

Segment F22: *Fast Track Couples*

Active, young, upper established suburban couples and families living upwardly mobile lifestyles

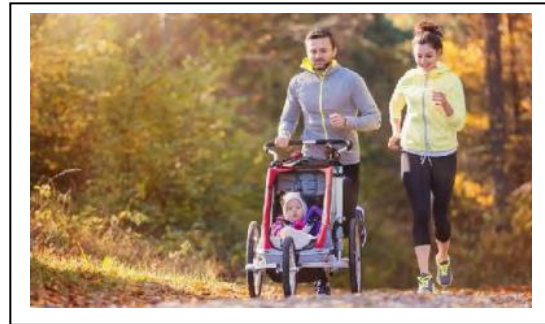
Resource: Mosaic 2021 by Experian.

Religious Experience in a Nutshell

Religious Perspective: *Looking for God through (or with?) the eyes of a child*
 Spiritual Issues: *Feeling purposeless or overwhelmed, anxieties over emptiness and fate*

Common Church Presence

- May connect with new church development
- Relationships more important than programs
- Authenticity more important than preaching
- Demand practical applications of faith
- Social media builds intimacy
- Often seek mentoring



Potential Influence

Lifestyle Compatibility	Family Group F <i>Promising Families</i>	Frequent Neighbors
C14 Boomers and Boomerangs G24 Ambitious Singles G25 Urban Edge M45 Growing and Expanding	F22 Fast Track Couples F23 Families Matter Most	B07 Across the Ages B08 Babies and Bliss B10 Cosmopolitan Achievers C11 Sophisticated City Dwellers

General Comments:

Fast Track Couples are mobile physically and virtually, and often on the leading edge of expanding urbanization. It is difficult for the church to either attract or bless them as they pass by. Households combine dual incomes to survive, and they may have to go into debt for continuing education to thrive. They struggle to balance free time and work time and may feel overwhelmed. They often live in an ethical blur. There are few absolutes in their lives, and they are inconsistent in their spiritual habits. Their behavior is pragmatic and self-absorbed. They are not very involved in local communities, but may be hungry for authentic, deep, and lasting relationships. A sense of emptiness or meaninglessness can suddenly overtake them. Unexpected tragedy can disrupt their lives, and they often look for help in times of crisis. They are open to lifestyle influencers (especially bloggers).

Church involvement may be sporadic and driven by crisis. They tend to gravitate toward new church developments, or a multi-site of a mega-church. They may not readily understand worship traditions or organizational structure. Some may be driven by relationships or daycare needs toward new church developments. Everything about a church needs to be convenient: central location, easy parking, and accessible entrances, and secure nurseries. All resources should be instantly accessible through the internet, including a podcast of the worship service that these people may well have missed because of busy weekend lives. Nothing should require too many turns, steps, pages, or clicks ... nor should it require too much work, thought, or perspiration.

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
	Enabler	x	Guru	x	Mentor
	CEO				Pilgrim

Fast Track Couples connect with spiritual leaders who are mature Christians, but capable of mentoring them “on the go”. These leaders are not necessarily seminary trained or ordained. They help them build a solid foundation in basic beliefs, understand key Biblical stories, and learn the essentials of Eucharist and baptism. They model accountability to core Christian values and embed simple and effective spiritual habits. More importantly, they guide singles and starters to discover their potential and discern their personal mission in life. They coach how to live faithfully amid transient residences, careers, and relationships. These spiritual leaders value the insights from other faiths and diverse cultures. They participate in ecumenical and cross-sector networks of like-minded leaders, so that they can hand off mobile relationships to another mentor. They are usually charismatic and encourage personal loyalty. This can make church leadership transitions difficult.

Lifestyle Connectivity

Spiritual leaders must be good communicators personally and digitally. They regularly blog, contribute to an interactive website, text constantly, and participate in social media. They need to be comfortable in front of a camera leading virtual worship or webinars.

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

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

Fast Track Couples live in a world of speed, flux, and blur. Couples without children are out late during the week and attending entertainment venues for sports or music over the weekend. Those with children are likely to use economical daycare during the week and take family outings over the weekend. People show up at the last minute. Parking and access must be super easy. Greeters need to be effusively friendly, and able to communicate three things in just a few seconds: sincere welcome, the message of the day, and the importance of a spiritual life. Provide a Welcome Center and password for internet access. The worship center provides tables and chairs, and people will come and go during worship for more coffee and dessert. No paper. No seating instructions. Fast convenience foods are normative. Provide lots of food, even if it means storing or giving away leftovers. Put leftovers in take-away bags that they can carry off to sports events and family outings. Food can be basic, but splurge on excellent coffee served in a variety of ways. Provide multiple serving stations to cut down any waiting in lines.

