

21st Century Evangelicals

A snapshot of the beliefs and habits of evangelical Christians in the UK



The first report on groundbreaking research by the Evangelical Alliance and Christian Research

Foreword



When I first saw these results, I immediately realised how significant they were.

As a church leader, I know there is a danger that I have spent lots of time telling people what they should believe in, and perhaps not enough time asking the question, "What does my church actually believe and how does that work itself out in their everyday lives?" This research – the most extensive of its kind – asks these two vital questions. It covers a multitude of issues relevant to evangelicals and it is essential that we take a close look at the results. It tells us so much about the people we are, the people we serve and the people we represent.

**'THIS RESEARCH...
will enable us to think about
where we need to go and what
we need to do.'**

We didn't conduct this research just so that we could have vast quantities of interesting information about evangelical Christians. Its purpose is not to simply tell us where we are currently at: it will enable us to think about where we need to go and what we need to do.

This research also provides us with vital evidence as we engage with government and the media. It helps us to speak with great confidence about our evangelical community, the things which are important to us and the significant

contribution we are making to the community around us.

This is the first in a series of groundbreaking reports which will paint a comprehensive and detailed picture of evangelicals in the UK at the beginning of 21st century. This picture will be an invaluable asset to church leaders and Christian organisations as it provides encouragement, presents challenges, guides reflection and stimulates discussion. And it is critical as we look to the future. By presenting an accurate picture of evangelicals today, we can be much better equipped to make effective plans for tomorrow.

Steve Clifford
General Director, Evangelical Alliance

Introduction

The pages that follow present a snapshot of the beliefs and habits of evangelical Christians. This report provides glimpses of a wide range of subjects and identifies some key trends. It reveals that while there are many beliefs and practices that connect evangelicals, there is considerable diversity. The results also indicate that evangelical Christians are distinct from Christians who do not consider themselves to be evangelical. There is much in this report that will encourage, but there are also challenges.

This initial report highlights areas where further, more detailed research is required. Please do not expect this summary to answer all your questions; in fact, it will hopefully raise more questions than answers! That was one of the purposes of this first piece of research – to find out what we need to find out.

Over 17,000 people completed questionnaires in order for us to take this snapshot, making it the most extensive piece of research of its kind. The results are credible markers that will not only provide a benchmark for more in-depth studies, but will enable future research to track changes over the decades to come.

Throughout 2010, questionnaires were completed at Christian festivals in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. The festivals chosen were ones that are popular among evangelical Christians. Due to the varying

sizes of, and response rates at, the different festivals, it was necessary to weight the results. This has been done proportionately, according to the approximate number of adults attending each festival. However, to alleviate any concern that this approach might cause, we also reviewed the data using various weighting options. Regardless of the approach used, the vast majority of the results were remarkably similar.

The questionnaire was also conducted at 35 randomly selected Evangelical Alliance member churches. The festival sample, when compared to the church sample, is extremely similar. Therefore, although there is the occasional notable difference, we are confident that evangelical festival goers are broadly representative of UK evangelicals.

OVER
17,000
people completed
questionnaires in order for us
to take this snapshot.

The results presented in this report (unless otherwise stated) are taken from the festival sample. If you would like to read more about the methodology, weighting and view the data tables that support the results presented in this report (including the church data) please go to www.eauk.org/snapshot.

Phil Green
Research Manager, Evangelical Alliance

Benita Hewitt
Director, Christian Research



Typically evangelical

There are many beliefs and practices that connect evangelicals in the UK.



There is widespread consensus on issues from Jesus to the miraculous gifts of the Spirit to the environment. There are also many practices that are common to the majority of evangelicals: these include reading the Bible, giving money and volunteering.

JESUS

91%

strongly agree that Jesus is the only way to God.

CHURCH

96%

attend a church service at least once a week.

77% attend a small group meeting at least once a fortnight.

BIBLE

82%

read (or listen to) the Bible at least a few times a week.

93% strongly agree that the Bible is the inspired word of God.

PRAYER

96%

pray at least a few times a week, 77% do so daily.

GIVING

96%

have given money to their church in the past year.

FAITH

88%

strongly agree that their faith is the most important thing in their life and 83% strongly agree that faith is a key factor in their decision making.

ENVIRONMENT

94%

agree that it's a Christian's duty to care for the environment.

ENGAGEMENT

86%

voted in the General Election in 2010 and 76% watch, listen to, or read the news every day.

MIRACLES

83%

strongly agree that the miraculous gifts of the Spirit did not come to an end in the first century.

VOLUNTEERING

81%

do some kind of voluntary work at least once a month.

UNITY

94%

agree that Christians should be united in truth. 92% agree that Christians should be united in mission.

VOICE

93%

agree that Christians should have a voice in the media. 94% agree that Christians should engage with government.

