line, however, is that clergy have a big heart for the people in the neighborhood.

*Lifestyle Connectivity*

Clergy are quite visible in the neighborhood (local cafes, bars, shops, and social agencies). They are on-call 24/7 and may receive a call on their cell phone at any time. Clergy often get extra training to understand the legal and social stresses for new immigrants and may be advocates for human rights.

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

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

Church attendance is a priority for *Simple Beginnings*. They may have to adjust for shift work and multiple part time jobs to attend, but sometime over the weekend they will worship. Greeters should be trained to be bilingual, or at the very least, able to greet and provide basic directions in both Spanish and English. Nurseries and play areas should be safe and secure and away from entrances and exits. Whenever possible, nurseries are located upstairs and out of damp basements, and relatively close to the worship and refreshment areas. The refreshment center is usually a very pleasant environment with good lighting, colorful images, and even background music (contemporary Christian). Refreshments may be basic, but they are very hot or very cold, with flavored creamers and lots of food. Bulk food may be supplemented with occasional day-old delights from the bakery. Servers should be trained to be very friendly and generally encouraging. People may linger, so provide refreshments before, during, and after worship. Go further and create teams who can cook hot and healthy meals to supplement their usual diets.

*Lifestyle Connectivity*

Radicalize your hospitality. Serve refreshments all morning. Serve food with real plates, cups, and tableware rather than paper, Styrofoam, and plastic. Go further and create teams who can cook hot and healthy meals to supplement their usual diets. Provide leftovers to take home to supplement their weekly diet.

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

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

*Simple Beginnings* worship as a family, although young children will probably leave worship for a Sunday school or children's activity. Worship is intended to communicate strength and hope. People want to leave with light hearts and optimistic attitudes. Since many in this segment are Roman Catholic, a traditional Mass will be celebrated. However, the Mass tends to be quite intimate and personal. Different Masses (or worship services) over the weekend may be less formal and might aim at different generations. They pass the peace with great familiarity. The prayers tend to emphasize personal intercessions for family and extended family, here and back home. Music is often traditional following customs of the country of origin. Occasionally it may be more upbeat with more contemporary Spanish rhythms. Special music may be provided by an ensemble with ethnic instruments and style. Ushers, liturgists, and musicians need not be experts, but they should be sincere and clearly give their best effort.

#### *Lifestyle Connectivity*

They celebrate major Christian and civic holy days and holidays (Thanksgiving, Christmas, Mother's Day, Easter, Independence Day, etc.). Churches should emphasize these occasions with more music, food, and fellowship. They may watch televised services from large, multi-cultural churches on special occasions.

### Education Preferences

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

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

*Simple Beginnings* single parents need a break from work and childcare to worship as an adult, with other adults. Sunday school provides basic bible understanding and moral teaching that may be difficult to do at home. Single parents like to see children come home with crafts or drawings related to Bible stories, and they want children to behave with civility and respect. The teacher can be just as important as the curriculum. Parents like to meet with the teacher and expect him/her to be a moral example. Discipline in the classroom is good if it is even-handed and gently given. Older youth may drop out of Sunday school because they may not see their parents participating. Therefore, youth groups and youth ministries are important. Youth groups often meet in Sunday evening for fellowship, recreation, Bible study and prayer. Since older youth may also be working, churches may develop a youth drop-in center. If the church can afford a second minister, it will probably be a Youth Pastor.

#### *Lifestyle Connectivity*

Adult education may be specifically targeted for youth of an age to join the church, and for adults chosen for lay leadership. Confirmation or First Communion classes for youth may be better facilitated using devotional images and objects and discussion rather than curricula and reading.

### Small Group Preferences

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

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

*Simple Beginnings* are more likely to participate in small groups if they include childcare. Consider designated one night a week as a family learning time, and provide dinner followed by diverse groups for all ages. Adults may find time for midweek small groups if the affinity is urgent, the location is flexible, and the timelines are limited. Topics might include any number of family, career, health, legal, or housing issues. They may meet at the church or some other public location but are less likely to meet in a home or private apartment. Life is a struggle and work schedules can be daunting. Small group affinities often relate to lifestyle priorities like diet and cooking, parenting, health, crime prevention and safety, and recreational priorities like basketball or baseball. Small groups always include prayer, scripture, and sharing life struggles and spiritual victories.

