

Segment I30: Stock Cars and State Parks

Middle-aged, middle-income couples and families living in more remote rural communities

Resource: Mosaic by Experian.

Religious Experience in a Nutshell

Religious Perspective: *Religious practices cherish our past and can empower my future*

Common Spiritual Issues: *Feeling flawed and neglected, anxieties of meaninglessness and estrangement*

Potential Influence

Lifestyle Compatibility	Family Group I Family Union	Frequent Neighbors
D15 Sports Utility Families	I30 Stock Cars and State Parks	J35 Rural Escape
J35 Rural Escape	I31 Blue Collar Comfort	M44 Red, White and Bluegrass
H28 Everyday Moderate	I32 Steadfast Conventionalists	N46 True Grit Americans
H29 Destination Recreation	I33 Balance and Harmony	N47 Countrified Pragmatics

General Comments

Among *Stock Cars and State Parks*, the church is often their most important community. Their roots go deep in their rural communities, and so does their church allegiance. The church reinforces their values, provides them a sense of belonging, and is a center for social activities beyond the home. They may treat the church as an extended family. Church participation is often shaped around hunting and fishing seasons or recreational activities, but faith is always important to them.

Their small church may be part of a circuit of preaching points. The pastor may or may not be ordained and the church may be independent or denominational. They rely a lot on lay leadership, and there are spiritual leaders among them who can preach, teach, and (depending on church policy) baptize. Aside from regular worship, they celebrate special Christian festivals like Christmas and Easter. Fellowship is important, and people often gather in gender-based groups for women and men. Food and fun are always accompanied by scripture and prayer.

Historically, many *Stock Cars and State Parks* households connected with established denominations. More recently, they are becoming very anxious about changes to denominational policies that erode traditional family values and promote rapid social change. In part, this may be due to the increasing pressure of urbanization. They tend to be drifting from institutional church loyalty toward personal religion, faith-based non-profit organizations, or independent churches. The credibility of the pastor, quality personal relationships, and local tradition are more important than high-quality programming, updated technologies, and denominational polity.

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
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Leadership Preferences

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

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

Stock Cars and State Parks see the pastor as a role model for Christian values, mentor for spiritual practices, and constant visitor, who provides moral and personal support in difficult times. Pastors do not need to be great expository preachers, but should speak from scripture, communicate the strength of their personal faith, and make eye contact. Speaking without notes is a plus. Pastors are always available in emergencies, and are a good visitors in homes and institutions. Pastors maintain excellent relationships with local and regional social services, schools, and correctional centers.

Stock Cars and State Parks often yearn for mature faith in a young body. Empathy is enhanced if the pastor shares their recreational passions, and can illustrate sermons from personal experiences. If the pastor is young or starting out, and is relational and respectful, they will go the second mile to support and mentor them. If the pastor is retired or part time, and honors life cycles and special occasions, they will be very tolerant of any personal limitations. Since the church may be part of a circuit of small churches, pastors need to have good time management skills and stamina.

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	
x	The Basics		Multiple Choices		Take-Out
			Healthy Choices		

Stock Cars and State Parks like fresh air, outdoor activities, potluck dinners, state fairs and country music festivals. Hospitality is always informal and extremely friendly. Although men, women, and youth often mingle separately, the pastor should move deliberately and easily among each group every Sunday.

Greeters, ushers, and servers should be enthusiastic and respectful. Hospitality leadership is often shared over time among the same families or networks, but it is a way for youth or newcomers to fit into the church, receive mentoring, and observe role models for Christian behavior. Attitude and piety are more important than training and expertise. Provide helpers for the elderly, young mothers, and anyone physically handicapped.

Provide basic refreshments, with a mix of homemade treats and homegrown vegetables and fruits, along with basic hot or cold coffee and tea. Many families eat fast food or frozen entrees, so quantities of take-out food are welcome. Add lemonade in the summer. Serve refreshments outdoors whenever possible. Special occasions deserve special refreshments, and that may be the time to encourage pot luck and home cooking. Always thank people.

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

Stock Cars and State Parks value continuity with the past. "Traditional" worship is whatever the particular local version of denominational heritage is, so fresh ideas out of seminary are not always welcome (even if they are endorsed by the denomination). Sunday worship is predictable in structure, and leaders need to be all the more intentional about authenticity and sincerity.

Worship may be structured, but it is somewhat informal. People will tend to wear their "Sunday Best" to worship, but they will still be laid back. No one is disturbed by babies crying, or older folks stepping out of the sanctuary for a moment. Many churches recognize birthdays and anniversaries, and honor the passing of family members with flowers and prayers. Spend time with announcements and passing the peace. Make the sermon shorter so the intercessory prayers can be longer.

Occasional healing worship (meditative, health and wellness oriented) and transformational worship (revival, addiction intervention) can be important through the year. If Holy Communion is important, it is often served as people kneel at the communion rail. Both infant and adult baptisms are big celebrations and central to worship. Classic hymns and camp songs are popular, and the hymnal is often an old version. People know many songs by heart, and the memorized words are part of their private devotions and sources of personal strength. They are inspired by favorite hymns, and usually enjoy singing. Be cautious about introducing new music.

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	
x	Curricular	x	Biblical	x	Generational
	Experiential		Topical		Peer Group

Stock Cars and State Parks love children and consider the youth to be the future of the church. They also admit that their home lives are often disorganized and undisciplined. They expect a children's Sunday school to not only provide a foundational knowledge of scripture, but also provide a model for disciplined living, teamwork, and respect for older generations. Lay leadership is important. Teachers often serve for a long time. They may be elderly and are often loved and respected. Teachers apprentice new teachers, but intentional training may be difficult.