Distinctly evangelical

There are significant differences between Christians who consider themselves to be evangelicals, and those who do not.



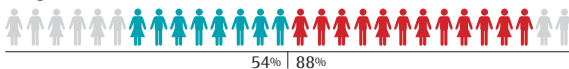
This research was conducted at festivals popular amongst evangelical Christians, and at Evangelical Alliance member churches. However, over 1000 of those who participated in this research said they did not consider themselves to be evangelical Christians (and a further 1500 were unsure). Therefore, although these results *cannot* be taken to be representative of all 'non-evangelical Christians', the results do highlight key differences between Christians at festivals who consider themselves to be evangelical, and those who do not.



FAITH

Faith takes a more prominent place in the lives of evangelical Christians.

Respondents who strongly agreed that their faith is the most important thing in their life.



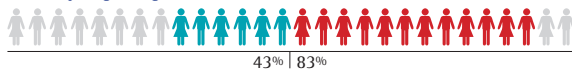
Respondents who strongly agreed that their faith is a key factor in all their decision making.



BIBLE

The Bible has a more significant role in the lives of evangelicals.

Respondents who strongly agreed that the Bible has the supreme authority in guiding their beliefs, views and behaviour.



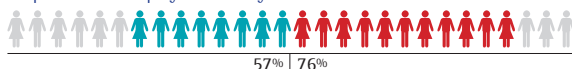
Respondents who read (or listen to) the Bible daily.



RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD

Evangelicals pray more frequently and are more likely to believe that Jesus is the only way to God.

Respondents who pray alone daily.



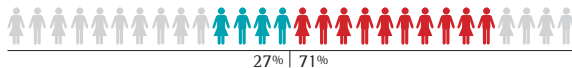
Respondents who strongly agree that Jesus is the only way to God.



EVANGELISM

Evangelicals place more emphasis on evangelism.

Respondents who strongly agreed that it's a Christian's duty to be actively involved in evangelism.



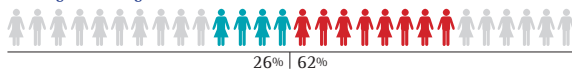
Respondents who talk about their faith, at least once a month, with someone who wouldn't call themselves a Christian.



RIGHT & WRONG

Evangelicals tend to have stronger views on what's right and wrong.

Respondents who strongly agreed that sexual intercourse outside of marriage is wrong.



Respondents who strongly agree that assisted suicide is always wrong.



Derek Tidball

Board Member, Evangelical Alliance & Former Principal of London School of Theology



Evangelicals are like any other Christians, but different.

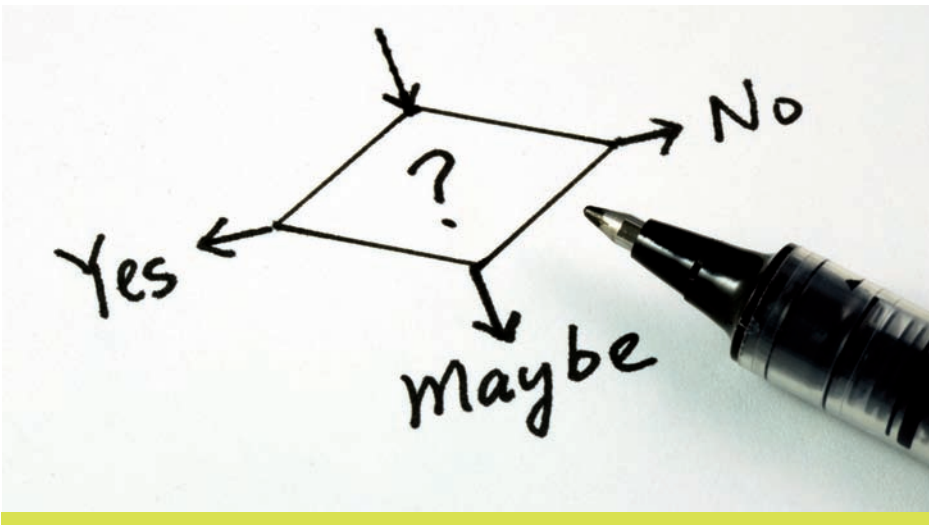
They are Christians with attitude! They hold convictions about the Bible, the work of Christ and actively working out their faith which, combined together, make them a distinctive stream in the church. Whatever their denomination, their strength and vitality as a movement flows from these convictions. This research shows they are holding to them. But are they holding to them as firmly as they should? And do they really practise what they believe? If, for example, the Bible really is their 'supreme authority', why do only half of us read it daily?

The wider church, as well as the wider world, needs evangelicals to be true to their distinctive calling, but to be true without arrogance. Truth must be expressed with the grace and humility of Christ.

