

Segment M45: *Growing and Expanding*

Young, working-class families and single parent households living in small established city residences

Resource: Mosaic 2021 by Experian.

Religious Experience in a Nutshell

Religious Perspective: *God, Family, and Country*
 Spiritual Issues: *Feelings of estrangement, anxieties about emptiness and displacement*

Common Church Presence

- Church shoppers
- Good churches adapt to their lifestyles

- Common sense and ordinary language
- Everyday faith

- Seek family-centered opportunities
- Online communities



Potential Influence

Lifestyle Compatibility	Family Group M <i>Families in Motion</i>	Frequent Neighbors
P56 Mid-Scale Medley O52 Urban Ambition O55 Family Troopers R67 Passionate Parents	M44 Creative Comfort M45 Growing and Expanding	I31 Hard Working Values J36 Settled and Sensible L42 Rooted Flower Power R66 Ambitious Dreamers

General Comments:

Growing and Expanding households identify themselves as “Christian” and faith is important. They are often shopping for the right church that can accept them as they are, provide family-centered opportunities with low expectations, and bring some sanity and direction to their hectic lives. They are not going to work hard to adapt to the church. They think a “good church” should go the second mile and adapt to them. They may be more involved in online communities than real-time organizations and may be apathetic to wider social issues. They’re focused on themselves and their families, and the church might be their only touchstone with the community in which they live.

Many are couples and single parents who are starting out (or starting over). They are trying to raise children on lower middle-class incomes. With modest educations and a few college courses, they face tough challenges. They are changing their circumstances, sometimes single-handedly, for a better life. They look for a church that offers practical support to live effectively and faithfully day to day. Church life can’t be too complicated but must focus on essential faith in common language. These people are in transition. A “good church” is going to bend over backwards to bless them. These people may relocate before they really mature as Christians, but a “good church” won’t care that they can’t quite pay their way into membership. They’ll hand them over to the Holy Spirit, trusting that they will get to know Jesus even better in their next (and perhaps more permanent) home.

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
x	Enabler		Guru		Mentor
	CEO				Pilgrim

Growing and Expanding households connect with clergy who have a “live and let live” attitude of acceptance and have let go of all the “sacred cows” of church institutions. Clergy are strong, dependable, mature, role models. They must be self-starters with clear priorities, and laser focused on servant evangelism. They are good managers of time and resources. Pastors and priests are old enough to be a “big brother” or “big sister”, but young enough to catch up with the kids. They are usually seminary trained and ordained, but connection with a denomination is often less important. Clergy are personal, practical preachers, capable of seeing and revealing God in a family-friendly and often entertaining and informal worship service. They work with individuals and small groups to help people shape a “do-able”, portable spiritual life for themselves and their families. Remember that the unrehearsed word and spontaneous deed can build or sabotage your credibility in an instant.

Lifestyle Connectivity

Clergy often connect with this group through music and may have some musical skill. Virtual presence is as important as real presence. Clergy should be readily available on the phone or drop-in visit, and active in social media and chat rooms.

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

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

Growing and Expanding households are likely to take public transportation, or cram their families into a well-used car or truck, to get to church. They may arrive late or at the last minute, so keep the greeters at the door well after worship begins. Train greeters to be a calming presence, utterly accepting, and ready to lend a helping hand with strollers, infants, and kids who act out. Be sure to have greeters at the door when they leave who are trained to smile, say goodbye, help get the stroller downstairs, and invite personal prayer requests during the week. They don’t expect a pristine church building or state of the art refreshment centers. Just make it clean and safe for roaming children and provide plenty of space for conversations. They survive on fast and frozen food but appreciate better quality when it is available. Make coffee and tea a cut above what they normally get on the job. Abundance is probably more important than variety. Healthy eating is unimportant, although you may try to cut back on sugar (especially for the children). The Welcome Center can be simple, but needs to be very visible, child-friendly, and constantly staffed. Nothing touches them more than the simple question: *How can we pray for you this week?*

Lifestyle Connectivity

Be sure to package leftovers in take-home bags. The 30 minutes of refreshment time conversation is perhaps the most crucial opportunity of the week to establish or deepen Christian relationships with these folks. Follow up visitors with a text message of welcome and encourage them through social media.