The curriculum may have been "recycled" over the years, and they may be cautious about introducing new material. Bible stories and moral maxims are most important. Small churches may not be able to group children by age, but they usually separate infants and toddlers, K-5th grade, and then pre-teens. There may or may not be a youth group, although there will likely be several "youth events" during the year that provide opportunities to teach and model Christian values. Adult classes may continue for many years.

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

Stock Cars and State Parks may struggle to fit small group participation into their seasonal participation and recreational interests. Some will participate in midweek Bible study groups, especially if the pastor leads them. Many women have always participated in affinity groups related to crafts or domestic activities, and some men gather in workshops to do repairs on vehicles and outdoors gear. These might be converted into more intentional small groups that include prayer and deeper conversation. Larger groups based on gender and ages are still important. Leadership for women's and men's groups usually requires relevant female or male leaders.

The challenge will be leadership. People prefer a designated leader whose age, experience, and spirituality deserve respect. However, the older generations that were held in such respect are passing on. Many adults do not feel they qualify, and may consider it presumptuous to volunteer. They are unlikely to use video technology as a supplement. Pastors will need to be very intentional to select, train, and provide ongoing coaching for potential leaders.

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	X	X
Health and Wellness		X
Quality of Life	X	X
Addiction Intervention		X
Interpersonal Relationships		
Human Potential		
Salvation and Human Destiny	X	

Stock Cars and State Parks are not particularly active in civic affairs. They rely on professionals to provide necessary social services, but tend to be slow to volunteer. They will rally to protect traditional family values, and endorse care giving programs. Despite their outdoors lifestyles, they are not particularly worried about the environment ... unless the big city or industry tries to invade their territory to create a garbage dump, quarry, or industrial site. This segment tends to be very hostile toward urbanization.

They especially appreciate outreach ministries that address basic needs for shelter, food, and clothing. In the past they have been unconcerned about crime, but increasingly worry about personal and home security. They support programs help military veterans. As the rural economy struggles, there is increasing alcohol and drug abuse, and an increasing interest in recovery programs. Parish Nurse and other healthcare support programs are often connected with the church. Wellness centers, rehabilitation centers, and basic physiotherapy are under-funded by the state and welcomed in association with a church. These people are remarkably sacrificial in the event of any family crisis or natural disaster. They give with extraordinary generosity, and volunteer their time and energy. Many will even risk their lives or the stability of their own homes for the sake of neighbors.

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	
x	Ecclesiastical		Modern	x	Classic Christendom
	Utilitarian		Postmodern		Contemporary Post–Christendom

Stock Cars and State Parks may not have sophisticated or artistic sensibilities about church architecture, but they do have a strong sense of sacred space. Church buildings may be small, and are often older, but they are well maintained and readily identifiable as Christian. The doors are often left unlocked so that people in need of prayer can visit any time ... but parishioners and neighbors all keep an eye on the building to make sure it is safe.

The symbols are classically Christian, and tend to repeat the motifs of cross, open Bible, and scenes from the Old and New Testaments. Catholic churches will also have symbols of the Eucharist. The Stations of the Cross may be rustic or even handmade, but are refurbished and readily accessible. Pulpits, altars or communion tables, communion ware and baptismal fonts are traditionally designed, but not fancy. Large "Reading Bibles" and older, authorized versions of scripture are cherished. Since that is what most generations have memorized, they continue to use them. All memorials are important, because the donor families are usually still active in the church.

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		Informed Philanthropy & Pledging
	Designated Programs & Mission Projects	x	Lifestyle Coaching & Family Financial Planning

Stock Cars and State Parks are accustomed to trust their pastor and board to use money wisely. They prefer to donate to a single budget, but may provide a large discretionary fund for use by the pastor. Since trust is high, any financial malfeasance is a great scandal. Members do not usually require detailed financial statements, unless there is some unusual problem regarding property maintenance or the pastor's salary and benefits. People tend to be skeptical of required denominational subsidies because they think the denominational overhead costs unnecessary or question changing denominational policies. Clergy are often torn between the expectations of their superiors and the skepticism of their members.

Stewardship campaigns are generally viewed as unnecessary. Costs are fixed and only require inflationary increases. Depending on their local faith tradition, they may practice tithing. They address any financial shortfalls with generous giving at the end of the year. A single "town meeting" will set the budget and plan the future. Although committed to the church, people in this segment tend to be pretty self-indulgent with their discretionary income. They spend a lot on cars and trucks, outdoors equipment, and occasional trips to NASCAR races and state fairs. They do appreciate advice on Christian family financial management ... or rather, how to juggle their money to give more to God without curtailing their personal passions and habits too much.

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	x	Newspaper	x	Corded Telephone	x	Verbal Announcements
Email Receptive	x	Broadcast Cable TV		Internet Radio	x	Print	x	AM/FM Radio	x	Personal Visits

Stock Cars and State Parks are often hard to reach. If the schedule changes for any event, anticipate that people will come at the wrong time anyway because they didn't get the message. Receive them warmly and without criticism, and make whatever adjustments are necessary to avoid embarrassment.

Many rely on corded telephones at home and only watch television occasionally. Many have a satellite dish so that they can tune in on sports, car races, and the occasional rerun of a favorite family show. They do not tend to surf website and don't expect the church to have one.

The church best communicates with these people through gatherings and verbal announcements. They will read newspapers and newsletters, and mass mailings may also reach them. They will carry away brochures, refrigerator magnets, key rings, and other objects that remind them of the church or provide them with devotional aids. Reinforce announcements with telephone calls to the home ... but there may or may not be an answering machine, and you may need to try several times.

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.