However... this research not only reveals differences between Christians who consider themselves to be evangelicals and those who do not. It also reveals that a notable number of Christians who do not consider themselves to be evangelicals are potentially very similar to evangelical Christians in terms of their beliefs and practices. **Therefore, are many Christians evangelical in all but name?**

Divergence and uncertainty

The beliefs of evangelicals are not uniform, and uncertainty is common.



The questions asked in this research were stark. Therefore, care has to be taken when drawing conclusions. However, it is possible to make two assertions.

Firstly, although evangelical Christians are similar to each other in many ways, there is also considerable diversity on a range of issues. Evangelicals are certainly not the homogeneous group that the media frequently portray them to be.

Secondly, it is not uncommon for evangelicals to be unsure of their beliefs.

Further research is required to explore the exact nature of this divergence and uncertainty.



The Bible There is widespread consensus and certainty amongst evangelicals that the Bible is the inspired Word of God and that it has supreme authority in their lives. However, there is less certainty, and a broader range of opinions as to whether or not the Bible, in its original manuscript, is without error.

The Bible, in its original manuscript, is without error



Abortion The results to this question provide a complete spectrum of opinions. It is younger evangelicals who are more likely to think that abortion can never be justified, while older people are more likely to think that abortion, in some instances, is justifiable. However, until more research is conducted to explore the circumstances where evangelicals find abortion justifiable, it's unwise to interpret the findings in any great detail.

Abortion can never be justified



Assisted Suicide Although the majority of evangelicals agree, to some extent, that assisted suicide is wrong, less than half strongly hold this opinion.

Assisted suicide is always wrong



Hell 37% of evangelicals strongly agree that hell is a place where the condemned will suffer eternal conscious pain. It's the issue where there is the greatest uncertainty.

Hell is a place where the condemned will suffer eternal conscious pain



Evolution 6 out of 10 evangelicals believe that, to some extent, evolution and Christianity are compatible.

Evolution and Christianity are incompatible: you cannot believe both



Women in Leadership Just over half of evangelicals strongly agree that women should be eligible for all roles within the church in the same way men are. A further 20% agree a little with this statement.

Women should be eligible for all roles within the church in the same way men are



Homosexuality It is common for evangelical Christians to distinguish between homosexual 'feelings' and 'actions'. The results reveal that while the majority of evangelicals do not consider homosexual feelings to be 'wrong', the majority do believe that homosexual actions are 'wrong'. 8 out of 10 evangelicals do not think homosexual couples should be able to have civil partnerships blessed in churches.

It is wrong to have homosexual feelings



Homosexual actions are always wrong



Elaine Storkey

Author and broadcaster,
theologian and sociologist



This research has highlighted just a few of a wide

range of issues where evangelicals hold a variety of opinions. Diversity is inevitable, but is it good, or is it a problem?

Being united doesn't mean we agree on everything, nor should it. It's essential that our unity includes space where we can discuss areas of disagreement. In some cases this will lead to us finding significant agreement; on other occasions it might mean learning to live with tension. Either way these discussions should be characterised by truth and grace, and promote unity.

As we move through the second decade of the 21st Century, we are reminded that the speed of change is greater than ever before, and this alone adds more tension and new issues which people need to reflect on and address. In helping people work through these, we should be aiming to enable them not only to reach a godly conclusion, but also wrestle in a godly manner.

Community engagement

Evangelicals provide a significant contribution to their local communities through working as volunteers.



Motivated by duty?

9 out of 10 evangelicals believe, to some extent, that it's a Christian's duty to be involved in activities that benefit the local community. Those who don't think it's a Christian's duty are less likely to volunteer.

Faith in action?

Evangelicals who consider their faith to be the most important thing in their life undertake an average of 2 hours of volunteering

each week, compared to an average of 1 hour 15 minutes by evangelicals who do not consider their faith to be the most important thing in their life.

Who volunteers?

Although volunteering is a common activity for the majority of evangelicals, it is women over the age of 55 who provide the most volunteer hours while men between the ages of 35-54 provide the least.

Working collaboratively?

7 out of 10 evangelicals believe, to some extent, that Christians should work collaboratively with people of other faiths on community projects. A further 2 out of 10 evangelicals are unsure. The older you are the more likely you are to strongly agree to working collaboratively.

WOMEN OVER THE AGE OF
55 provide the most
volunteer hours.



The congregations of Evangelical Alliance member churches provide over half a million volunteer hours for activities that serve the local community each week.

99%

of evangelical Christians do some type of volunteering each year.

85%

of evangelical Christians say that their church is engaged with the local community.

43%

of evangelical Christians volunteer for their church in an activity that serves the local community at least once a fortnight.

81%

of evangelical Christians say that their church is working together with other churches in their area.