Lifestyle Connectivity

Leaders should send greetings by text within 24 hours of their visit to church. Extend conversations into social media. Takeaway food packages can include free vouchers for coffee, breakfast, or dinner at local food outlets, or free ground coffee to take home. Include a letter of greeting, and links to spiritual or mission resources.

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		Transformational Worship	x	Coaching Worship
	Healing Worship				

Fast Track Couples may not connect with a church through regular Sunday worship. They are more likely to connect through a small group or through a day care center sponsored by the church. Provide an *excellent* nursery and pre-school during and after worship. Make the worship service an adult experience but be patient with crying infants in the sanctuary. Coaching worship based on practical themes of Christian living is the best method to sustain worship involvement. They may attend two or three worship services in a row to follow a relevant theme. Worship is informal and interactive. Be sure to include ample time for Q & A. Keep their attention by including video clips or live drama. Assume they are multi-tasking during worship. They mean no disrespect when they are tracking internet links, posting comments on social media, and watching the news while the worship service is going on.

Music will be truly contemporary with the sounds currently playing on the radio or internet. Do not expect them to sing. Most prefer to observe and appreciate either live music or music video. Keep the order of worship very simple. No need for bulletins that contain responsive readings. Limit scripture to the essential texts of the Old or New Testaments (and include wisdom from other faiths and sacred texts.) Make the celebration of Eucharist very personal and help them connect with the real presence of Christ as a spiritual guide and constant companion.

Lifestyle Connectivity

These people may linger in the refreshment center to watch TV, surf on wireless internet, or converse. They may sustain their church connection through a relationship with the spiritual leader, social media, and podcasts of the worship service. Gather text messages *during* worship to feed into Q & A ... and *following* worship for the clergy (or speaker) to respond. Livestream and record worship and provide links on website and through texts.

Education Preferences

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

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

Fast Track Couples may have young children, and often assume their children learn best through activities, sounds, and images. If they attend a large mega-church, they will expect a Bible-based program enhanced by lots of technology, crafts, and activities. If they attend a beta site or new church development, they may expect a more topical program that is inter-generational. Constantly reinforce the core values and beliefs critical to the consensus of the faith community. It may be difficult to draw adults into Sunday school. They prefer Sunday school to be concurrent with worship, so that they spend less time at the church and more time on family outings. *Fast Track Couples* may resist new religious ideas, despite their progressive attitudes toward technology and change. They may make snap judgments about clergy, church people, programs, and policies, or uncritically accept demographic generalizations. Churches often need to explain the basics of accountability, and provide strong role models for compassion, generosity, and respect.

Lifestyle Connectivity

Fast Track Couples may participate in webinars connected to the theme of worship or related to a particular lifestyle challenge they face. They may watch video of some expert (celebrity, athlete, etc.) on the theme for the day; or they will appreciate the Christian witness of a famous athlete or celebrity.

Small Group Preferences

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

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

The mobility of *Fast Track Couples* often encourages shorter, shallower relationships. Their yearning for deeper relationships is a primary motivation to become involved in a midweek small group. Groups are usually short term but may be very intense. Groups are very creative about where and when they meet. They always have a digital component, and participants will continue their conversations through email, text message, and social media. Topics will vary but tend to reflect the self-absorption of people in this segment. Affinities often focus on parenting, marriage enrichment, relationships, and sexuality; or on technologies, music, and video; or especially on amateur or

professional sports, personal fitness, and career development. Designated leaders are preferred. If they make time for a small group, they want to spend that time with an expert or mentor. This is someone who not only speaks knowledgeably about the topic, but who demonstrates accountability and intentionally models Christian values. Christian faith often comes through a mentoring moment when “the penny drops” and individuals or couples in this segment suddenly “get it”. People in this segment can become strong Christian leaders and confident witnesses.

Lifestyle Connectivity

Physical and digital presence in small groups merge easily. Small group discussions often continue in short bursts through texting rather than common social media platforms, and themes may return in future messaging. Once trust has been established, there can be remarkable honesty between group members through the internet.

