

Segment **B08: Babies and Bliss**

Middle-aged couples with large families and active lives in affluent suburbia

Resource: Mosaic by Experian.

Religious Experience in a Nutshell

Religious Perspective: *An Important Part of a Healthy Lifestyle*

Common Spiritual Issues: *Feeling broken or rejected, anxieties over guilt and displacement*

Potential Influence

Lifestyle Compatibility	Family Group B Flourishing Families	Frequent Neighbors
A01 American Royalty	B07: Generational Soup	C11 Aging of Aquarius
K37 Wired for Success	B08: Babies and Bliss	C13 Silver Sophisticates
O53 Colleges and Cafes	B09: Family Fun-tastic	A03 Kids and Cabernet
I32 Steadfast Conventionalists	B10: Cosmopolitan Achievers	F22 Fast Track Couples

General Comments

Babies and Bliss describe themselves as both spiritual and religious. The church is a part of a balanced lifestyle. They shop for churches that are child-sensitive and family friendly, and which offer a wide variety of generational programs in a single location. Therefore, they tend to gravitate to large, resource-size churches ... or to small churches with healthy budgets that can afford multiple professional staff. The parents expect a good church to help them "cope". Each parent has a career, although women organize careers around homemaking and parenting. They may work from home, maintain home offices, or take extended leaves of absence for the sake of children. Women may become more involved in church than men.

Churches are often conservative in their social attitudes, but relatively open to the creativity of youth groups. *Babies and Bliss* are not activists for any particular cause, although they will vocally support pro-life policies and traditional families. Their commitment to church is often intense for a limited time, and then they move on. They may also change churches if there is a sexual or financial scandal.

General Comments

Note: See the list of definitions at the end of this report to explain key terminology.

Discussion Questions:

How do I, as a leader, perceive the spiritual expectations of people in our community?

How can we, as a board, research and understand our community better?

How can we, as a church, build closer relationships with this lifestyle segment?

Color Key

High Priority	Medium Priority	Low Priority
---------------	-----------------	--------------

Leadership Preferences

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

THE CONSTANT LEADERS		THE ORGANIC LEADERS		THE EXTREME LEADERS	
	Caregiver	x	Discipler		Visionary
	Enabler		Guru		Mentor
x	CEO				Pilgrim

Babies and Bliss expect the senior pastor to be a capable CEO managing multiple programs for different generations. This usually implies additional paid staff work at the church. However, they prefer a *discipler* to an *enabler*. Pastors do not need to be great visitors or expert counselors, but do need to manage a process that leads to Christian maturity. They are good coaches and advisors, and are sensitive to life stages. They are very much in tune with the ebb and flow of children and youth cultures, and with the stresses of modern parenting. They help adults solve problems, focus living, mentor younger generations, and develop a profound inner awareness of God. The senior pastor is a strong, assertive leader with good business sense and a holistically healthy lifestyle. Staff lifestyles should model their fairly conservative social values.

Note: See the list of definitions at the end of this report to explain key terminology.

Discussion Questions:

How would you describe your pastor now?

How might your pastor adapt to be more empathic in the future?

How can you equip, train, and/or support your pastor in any transition?

Hospitality Preferences

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

TRADITIONAL		MODERN		POSTMODERN	
	The Basics	x	Multiple Choices		Take-Out
			Healthy Choices		

Large, young families require big vehicles. Provide ample parking, and make sure there is a safe and sheltered "drop off" place to let the family enter the building. Safety guards and greeters who can help with infants and children are appreciated. Provide special parking for the handicapped and young mothers. Always staff the Welcome Center *during* worship, and train ushers to assist children or parents coming in and out of the worship center. Never leave vestibules, washrooms, and refreshment areas unsupervised. Remember that churches are often prime targets for child theft ... and that these parents are very protective of their children. The Welcome Center should stock free gifts for visitors (e.g. plush toys for children, free flash drives for teens). Greeters should include youth, and all greeters should be trained to be extra helpful and very respectful.