Evangelism and Social Action

The majority of evangelicals believe that evangelism and social action are equally important and compatible tasks. However, 35% believe, to some extent, that many churches and organisations are placing too much emphasis on social action, with a further 25% being unsure. The over 55s are almost twice as likely to think this as the under 54s.

Community engagement in the workplace

The community in which many evangelicals spend the greatest amount of time is the workplace. 8 out of 10 evangelicals believe that they are called by God to do their job/vocation. 5 out of 10 consider themselves to be well equipped to apply their faith to their work/vocation, with a further 3 out of 10 considering themselves to be fairly well equipped.

David Westlake

Integral Mission Director,
Tearfund



This research provides yet more evidence that

evangelical churches and their congregations play a vital role in their local communities. However, we can't become complacent; look around and it's all-too-obvious that there's so much more that needs to be done. Our communities are in desperate need of holistic transformation. Support for children, families and vulnerable adults is the heart cry of our Father and the great need in our communities.

Therefore, these results should embolden us to get more involved in what's going on around us. We are making a difference and we would be sorely missed if we weren't doing what we are doing. This means we should be able to approach decision makers and funding providers with confidence.

How can we get the word out? How can we shout about what churches are doing?

Giving

Evangelicals are generous, but do we need to nurture greater generosity?

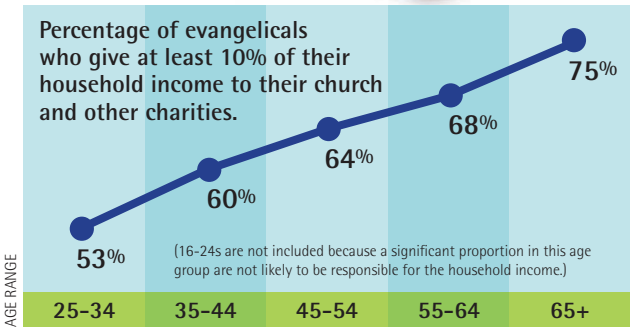
6 OUT OF 10 respondents had given at least 10% of their household income to their church and charities in the previous month.

3 OUT OF 10 respondents had given at least 10% of their household income to their church in the past month.

4 OUT OF 10 respondents strongly agreed that 10% of a Christian's income should be given to the church they attend.*



Is this graph a cause for concern?



Receivers and givers

Percentages of evangelicals who have given money to the following causes in the past year.

	Total	16-24	35-44	65+
Their church	96%	86%	97%	97%
Individual missionaries	47%	28%	45%	56%
Christian charities	86%	70%	85%	90%
Non-Christian charities	57%	42%	59%	59%
Individual homeless people	19%	24%	18%	16%

*A further 3 out of 10 respondents agreed a little. This *could* reveal agreement with the principle of tithing, but the questioning of either the realism of tithing today and/or that the local church should be the sole recipient of the 10%.

Michael O'Neill

Chief Executive,
Stewardship









We should all appreciate the tremendous importance

of these results. To see evidence that evangelicals are embracing generosity to such an extent is extremely encouraging.

But these results also raise questions. How can we better equip young people to unleash their generosity? Is giving away one tenth of our income really the ideal to which we should be working? And how can we best serve the quarter of those who strongly agree that a tithe should be given to their church, yet do not put that principle into practice? The Church always suffers when our words and our actions are not aligned, and this report can help unite our efforts.

I welcome this valuable research, pray that it will spark discussion across the country and trust in the potential of generosity to transform communities – just as generosity transformed our hearts.

We make your giving
easy . Our accounts
keep things simple, 
and secure, so you can
put your  up, knowing
your giving is in safe .
Less forms, less , less
hassle. And now, you
can do it all at the
click of a .

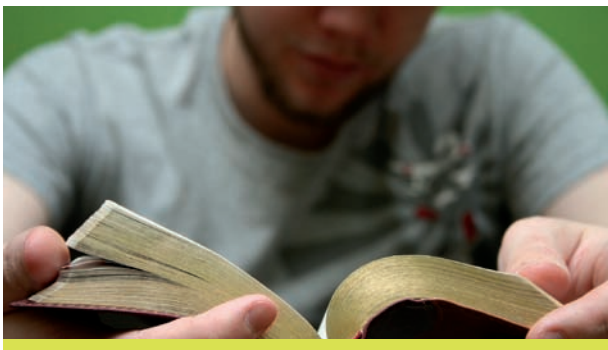
Join our community of 34,000 givers, who trust us with around £50 million of tax effective giving each year.

Open an account online, or find
out more, at www.give.net

Engaging with the Bible

The Bible is a key feature of an energised faith.