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

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

Growing and Expanding households prefer worship that is relatively informal and very upbeat. Even with a concurrent nursery and preschool program, infants and children may still be in worship. Be prepared for participants coming and going during the service. Praise music with a strong rhythm begins worship, and music tends to set the mood, frame the message, and connect everything together. The music director or band leader is more important than the average organist or choir director might be in a traditional church. Christian music may have a distinctly country or rock sound and is usually led by electronic keyboard or band. There is often soft music in the background for prayers, Holy Communion, or Baptism. Lyrics are uncomplicated and clear, and the words to prayers, music, and the points of the sermon are visually displayed (projected or computer generated).

The focus of worship is on coaching daily Christian living or personal transformation. Worship often follows a theme for the day (or a theme extending several weeks) on a practical subject of Christian living. The pastor often speaks for 30 minutes or so, without a written text, and with frequent references to scripture. The message may be supplemented by video clips or drama. Worship may also focus on changing lives (conversion, spiritual blessings, addiction intervention, etc.). This message is more motivational, and often includes a witness from the band or congregation, healing prayer or altar call. Eucharist can be important for people with Catholic, Episcopal, and Lutheran backgrounds. Liturgy is usually simpler and in ordinary language, includes children, and focuses on specific experiences of grace that sustain people through hard living or rescues them from bad habits.

Lifestyle Connectivity

Religious and secular holidays are opportunities for special family-oriented worship celebrations (especially Christmas, Mothers Day, Easter, and Halloween). Advertise in all media. Redundancy is a virtue. Emphasize music and singing popular Christian carols and songs.

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		Peer Group

Growing and Expanding households may *want* Christian spirituality to be a natural part of home life, but the reality in their hectic lives is quite different. Children's Sunday school may be the one intentional Christian education time each week, and parents would like to make the most of it. They may prefer experiential over curriculum-based education. Children may have short attention spans and need to be actively engaged in crafts, Christian videos and video games, puppetry, stories, or special music that is supplemented by a simple study guide. Think of Vacation Bible School as normative for the whole year. Children may still be organized by age groups, and the themes will emphasize Bible stories and memorable verses.

Some adults will participate in a Sunday school class. These are often short-term commitments in bursts of 3-6 weeks with a designated leader (usually a more mature veteran of the church). The topic is often related to the current theme for coaching in worship, with parallel Bible study, and relies more on video than print technology. Other adults enjoy the freedom from childcare and may prefer to just linger over refreshments. Deploy lay leaders to intentionally mingle with these adults and engage them in "significant conversation" about stress management, personal goals, faith, and marriage and parenting.

Lifestyle Connectivity

Provide resources on the website for home-based Christian education and family devotions. Include practical tips and tactics to coach parents teaching and modeling Christian values and essential beliefs.

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

Growing and Expanding households are often interested in midweek small groups. They help create and deepen friendships for mutual support and are often an important part of the discipling process. The pastor or paid staff person trains and coaches small group leaders to build relationships and deepen faith. A book or workbook is usually the focus of conversation, and often parallels the theme of coaching in worship. The curriculum strongly references scripture but is very practical in its lifestyle application. Most people in this segment prefer “following” than “leading”. A small group leader is often recruited by the clergy using spiritual gifts inventories, and regularly coached to lead the group. Clergy should lead a small group of small group leaders for training, spiritual growth, and accountability. Groups may be quite structured for prayer, fellowship, and learning. They may have very clear times for closure, and intentional mentoring moments to move people to the next group that will enhance their individual spiritual growth. Small groups won’t work without a strategy for concurrent childcare. This is usually done at the church building in a quality nursery with trained church volunteers. This means churches may designate a particular night as “small group night” and provide space in the church for groups to meet.

Lifestyle Connectivity

Small groups can become the primary unit for caregiving and mutual support in the church (in addition to the pastor), and participants may well connect in-person or via social media through the week.