Refreshments are varied, and clearly labeled to be sugar free, nut free, etc. Make refreshments available before, during, and after worship. Provide separate serving stations for little children that are well supervised. Families were almost certainly listening to pop or children's music on the radio as they drove to church ... so provide ambient music refreshment areas that maintain the musical style and beat, and use intentionally Christian lyrics.

Note: See the list of definitions at the end of this report to explain key terminology.

Discussion Questions:

How would you describe your hospitality ministries now?

How should hospitality ministries change to be more relevant to this lifestyle segment?

What additional training do greeters, ushers, and servers need to be more empathic?

Worship Preferences

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

TRADITIONAL		MODERN		POSTMODERN	
	Care-giving Worship	x	Inspirational Worship		Mission-Connectional Worship
x	Educational Worship		Transformational Worship	x	Coaching Worship
	Healing Worship				

Babies and Bliss get frustrated by attempts to "blend" contemporary and traditional styles. However, families do like to worship together. The new "norm" will be a worship service that is relatively informal and very inspirational. The music is usually Christian contemporary pop. (Don't try to get away with 70's "praise music", because these folks are attuned to the latest Christian and pop sounds). Excellent video technology is expected, and a kind of "litmus test" for relevance and credibility. Parents like options for their children. In addition to concurrent Sunday school and nursery, provide space and resources for infants and toddlers to be creatively occupied in the worship center with Mom watching over them. Learn to accept a degree of noise and chaos during the worship service with good humor and helpful ushers.

Worship is often oriented to themes rather than lectionaries, but is strongly Biblical. Preaching is very practical and coaches adults (or families) in Christian living, faith priorities, stress reduction, or problem solving. Preaching is often supplemented by drama or video clip, and may be linked to ongoing small groups.

Note: See the list of definitions at the end of this report to explain key terminology.

Discussion Questions:

How would you describe your worship service(s) now?

How should you customize one or more worship services to be relevant to this segment?

What additional training do preachers, musicians, readers need to meet expectations?

Education Preferences

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

FORM		CONTENT		GROUPING	
	Curricular	x	Biblical	x	Generational
x	Experiential		Topical		Peer Group

Babies and Bliss are well educated, but certainly not passive intellectuals. They rely on a variety of technologies are often "lateral thinkers" (solving problems by indirect and creative means rather than step-by-step logic). They prefer experiential methodologies of learning that are creative, interactive, and use diverse media. They usually find traditional curricula from denominational publishing houses to be boring or inadequate. The content should be Bible stories with a strong moral thread, and teaching may be organized around themes rather than the Christian Year. Sunday school classes follow the pattern of public school grades, but some activities will intentionally gather different age groups. Teachers are well trained.

Teens may still gather in a large "youth group", but actually tend to function in small groups oriented around special interests (sports, games, service, music genres, etc.). Small group affinities and the mentoring ability of specially trained youth ministers will be more important than any particular curriculum. Youth leaders are expected to be strong mentors and role models. Some families in this lifestyle segment may have opted out of the public education system for home schooling, or they may look for churches that offer a private Christian academy. They want to interface Sunday school education with the overall goals and resources of their educational preferences for their children.

Note: See the list of definitions at the end of this report to explain key terminology.

Discussion Questions:

How would you describe children, youth, and adult education in your church now?

How would education strategies need to change to be relevant to this lifestyle segment?

What changes in leadership selection and training would make education more effective?

Small Group Preferences

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

LEADERSHIP		CONTENT	
x	Trained Leaders	x	Curriculum Study
	Rotated Leaders	x	Shared Affinity

Babies and Bliss adults (both women and men) will opt for midweek small groups as the preferred method of Christian education. Busy family lifestyles often create a strong need for intimate bonds of peer friendships. Groups specifically for men and women, couples, or parents with special needs are common. Recovery groups may be more difficult to establish, and individuals may choose to go outside the church. Support groups for parenting, marriage enrichment, or death of a loved one are popular.