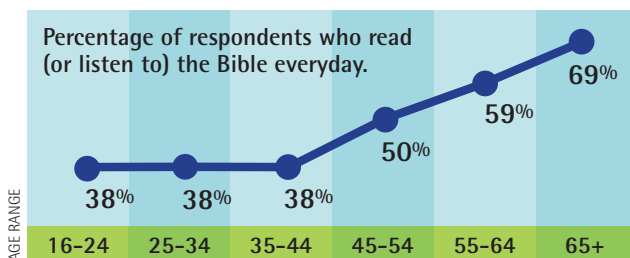
The more time an evangelical Christian spends reading the Bible each week, the more active they are in other areas of their faith. They are more likely to volunteer, to give money, to pray frequently and talk about their faith.



8 **OUT OF 10** evangelical Christians strongly agree that the Bible has the supreme authority in guiding their beliefs, views and behaviour.

9 **OUT OF 10** evangelical Christians strongly agree that the Bible is the inspired Word of God.

8 **OUT OF 10** evangelical Christians read (or listen to) the Bible at least a few times a week.



3 out of 10 evangelical Christians read the Bible for more than two hours a week, 5 out of 10 between 30 minutes and 2 hours, and 2 out of 10 read the Bible for less than 30 minutes each week.

James Catford

Group Chief Executive,
Bible Society



I once challenged a senior Communist government official in China that he should encourage more people to become Christians. 'Why?' he asked. Because Christians do more volunteering, give more money to charity and care more about the welfare of society. This research shows how true this is for Britain.

We shouldn't be surprised. The more we hear God speak to us through the Bible, the more vibrant our life will become.

Why are fewer 16-34 year olds reading or listening to the Bible? We should ask what they're taught about connecting God, life and the Bible. This survey suggests the more we integrate these, the more alive we become. The Bible was never intended to sit on a shelf gathering dust. The invitation to everyone is to get the words off the page and into our lives.



Come near to God and
he will come near to you.

WordLive

Go to wordlive.org to enjoy a
multimedia Bible experience

online

email

rss

mobile

iPhone

iPad



Evangelism

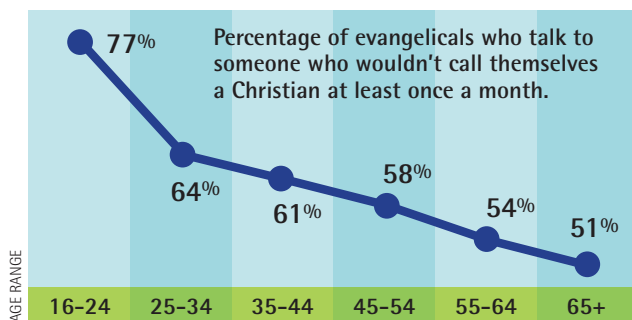
Evangelicals are talking, but more think they should.



9 OUT OF 10 evangelicals agree that all Christians should be actively involved in evangelism. 7 out of 10 believe this strongly.

6 OUT OF 10 evangelicals talk to someone who wouldn't call themselves a Christian about their faith at least once a month.

When it comes to talking about faith, are younger evangelicals leading the way?



Evangelism in the multi-faith context

Evangelicals who strongly agree that all Christians should be actively involved in evangelism are, when compared to those who disagree, more likely to think that...

- ... followers of all religions should be free to promote their faith in the UK.
- ... it's getting more difficult to live as a Christian in an increasingly secular country.
- ... it's becoming more difficult for Christians to speak freely about what they believe.

Mark Greene

Executive Director, London Institute of Contemporary Christianity



Good news, bad news. Evangelicals believe they should be

talking about faith, and many are. But lots aren't. Yes, young people tend to meet more new people and so have more opportunities to share but it's great they're taking them. Indeed, we might have supposed that they'd be the group most affected by the intimidating atmosphere of 'secular correctness' and/or multi-faith oversensitivity but they are the ones talking most about what shapes their lives.

Still, we need more research to understand precisely what's hindering faith-seasoned conversation and what would facilitate it across all age groups in the range of contexts people find themselves in – work, school, neighbourhood.

Many have said that confidence is the key. And that certainly means more than going through a training programme. How can our evangelism become more like the spontaneous testimony of a life transformed by Jesus? After all, if Jesus has changed me, it's much easier to proclaim a gospel that promises to change others.

Black Majority Churches

Typically evangelical, but distinct.

Black majority churches (BMCs) in the UK are growing both in terms of their number and influence. Many are an integral part of the evangelical constituency.

Consequently, it was essential that BMCs were an integral part of this research. Although approximately 900 questionnaires were completed by evangelical Christians who attend BMCs it is not possible to present data that is representative of all evangelical BMCs. However, it is possible to identify some clear trends.

In many ways BMCs are typically evangelical, but they are distinct. Therefore any research into 21st century evangelicals in the UK has to thoroughly investigate BMCs.



Typically evangelical...

