

Segment **M44: Red White and Bluegrass**

Lower middle-income rural families with diverse household dynamics

Resource: Mosaic by Experian.

Religious Experience in a Nutshell

Religious Perspective: *God, Family, and Country*

Common Spiritual Issues: *Feelings of estrangement, anxieties about emptiness and displacement*

Potential Influence

Lifestyle Compatibility	Family Group M Families in Motion	Frequent Neighbors
D15 Sports Utility Families	M44 Red White and Bluegrass	E21 Unspoiled Splendor
N46 True Grit Americans	M45 Diapers and Debit Cards	I30 Stockcars and State Parks
N47 Countrified Pragmatics		J35 Rural Escape
O55 Family Troopers		L43 Homemade Happiness

General Comments

Red White and Bluegrass express an old-fashioned pride that has been handed down over the generations. Their roots are on the farm, but now many work in construction, transportation, health care, and other blue collar jobs. Their priorities are God, family, and country. These reinforce each other. Their patriotism is more about protection than expansion. They have agrarian roots, but have moved from the farm to other forms of blue collar work. They often relocate within commuting range of work, so that church and family anchor their lives.

God is important, and the church is very much a part of their lives. Churches tend to be conservative, and take faith and Christian lifestyle very seriously. They usually support conservative public policies and political candidates. The churches which capture their interest are not necessarily high tech, but do emphasize divine immanence, mutual accountability, conformity with traditional family expectations, and hope for tomorrow. Positive personal relationships and experiential worship are important. They appreciate a church that is down to earth and focuses on the family. It is not too intellectual, but very spiritual.

Family is important. The children are usually quite young, and the aging grandparents might share some of the parenting load. Some have military careers which bring greater stress to family life. Churches often provide personal support and counseling services. They prefer a family friendly church with strong children and youth ministries, and strong small groups for adults and seniors. They may gravitate toward large, resource-size churches with a variety of programming and an emphasis on disciple making.

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	
	Caregiver	x	Discipler		Visionary
x	Enabler		Guru		Mentor
	CEO				Pilgrim

Red White and Bluegrass often form strong bonds with the pastor and staff of their church. Pastors may be called “preachers”, but “preaching” is not really the most important part of their leadership. These are pastors for whom preaching and Sunday worship are only one part of a larger process to mature Christians in faith and shape Christian behavior in daily life. Pastors are usually expressive and Biblically knowledgeable preachers, but do not need to be the best public communicators. Their greatest strength is the ability to teach by word and deed what it means to live like a Christian. Pastors oversee interconnected programs for spiritual growth, and are especially helpful coaching young parents to shape their home life and raise their children around Christian values and beliefs.

Pastors are usually trained in a Bible College or Seminar, but may or may not be ordained by a denomination. They must be spiritual leaders and role models. They frequently teach a Bible study class for leaders, and coach small group leaders to exercise care giving among members. These pastors are strong witnesses beyond the church in the community, and are especially attentive to seekers, visitors, and new families. Large churches add staff who specialize in particular areas of ministry (especially a worship or music director, youth pastor, and small group developer). Pastor and staff are readily available for emergency counseling, and observe and celebrate lifecycle transitions among the member families of the church.

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	X	Multiple Choices		Take-Out
			Healthy Choices		

Red White and Bluegrass may live in small town subdivisions or mobile homes, but they usually have rural or agricultural roots. They own large lots, and often plant large vegetable gardens to supplement the family groceries. Refreshments are pretty basic: large urns of supermarket coffee and tea (hot and cold), along with sugary treats. Nobody is particularly diet conscious (although single parents may be concerned about their children’s food allergies. Provide separate serving stations for children, with lower tables, and an assortment of fruit juices and smaller portions of goodies. “Fast and easy” is more important than “healthy and recyclable”. Always provide additional volunteer servers to staff the various serving stations. Pot luck fellowship dinners, designed to include the whole family, are very welcome to these people with small discretionary budgets. This is an opportunity for good times ... and healthier eating. Families may bring fresh vegetables and enjoy home cooking, and avoid the fast and frozen food that characterizes much of their weekly diet.

Red White and Bluegrass often arrive at the church building with a car full of smaller children and infant paraphernalia. A sheltered, safe drop-off entrance is crucial, and churches should deploy greeters who can help families unload and enter the church. Deploy the same people after church to help them exit. The vestibule and refreshment center before or in-between worship services can be pretty chaotic. Provide lots of room, minimize objects with sharp corners, and provide extra storage space for strollers. Greeters will be very busy directing traffic, welcoming visitors and relatives, and pointing people in the right direction. They should wear big, bold nametags, or some identifiable apparel (T-shirt, hat, etc.) to identify their role. Always train greeters to be extra friendly, sensitively to special needs, and capable of stating the mission of the church over and over again.

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
	Educational Worship	x	Transformational Worship	x	Coaching Worship
	Healing Worship				

For *Red White and Bluegrass*, worship may be a special day, but it is clearly an extension of their daily lives and a part of a larger weekly spiritual life. They often come wearing the same functional clothes, sneakers, and work boots ... only cleaner. They bring with them habits of table grace and personal or family devotions during the week. All the elements of traditional worship do not need to be emphasized on Sunday, because Sunday worship is not a “stand alone” event in their Christian behavior.