Adult participants prefer groups with a trained leader who is accountable to the senior pastor or designated staff person. The leader often becomes a primary care-giver to the participants and their families, and is particularly adept managing conversations, encouraging shy people, and overcoming personality conflicts. Small groups can be very informal or highly structured. They may be based on some shared enthusiasm (e.g. sports, camping, etc.) or on a Bible study curriculum. Covenants are usually short term, and adults self-select the topics, times, and leaders that interest them. Groups often interact through social media when they are not together face to face.

Note: See the list of definitions at the end of this report to explain key terminology.

Discussion Questions:

How would you describe the Small Group strategy in your church now?

How would Small Group strategies need to change to be relevant to this lifestyle segment?

What changes in leadership and content would make Small Groups more effective?

Outreach Preferences

Resource: Strategic Thinking by Thomas Bandy (Abingdon Press)

	PERSONAL NEED	READINESS TO VOLUNTEER
Basic Survival		
Health and Wellness		x
Quality of Life		x
Addiction Intervention		
Interpersonal Relationships		x
Human Potential	x	
Salvation and Human Destiny	x	

Babies and Bliss are generally happy with their status quo. Their challenge is to balance work, family, and personal time. Social service is often a lower priority, unless it connects with a stage in their own families (e.g. Boy Scouts or Girl Scouts) or can become a vehicle to shape the moral character of the next generation. Personally, they are very interested in any program that helps them explore their potential as human beings (gift discernment, personality inventories, career choices, etc.) They are often interested in issues of personal salvation, life after death, or salvation history.

People in this segment are most likely to become active in outreach ministries related to health (particularly physical or mental fitness), and support camps, amateur sports, and learning competitions. They also support social services that improve the quality of life in their neighborhoods (crime prevention, safety, and local environmental concerns). They are strongly motivated to support outreach ministries for youth that shape responsible interpersonal relationships. They are more likely to *participate* than to *lead*. They are more likely to offer in-kind donations (like food, equipment, etc.) than direct financial support.

Note: See the list of definitions at the end of this report to explain key terminology.

Discussion Questions:

What outreach categories does your church emphasize now?

What outreach categories would be more relevant to this lifestyle segment?

What outreach priorities and tactics should change for the church to bless this segment?

Facility Preferences

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

PROPERTY		TECHNOLOGY		SYMBOLISM	
	Ecclesiastical		Modern	x	Classic Christendom
x	Utilitarian	x	Postmodern		Contemporary Post–Christendom

Experian suggests that *Babies and Bliss* have hyper-active large families. Well-designed, utilitarian space is preferable to adapt to changing generational needs. An internal coffee house may be a priority over large kitchens. They are less motivated to preserve ecclesiastical facilities and maintain old equipment, regardless of memorial status, and prefer flexible, multi-purpose spaces that can incorporate traditional Christian symbols. They tend to be frugal about everything in the budget ... but indulgent enough to make facilities "state of the art".

Technologies to regulate heat and air conditioning, light and fresh air, and facilitate handicapped access are important. However, these people tend to be frugal money managers, and will always look to cut costs for labor to install technologies or build structures. They are more likely to spend extra money to develop athletic fields and gymnasiums, or to manage church camps. The safe location and quality of space for the nursery, Sunday school, and youth rooms are extremely important.

Note: See the list of definitions at the end of this report to explain key terminology.

Discussion Questions:

What renovations and/or upgrades need to be made in our church facility?

What symbols of faith would be most relevant to this lifestyle segment?

If we started another site of ministry for this segment, how should we design it?

Financial Preferences

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

GIVING TARGET		GIVING METHOD	
x	Unified Budgets and General Funds	x	Informed Philanthropy & Pledging
x	Designated Programs & Mission Projects	x	Lifestyle Coaching & Family Financial Planning

Babies and Bliss households have significant combined incomes, but they also have high family expenses. They are very careful about most spending, although they do indulge their children and themselves. *Experian* suggests that they are savvy investors and protect their children's financial future. In the church, they are more likely to invest in trusts or foundations related to leadership development than property maintenance. Capital campaigns always need to have a strong missional component. Leaders must set benchmarks for giving.