Evangelical Christians that attend BMCs are in many ways typically evangelical. Their faith takes a prominent place in their lives. They believe that Jesus is the only way to God and that the Bible is the inspired word of God. They attend church services weekly, give money, undertake voluntary work, pray and read the Bible.

...but distinct

The results also display some significant differences. Evangelical Christians who attend BMCs are more likely to...

... fast from food, and read the Bible daily.

... talk about their faith with non-Christians.

... believe that it's a Christian's duty to give 10% of their income to the church they attend (they are also more likely to do so.)

... strongly agree that the Bible has the supreme authority in guiding their beliefs, views and behaviour, and are also more likely to consider it to be without error, in its original manuscript.

... consider that assisted suicide, and sex before marriage, are wrong.

... believe that hell is a place where the condemned will suffer eternal conscious pain.

... believe that evolution and Christianity are incompatible.

Bishop Wilton Powell, OBE

National Overseer,
Church of God of Prophecy



Black majority churches bring diversity to UK Christianity and the

out working of its vitality and vibrancy is clearly manifested in its evangelism. I am delighted that this research has highlighted the commitment, passion, faithfulness and resilience that exists amongst many of our members.

However, the research also depicts the great need for ecumenism where the body of Christ replenishes itself by those strengthened parts, assisting those who are deficient or weak. This environment sets a context where collectively we can celebrate others strengths and support others where there are weaknesses.

UK Christianity will mature significantly as we learn from one another and can achieve so much more when we are united behind the truth of the Gospel.

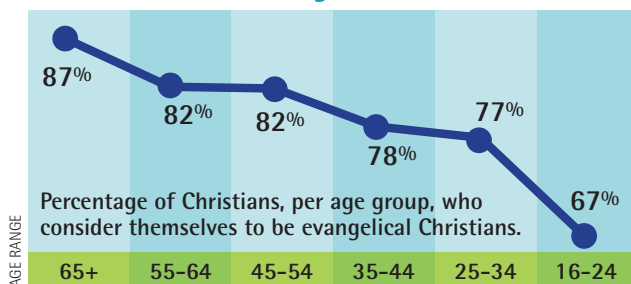
'Black majority churches bring diversity to UK Christianity'

The future of evangelical Christianity

Under 25s are markedly different, but what does this mean?



Younger people are less likely to consider themselves to be evangelical Christians:



However, before evangelicalism's obituary is written this trend needs to be investigated further. These results could simply reveal that younger people are rejecting the name 'evangelical' or that Christians start referring

to themselves as 'evangelical Christians' later on in life. Possible evidence for this is the fact that 16-24 year olds are two times more likely to be unsure whether or not they are evangelical than any other age group. If half of these decided to

consider themselves evangelicals, there would be the same percentage of 16-24 year old evangelicals as there are 25-44 year olds.

That all said, these results cannot be ignored, especially when compared alongside other results that have been outlined in this report. 16-24 year olds who consider themselves to be evangelical Christians are markedly different from other evangelical Christians.

Therefore more research is required to pinpoint whether this age group are evangelical in all but name, evangelicals in formation or whether evangelicalism is in decline, or at least changing. Whatever the conclusion, this is a significant issue.

Typically evangelical...

Attend a church service at least once a week.

Volunteer in activities that serve the local community.

Consider faith to be the most important thing in their life.

Believe that Jesus is the only way to God.

Believe that all Christians should be involved in evangelism.

Agree that sex before marriage is wrong.

16-24 year olds (who consider themselves evangelical Christians) are typically evangelical on a range of issues (within plus or minus 3% of the average).

...markedly different.

Less likely to strongly agree that the Bible has supreme authority in guiding their beliefs, views and behaviour.

More likely to talk about their faith with 'non' Christians.*

Less likely to give money.

Less likely to pray or read (or listen to) the Bible* every day.

Faith is less likely to be a key factor in their decision making.

Less likely to agree that women should be eligible for all roles within the church in the same way men are.*

On many issues, 16-24 year olds (who consider themselves evangelical Christians) are markedly different (at least 7% different, unless there is an * which indicates that the difference is at least 13%, from the average).

Andy Frost

Director, Share Jesus International



Postmodern Britain, with its melting pot of faiths and ideologies, has

created a new generation caricatured by contradiction. On the one hand, they reflect a good evangelical passion to share their faith; but on the other hand, they less vehemently defend Scripture and lack personal time reading the Bible and praying.

For many in this age group, beliefs have been shaped by good youth work and summer festivals, rather than personal devotions. We have shared bite sized theology but one of the greatest challenges is to enable this age group to take responsibility for their own discipleship amidst busy, media saturated lives.

Is evangelicalism in decline?
I don't think so.