Outreach Preferences

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

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

Fast Track Couples may assume that the issues that are a high priority for them should be the same for everybody. They can take an interest in any outreach event or program that helps them explore spiritual gifts, personality types, vocational goals, and career plans. They are also interested in the dynamics of interpersonal relationships. Singles often have trouble starting healthy relationships, and couples are often concerned about maintaining healthy intimacy. Their frenetic dual career lifestyles raise many issues about parenting young children. Many parents are already investing in college funds and micro-managing the futures of their toddlers.

The same lifestyle segment that loves thrill rides at the theme park may experiment with drugs, and their combined incomes may help sustain bad habits. They may prioritize recovery groups for others as a backwards way they can participate in such groups themselves. They may be surprisingly open to the miraculous ... in the sense that authentic spirituality does not need to be rationally explained. Individuals may experience the transforming power of God through addiction recovery, renewed relationships, or unexpected and undeserved grace.

Lifestyle Connectivity

Fast Track Couples may watch video related to global crises (global warming, racism, political polarization etc.), or listen to radio talk shows by experts (social service, economics, etc.). They will use instant messaging to express opinions and coordinate social advocacy activities.

Facility Preferences

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

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

Fast Track Couples find ecclesiastical structures rather forbidding and Christendom symbols are often incomprehensible. They may have visited traditional church facilities at a wedding or in their childhood, although that is increasingly rare. Environments that lack postmodern technologies seem anachronistic. They prefer a church with a multi-purpose design, wireless internet, ample video screens, and cell phone freedom. Hospitality and nursery space is especially important. Environments should include comfortable conversation areas and refreshment centers; and the nursery space should equal the best day care organizations in the region. Landscaping is relatively unimportant, but parking and accessibility is crucial. The architecture often resembles any other public or

educational building, but symbols embedded in murals, floor mosaics, pictures, and sculptures represent scenes of nature, starbursts, colored lights, and other broadly spiritual motifs. These people are very status conscious. They may dress conservatively and avoid ceremony, but they like to be in a quality environment with excellent furnishings and updated technologies.

Lifestyle Connectivity

Virtual reality can be more important than physical surroundings. The facility may be utilitarian, but the virtual experience of worship and fellowship is often filled with image and music. Virtual participation may merge with physical presence on site, and you will see frequent use of smartphones.

Financial Preferences

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

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

Fast Track Couples combine dual incomes and excessive debt to afford whatever is new and popular. They are informed consumers, and do not consider it indulgent to set aside money for fitness and recreation. They do understand, however, that spirituality is an important part of overall health, and may welcome coaching to develop values-centered family budgets that balance essential and personal expenses with generosity toward the church. They prefer to meet a Christian financial adviser in a coffee shop with two or three other couples and develop a faithful family financial plan. They do not readily participate in traditional stewardship campaigns that include personal home visits and pledge cards. They are wary of financial waste through institutional overhead, and often do not appreciate the necessity of property costs.

They prefer to designate giving to specific programs and may contribute to the operations of a church as what their grandparents might have called "second mile giving". Favorite priorities in giving often involve children's ministries, technology upgrades, and leadership support packages. However, it takes more persuasion for them to give to denominational mission funds, and other program and support staff. If the church is in a financial crisis, they are more likely to prioritize money to sustain personnel and sacrifice property. However, they often expect the spiritual leader to have an alternative source of income from grants or work in another sector.

Lifestyle Connectivity

Fast Track Couples may not carry much cash. They are more likely to e-transfer money to designated ministries or outreach projects. They will participate in financial management webinars, or search for resources online to help them manage debt and budget.

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	Print and Paper	Announcements or Visits
x	Mobile SMS	Email		Social Media	x	Text Message	Email	Social Media

Fast Track Couples avoid print. Paper is a waste of resources, verbal announcements are interruptions, and home visits may be an invasion of privacy. They don't get much mail, and flyers stuck in the door are annoying. Information tends to be passed on through network relationships.

Lifestyle Connectivity

The internet in all facets is the clear communication preference, but they tend to emphasize video, image, and short bursts of conversation. Use instant messaging rather than email. Livestream or record worship and webinars. Rely on virtual conferencing for meetings. They may be slow responding to voicemail but react immediately to text messages.