They invest in a church in the way that they invest in non-profits and schools. They appreciate stewardship campaigns that coach them to make better lifestyle decisions, and dislike churches that make them feel guilty. They will readily take a seminar on Christian family financial planning, but are reluctant to participate in an every member canvass. ***Babies and Bliss*** usually pledge to a unified budget as a household rather than as individuals. They can be very generous to local churches, but denominational policies can negatively impact their financial giving. They may opt for designated giving to micro-charities rather than give to denominational missions.

Note: See the list of definitions at the end of this report to explain key terminology.

Discussion Questions:

What options in giving methods and giving targets do we offer now?

How do we design our annual stewardship campaign(s) now?

How should we revise our financial strategy to be more relevant to this segment?

Communication

Resource: Mosaic E–Handbook by Experian

CONTEMPORARY PUBLIC COMMUNICATION				TRADITIONAL CHURCH COMMUNICATION							
	Direct Mail Receptive		Mobile Telephone		Online Computer		Newspaper		Corded Telephone		Verbal Announcements
x	Email Receptive	x	Broadcast Cable TV	x	Internet Radio		Print		AM/FM Radio		Personal Visits

Babies and Bliss navigate the internet constantly. They quickly “tune out” verbal announcements and often eliminate them from worship. Church communicators may not catch them at home, and must rely on websites to distribute resources and provide information. Even cell phone conversations may need to be replaced by texting. They migrate seamlessly from email, to website, to chat room and other social media. If you do connect with them on the phone, you may often hear keys tapping and endure gaps of silence as they respond to incoming messages. These people are interested in personal spirituality. Texting a "thought for the day" helps keep them connected with the church. Store devotional resources on websites that can easily be downloaded wherever and whenever needed.

Note: See the list of definitions at the end of this report to explain key terminology.

Discussion Questions:

How do we communicate among church participants now?

How do we communicate beyond our church to the community now?

How should we adapt communication strategies to be more effective for this segment?

IMPORTANT DEFINITIONS

POTENTIAL INFLUENCE

Lifestyle Compatibility	Daily behavioral habits overlap with common activities and similar priorities
Family Group	Grouping by key demographic factors like age, income, culture, family status, etc.
Frequent Neighbors	Often live near each other with shared recreational, health, or emergency services

LEADERSHIP

Constant Leaders	Traditional clergy focused on sustaining ministries & increasing members
Organic Leaders	Innovative leaders focused on church growth, new starts & multiplying followers
Extreme Leaders	Non-Institutional leaders focused on spiritual disciplines, high accountability, and pursuing perfection
Caregiver	Focus on visitation, counseling, pastoral prayer
Enabler	Focus on facilitating meetings, lay empowerment, mediation, liturgy
CEO	Focus on staff development, administration, fund raising, expository preaching
Discipler	Focus on seeker sensitivity, adult faith formation, guidance for Christian living
Guru	Focus on religious insight, holistic personal growth, spirituality, enlightenment
Visionary	Focus on big picture, major social change, motivational speaking
Mentor	Focus on self-awareness, individual meaning and purpose, vocational clarity
Pilgrim	Focus on cross-cultural sensitivity, inter-religious dialogue, strict spiritual discipline

HOSPITALITY

The Basics	Friendly untrained greeters, basic coffee and creamer, packaged food or sugary snacks
Multiple Choices	Trained greeters, multiple serving stations, great coffee, varieties of food
Healthy Choices	Trained greeters mirroring lifestyle diversity, healthy food options, allergen alerts
Take-Out	Coffee-to-go, bagged food, exit door hospitality, text message and social media

EDUCATION

Curricular	Printed books or study guides. Passive, intellectual, classroom. Maturity measured by acquired knowledge
Experiential	Activities. More music, images, movement, interaction. Maturity measured by behavior patterns, attitudes.
Biblical	Focuses on the Old and New Testaments. Maturity means Biblical literacy
Topical	Focuses on contemporary issues. Maturity means ethical integrity and enlightened behavior
Generational	Gathers people by age or grade in separate classrooms with age-appropriate resources.
Peer Group	Gathers people sharing affinities or common interests regardless of age.