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		
Interpersonal Relationships	x	x
Human Potential	x	x
Salvation and Human Destiny	x	

Growing and Expanding households are often experiencing transition in their personal lives and work patterns. They appreciate help to explore spiritual gifts and hidden talents, develop life skills, open new career possibilities, and expand their personal and family opportunities. They want to achieve stability in their own lives, and open new possibilities for advancement for their children. They are interested in anything that will improve family unity and interpersonal relationships or develop safe environments in home and neighborhood. Amateur sports are often a welcome outreach (including basketball, baseball, soccer, and other programs that do not require expensive equipment). Picnics, trips to the zoo, and other inexpensive family fun options are popular. They avoid controversial issues but may be interested in counseling or advocacy related to single parenting, divorce recovery, spousal abuse, or domestic violence). They are likely to connect with practical programs for home improvement, child health, healthy diets and easy cooking, crime prevention, or free entertainment.

Lifestyle Connectivity

The church often runs its own daycare center, after-school program, or tutoring program. This can include a computer center in the church monitored by volunteers who can also guide children and parents to access resources. All these programs create smaller communities of faith and personal support linked through social media.

Facility Preferences

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

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

Growing and Expanding households are not choosy about church buildings. The building or architecture is not what attracts their attention, nor do they have much vested interest in maintaining heritage properties. They want facilities to be clean, safe, and useful. Any ordinary space can be transformed into sacred space through video

technology, interior decoration, and a little imagination. The church building in older neighborhoods is often as much of a fixer upper as their homes, and volunteers are happy to maintain it as part of their stewardship. Outdoor areas for team sports are welcome. Outdoor playgrounds for little children, fenced and updated with durable toys and activities ... are a strong attraction. These send signals of acceptance to the neighborhood.

They prefer to clear away the hardwood from the sanctuary and create flexible space for worship. This is safer for children, more family friendly, and opens possibilities for musical groups and video technology. They look for an excellent nursery that is near the worship center and food court. Nurseries should be well away from exit doors, safe and secure. The children's space is roomy, airy, and illuminated. It separates the infants from the toddlers and provides ready access to water and washrooms. It contains clean, unbroken, and relatively new toys. The symbols outside and inside are clearly and unambiguously Christian. Interior halls are often covered by large murals painted by volunteers (Noah's Ark, Jesus blessing the children, and other Biblical scenes). The building is wireless and allows easy cell phone access. In addition to video technology in the worship center and education rooms, the office has up-to-date hardware and software.

Lifestyle Connectivity

Security is a high priority to protect children and single mothers, and to protect computers, musical instruments, and other technology. Parking lots, entrances, and hallways must be well illuminated, and restrooms frequently monitored.

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

Growing and Expanding households have little disposable income, and their "tithe" may be a balance of in-kind donations for worship and small group refreshments plus volunteer service. The goal of a stewardship campaign is to help young families develop a lifestyle of Christian generosity. They often welcome coaching to develop a Christian family financial management strategy that might include debt freedom, college savings for the kids, church support, and one or two selected mission projects. Their trust for the institutional church does not extend much further than the local church. They give to a no-frills unified operations budget. They are reluctant to do a capital campaign, but they may apply for denominational or municipal grants to support relevant programs. Churches often must function on a financial shoestring, and there are frequent fundraising events for special needs.

Lifestyle Connectivity

They need visible benchmarks for giving. Leaders lead! The individual or average giving of staff and board set a standard for members and adherents to follow. Offer tips and tactics for financial management through printed handouts and on the church website.

Communication

Resource: *Mosaic E-Handbook* by Experian

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

Growing and Expanding households are comfortable with video screens. They respond positively to radio advertising and talk programs, listen to announcements that are verbal or streamed electronically during coffee hour. They are open to personal visits (phone ahead). The best way to communicate information is during large and small group gatherings. Illuminate and update outdoor signs to share information about coming events.

Lifestyle Connectivity

They are increasingly online using older home computers and smartphones. They will explore the church website, download devotional resources, and upload images and amateur video. They increasingly use social media. A chain of text messages is more effective than a telephone tree.