But the word 'evangelical' has been tarnished by American political agendas and is confusing to a generation who don't understand party lines and church squabbles. This generation simply want to get the job done. Evangelicalism needs to be redefined for them as Grace and Truth. The question is how do we do this?

Evangelical Alliance

There's a hunger for unity and a desire to engage.

9 out of 10 evangelicals believe that Christians should...

- ... be united in truth.
- ... be united in mission.
- ... have a voice in the media.
- ... engage with government.

Evangelical Christians think the Alliance should focus on:

- 1 Advocating on behalf of evangelical Christians to government.
- 2 Speaking to the media on behalf of Christians
- 3 Campaigning on issues relevant to evangelical Christians.
- 4 Promoting unity amongst evangelical Christians
- 5 Facilitating churches and organisations to work collaboratively in mission.



95%

of the Alliance's individual members think that the Evangelical Alliance performs an important role within the UK.

Roger Forster

Chair, Evangelical Alliance Council



The heartbeat of the Evangelical Alliance is unity. Unity which enables us,

together, to change society. Unity that provides us all with a voice to Government and media. Unity that sees community transformed spiritually, socially and physically.

Taking this snapshot has provided us with the opportunity to find out what Christians think about our work.

The results are extremely encouraging and provide us with a clear mandate in our mission of uniting evangelical Christians, with their enriching diversities, in order to change society - by bringing in the Kingdom of God - "justice, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit". It is equally encouraging to know that 95% of our individual members think the Alliance plays an important role in the UK.

These results will spur us on to do even more to serve evangelical Christians. We also hope that being that so many evangelicals agree with what we're doing, it will encourage others to get involved. We will be able to achieve so much more together and with our Lord.

Encouraged, but challenged

'When I became a Christian from an unchurched background my mum sat me down and gave me some advice. She said: "I don't mind you being a Christian but if you're going to be one, BE one." Don't say that you believe this stuff and then don't live it out! It's clear from this report that many evangelical Christians in the UK are totally committed to 'living their faith out' – it's encouraging that so many evangelicals are committed to giving, community engagement and sharing the hope they have.'

Wendy Beech-Ward, Director, Spring Harvest

'This report is an encouragement to evangelicals and a provocation to the cynics. Far from being a dwindling, schismatic minority, evangelical Christians have a significant level of coherence. They value meeting together, prize the Bible and the presence of God's Spirit, and love to give of their time and money. Evangelicals can be a potent force for making a contribution to this nation through sharing our faith, starting new churches, and working for the common good. However, there is no room for complacency. We must strengthen and encourage the under 25s and give evangelicals clarity and confidence in areas of uncertainty, if we are to continue making progress.'

David Stroud, Pastor of ChristChurch London and leader of the Newfrontiers UK Team

'What a diverse bunch we are! But, perhaps this shouldn't come as a surprise to a body which although clearly identifiable, is made up of many non-identical parts. The key findings on 'Engaging with the Bible' show clearly how 'living and active' God's Word is, and how it can equip us so thoroughly for practical areas of faith and life. I look forward to seeing the unifying effect of faithful Bible teaching and regular Bible reading on generations of UK Evangelicals who will live through this century and into the next.'

David Bradley, General Director, Keswick Ministries

'Amidst the encouragements of this pioneering research, we cannot avoid the challenges that lie beneath the surface – particularly in terms of how evangelicals present themselves as a united, good news movement, amidst such a wide range of different views and beliefs.'

Matt Summerfield, Executive Director, Urban Saints



We asked the popular American author Philip Yancey his

thoughts on evangelicalism in the UK...

In the United States the evangelical church is much like a large corporation. In the UK the corporation is much smaller. I think it's easy for evangelicals in a country like this to feel like that beleaguered minority, especially because you do have a history of faith; you have been the source for much of the world. But for that reason the Church here is more likely to be united, or at least less divided. The Evangelical Alliance is a good demonstration of that unity; because the churches do feel like they are a minority they emphasize what they have in common instead of what divides them, and that's a healthy thing.

If you go to church in the UK you don't go because it is socially advantageous – it's not. Everybody around you is sleeping in and watching football; why would you go to church? Well you only go to church if you believe that it's true. In the United States because there are so many Christians it's easy for us to create our own culture and live within that culture. Here you really can't do that. There is more of an awareness of the surrounding secular culture.

It's time to get talking



This report has got us talking!

The Evangelical Alliance has no plans to put it on a bookcase and forget about it. We plan to keep it open, explore the data in more depth and keep talking about how we should respond. Already we have had many fascinating and thought-provoking conversations.

We hope you'll join us in these conversations.

Let me encourage you not to file your copy of this report away. Make sure it's well thumbed, lend it to people and talk about it.