SMALL GROUPS

Rotated Leaders	Participants take turns hosting and leading the group. Requires limited expertise and training.
Designated Leaders	Single leader guides the group from start to finish. Requires significant maturity and training.
Curriculum	Focus on a book, workbook, or structured program to guide structured discussion
Affinity	Focus on shared interest, enthusiasm, or activity to inspire informal discussion.

IMPORTANT DEFINITIONS (cont.)

WORSHIP

Educational	Consistent liturgy, expository preaching, focus on doctrine, ethics, and history
Inspirational	Uplifting music, motivational speaking, focus on joy, optimism, and encouragement
Transformational	Spontaneous, expectant, personal transformations, Higher Power interventions
Coaching	Informal, dialogical, topical, practical coaching on how to live better & faithfully
Caregiving	Slow, meditative, family–feel with pastoral prayer, children’s time, senior celebrations
Healing	Quiet, prayerful, expectant of physical, mental, relational healing and hope
Mission–Connectional	Unity of action/reflection, all about outreach, volunteer empowerment

OUTREACH

Survival	Basic needs for food, shelter, clothing, jobs, basic health care
Recovery	Addiction intervention, 12 step support, and counseling services
Health	Mental and physical fitness, disease prevention, rehabilitation, therapy
Quality of Life	Social wellbeing, neighborhood safety, environment, immigration, peacemaking
Human Potential	Personal/vocational fulfillment, education, career help, human rights advocacy
Interpersonal	Intimacy, sexuality, family & marriage counseling, healthy friendships
Human Destiny	Repentance, conversion, witnessing, alignment with God’s purposes

FACILITIES

Ecclesiastical	Facility must “look like a church” with traditional architecture and furnishings
Utilitarian	Facility must be “user–friendly” and multi–purpose for public use
Christendom	Indoor/outdoor symbols associated with church history or denominational identity
Contemporary	Indoor/outdoor symbols from nature, indigenous cultures, alternative spiritualities
Modern	Technology primarily enhances print and oral communication
Postmodern	Technology primarily enhances multi–sensory interaction, internet, social media

FINANCES

Unified Budgets	Stability first. Give to a single general fund to pay staff and manage overhead costs
Designated Giving	Effectiveness first. Give to specific funds or causes by personal preference
Informed Philanthropy	Informed, independent, confidential financial commitments for a tax benefit
Lifestyle Coaching	Individual & household coaching for Christian family financial management

COMMUNICATION

Direct Mail Receptive	Pay attention to mass mailings to postal addresses.
Email Receptive	Pay attention to information delivered digitally to personal email addresses.
Mobile Telephone	Regularly rely on cell phones and smart phones for calling, texting, surfing, banking etc.
Broadcast Cable TV	Regularly rely on cable television for news, advertising, and entertainment.
Online Computer	Regularly go online by personal computer to surf websites, shop, bank, and use other services.
Internet Radio	Regularly subscribe to internet services for music, sports, and topical discussions.
Newspaper	Pay attention to printed newspapers for updates about church news or local, national, global events.
Print	Pay attention to printed church newsletters, bulletin inserts, brochures, and other handouts.
Corded Telephone	Regularly use ordinary telephones to communicate from home.
AM/FM Radio	Regularly use traditional radio to listen to music, commercials, and talk.
Verbal Announcements	Always rely on verbal announcements from the pulpit about church events or items of interest.
Personal Visits	Always expect personal visits at home by a representative of the church to share information.