#### *Lifestyle Connectivity*

Small groups are almost always facilitated in Spanish. Since the topics are often very practical, leaders are often imported from other educational and social service agencies in the community.

## Outreach Preferences

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

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

*Simple Beginnings* look on the church as a gathering place for all ages. Churches may provide coffee houses, internet cafes, and other kinds of drop-in facilities for adults and older youth, and recreational activities for children. The church tends to function as a community center with programs seven days a week. These might especially include Christian day care, after school care, tutoring, and parenting support, and legal aid, financial aid, and housing information. Many churches provide distribution centers for food, winter clothing, used work boots, kitchen appliances, etc. People in the community are often very concerned about health issues. Churches often provide clinics, vaccination centers, and Parish Nurse Programs, and often partner with addiction recovery groups that use the building. These people are ambitious and want to get ahead, but struggle with low educations and poor training. Therefore, they appreciate educational opportunities that build life skills or expand work capabilities.

### *Lifestyle Connectivity*

Programs for English as a Second Language (ESL) are common. Churches may provide tutoring to complete high school diplomas. Churches build partnerships with non-profits and community colleges and locate training opportunities in the church building. On-site education may be combined with online opportunities.

## Facility Preferences

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

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

*Simple Beginnings* may not have strong preferences about the architecture or interior design of a building. Their background may predispose them to prefer churches that look like churches, but their experience of hard knocks may also cause them to be wary of structures that look too forbidding or judgemental. Programs are more important than structures. Whatever the building looks like, it should allow lots of different kinds of activities in the space available. They do want to see classically Christian symbols outside and inside, including crosses, pictures of Biblical events, open Bibles, praying hands, and so on. Church buildings may seem in chronic need of fresh paint and repair, but they keep up with major maintenance and safety codes. They do pay special attention to safety and security, particularly around classrooms and nurseries.

### *Lifestyle Connectivity*

These churches are rarely high tech. At best they rely on older audio systems. Furnishings tend to be well used. They might provide a computer center with high-speed internet access. Computer and online capabilities may be used for tutoring, adult education, job hunting, and health research.

## Financial Preferences

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

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

*Simple Beginnings* are financially challenged. They have low incomes and few investments, and little insurance. They may have car loans. Those with credit cards are tempted to live beyond their means and may carry credit card debts. It is often difficult to make ends meet. This may make it difficult to participate in a traditional church stewardship campaign. They trust the church with money for a unified budget but may not be interested in the financial details. If they pledge, they will likely make conservative pledges, and "walk a second mile" to give additional money to urgent missions as they feel motivated. People in this segment are more likely to express their generosity through in-kind gifts of food or personal service in the children or outreach programs, or in maintaining the property. Their churches are not likely to amass large reserve funds, but they may receive government or church grants for outreach ministries.

### *Lifestyle Connectivity*

*Simple Beginnings* often feel financially insecure, and do not have much experience in managing money or planning a financial future. They will respond to a church that offers solid financial advice to develop an overall personal financial plan based on Christian values and generosity, but which also helps them get out of debt, develop some investments, and establish good credit.

## Communication

Resource: *Mosaic E-Handbook* by Experian

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

Word of mouth is probably the most important method of communication for *Simple Beginnings*. They usually pay attention to verbal announcements in worship, large and small gatherings, and pass on information by phone and conversation to others. For example, posters in local shops, bars, restaurants, health centers, sports arenas, and bus stops may be helpful, although these people may be unresponsive to advertising in general. Some people may afford cell phones, but telephone trees and telephone reminders to a home phone are more often the method of extending oral communication. Printed information from the church can be helpful, but limit information to short bursts rather than long messages. Use images or graphics to speed interpretation.

### *Lifestyle Connectivity*

Information is shared through print and some social media, but coordination and encouragement of volunteers occurs through rapid instant messaging. Use texts to raise urgent needs or emergent opportunities for social action. Print and internet communication is fluently bilingual.