We're doing everything we can to make this report widely available. It can be viewed online, it can be

downloaded and it's available as a printed booklet. If you're involved in church leadership go to www.eauk.org/snapshot and get your hands on more copies of this report. Make sure everyone in your church's leadership team takes a look at copy, then spend some time discussing some of the questions that this research raises.

There are a few discussion questions on this page to get you started. More detailed questions can be downloaded from www.eauk.org/snapshot.



Steve Clifford
General Director,
Evangelical
Alliance

'Let me encourage you not to file your copy of this report away. Make sure it's well thumbed, lend it to people and talk about it.'

How well do you know the people who are a part of your church? Do you think the results presented in this report are representative of your church? What do you expect would be the main areas of difference and similarities?

What do you find encouraging about the results? What do you find challenging? What results surprise you?

There is a high level of consensus amongst evangelicals in many key areas. How can we reinforce these? (Page 4 & 5)

On many issues evangelicals are not as black and white as they are often portrayed. How can we encourage conversations that help our churches come to a greater understanding on these often complex issues? (Page 8 & 9)

Do evangelicals have an identity crisis? If so, what should we be doing about it? (Page 6 & 7, 18 & 19)

How can our church integrate evangelism and social action to ensure that we speak good news as well as being good news? (Page 10 & 11)

Does our church talk about money enough? How can we unleash the generosity of God's people? (Page 12)

How can we enable people to engage effectively with the Bible? (Page 14)

How can we become more confident in talking about our faith? What can we learn from young adults in this? (Page 16)

What concerns you most about the differences amongst younger people? How can we engage effectively with the younger generations? (Page 18 & 19)

The next step

We have taken a snapshot, now a comprehensive and detailed picture of 21st century UK evangelicals needs to be painted.

We will delve deeper in order to understand more fully the beliefs of evangelical Christians. It's important that we go to the heart of evangelicalism. We need to look at the core tenets of the evangelical faith to establish the degree of similarity and the extent of the diversity. However, the aim is not just to establish what people believe, but also to investigate why people believe what they do. In addition we plan to explore people's understanding of a range of apologetic issues.

We do not just want to find out more about what people believe – we also want to discover how these beliefs impact their lives.

What does discipleship look like in the 21st century? Do people feel equipped to follow Jesus in the day-to-day realities of life? What's the condition of the relationships and family life among evangelicals?

It's essential for us to confront the potential challenges that this research presents. Is evangelicalism in decline? Are people rejecting the name 'evangelical'? What needs to be done in order to engage effectively with the younger generations? These are timely questions and future research will provide us with a fuller picture of UK evangelicals. However, it's important that we don't just look at the picture. We need to prayerfully reflect on what it reveals. We need to have the conversations that it stimulates.

And then we need to take action.



Thank you

We would like to thank the following festivals for participating in this research...

CLAN Gathering (Scotland), ECG (Wales), Grapevine, Keswick Convention, New Horizon (Northern Ireland), New Wine and Spring Harvest.

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Beulah Christian Fellowship (Gillingham), Bloomfield Presbyterian Church (Belfast), Bournemouth Vineyard, Broadmead Baptist Church, Causeway Coast Vineyard, Charlton and Blackheath Christian Fellowship, Christ Church Spitalfields, City Church Centre (Grimsby), Church of God of Prophecy, Community Church Killingworth, Cornerstone Church (Wimbourne), Dayspring Church (Chippenham), Fulwood Methodist Free Church, Gateway Community Church (Perth), Grace Community Church (Maidstone), Heartlands Church (Stratford), High Kirk Presbyterian Church (Ballymena), Highway Church (Cornwall), House of Destiny (Bournemouth), Jesus House (London), Kings Church (Lincolnshire), Kings Fellowship (Bangor), Mount Pleasant Baptist Church (Northampton), New Life Family Church (Somerset), New Testament Church of God, Princes Risborough Baptist Church (Aylesbury), Rainham Christian Fellowship, Roman Road Independent Methodist Church (Manchester), Salem Chapel (Bristol), South Park Church (Ilford), Southgate Christian Fellowship (London), St Luke's Church (Nottingham), Stamford Free Church, Tywyn Baptist Church, Warton Methodist Church, Westminster Chapel, Woodlands Church (Swansea) and Yeovil Community Church.

'We are indebted to the Evangelical Alliance and Christian Research for this extremely valuable snapshot of the Church at the beginning of the 21st Century. It sometimes takes courage to use a mirror when the viewer is unsure as to the form the reflection will take. I think most of us will find the results encouraging - though perhaps not universally so. What has been presented to us in this publication should inspire us to rise to the challenge to better express a culture that is biblically sound and socially coherent. Having read its contents I find myself wanting to hear God more acutely and communicate his heart more accurately.'

John Glass, General Superintendent, Elim Pentecostal Churches

To find out more and get involved with future research go to www.eauk.org/snapshot



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