Worship is always upbeat and inspirational. Praise music with a strong rhythm begins worship, and music tends to set the mood, frame the message, and connect everything together. The music director or band leader is more important than the average organist or choir director might be in a traditional church. Christian music may have a distinctly bluegrass, country, or rock sound, and is usually led by band gathered around an electronic keyboard. There is often soft background music. Lyrics are uncomplicated and clear, and the words to prayers, music, and the points of the sermon are visually displayed (projected or computer generated).

Worship usually focuses on lifestyle coaching or personal transformational. Worship often follows a practical theme for the day (or a theme extending several weeks) on a practical subject of Christian living. The pastor often speaks for 30 minutes or so, without a written text, and with frequent references to scripture. The message may be supplemented by video clips or drama. Alternatively, worship may focus on changing lives (conversion, spiritual blessings, addiction intervention, etc.) The message is more motivational, and often includes a witness from the band or congregation, and healing prayer or altar call.

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
x	Experiential	x	Topical	x	Peer Group

Red White and Bluegrass households are large and contain multiple generations. Therefore, they can be open to many forms, themes, and resources for Christian education. Children's Sunday school is usually based on a curriculum from a Christian (but not necessarily denominational) publishing house. It may be customized by local teachers, but more often it includes a teacher's guide that is followed carefully. Older grades may be more experiential. The budget of the church may allow crafts, Christian videos and video games, puppetry, and special music, but often the church budget is as constrained as family budgets. Classes are organized by age, and curriculums emphasize Bible stories and moral teachings. Sunday school is usually separate from the worship time, although preschoolers may leave worship for a separate "Children's Church" experience.

Adult Sunday school is important. Classes gather around a more mature member with credibility as a spiritual person. The class studies a curriculum that contains exercises for each lesson. The curriculum focus may be topical, but is primarily informed by scripture. Sunday school for children once attracted adults, but these days adult participation is what stimulates family participation. Adults bring children with them. Men are particularly important for Sunday school, since they are often considered the head of household and pacesetters for the traditional family.

Christian spirituality is often a natural part of home life. Church families often pray before meals, and couples may pray or read the Bible together during the week. If they can afford it and it is readily available, they might opt for Christian schools or even home schooling. The church may have inexpensive day care and Vacation Bible School programs. The men's ministries strive to be as strong as the women's ministries.

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
x	Rotated Leaders	x	Shared Affinity

Red White and Bluegrass often participate in midweek small groups as part of the discipling process. The pastor or paid staff person trains and coaches small group leaders to build relationships and deepen faith. A book or workbook is usually the focus of conversation in small groups, and sometimes this book is uniformly studied by all small groups. The curriculum strongly references scripture, but is very practical in its lifestyle application. Leadership is sometimes rotated among group participants, but many people in this segment prefer “following” than “leading”. A small group leader is often recruited by the pastor using spiritual gifts inventories, and regularly coached to lead the group. Groups may be quite structured for prayer, fellowship, and learning. They often have very clear times for closure, and intentional mentoring moments to move people to the next group that will enhance their individual spiritual growth.

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

Red White and Bluegrass are often conservative in their social views and may also be politically active. Locally, they are especially concerned about quality of life issues related to safety, crime prevention, affordable housing, schools, and so on. Nationally or regionally they are especially concerned about cultural diversity and immigration, jobs, urbanization, and the threat of corporate and political corruption. They are increasingly involved in community services and they can be passionate advocates for a cause. Their default rural values, however, predispose them to conversation and persuasion rather than confrontation. They seek to protect a way of life that combines faith, economic security, family unity, and community harmony.

Red White and Bluegrass can be extraordinarily generous responding to local or regional emergencies, and readily come to the aid of their neighbors. They may serve on cross-generational mission teams locally or globally that combine both work and witness. The midweek small group is often the primary unit for mission (rather than a committee or task force) because it can more easily combine prayer, planning, and action. The small group can become a primary entry point for newcomers to the faith or into the church.

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

Red, White and Bluegrass prefer church buildings that stand out in the neighborhood as religious centers (i.e. steeple and cross), but which are otherwise quite versatile and resemble other public buildings. Exterior signs are very visible, day or night, and often communicates the theme for the Sunday message and a “thought for the day”. The name and logo of the church communicate the unique vision of the congregation.

Hospitality is important. There is usually a sheltered car port, and clear signage to find the office, worship center, and nursery. The vestibule is large, and may include refreshment stations. The hospitality center, nursery, and worship center are usually proximate to each other (on the same floor and just a few steps away). The worship center is more of a hall than a sanctuary: flexible seating, stage, projection screen, and plenty of space for a musical ensemble (electronic piano, amplified guitars, and percussion). The room may have a few symbols. Windows may be shaded, and the stage may have some artificial plants. Technology is modestly progressive. Amplified audio and video screens are used constantly. Budgets are limited, so projected images rather than LCD screens are most common. However, the building may not be wireless or cell phone friendly, and the internet may not be available in worship center or Sunday school space.

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

Red White and Bluegrass usually have low salaries, few investments, and functional tastes. They have significant debt burdens. They use credit and debit, but may not carry much cash. Occasionally they have to make ends meet by borrowing against payday at high interest rates. Aside from paying the weekly bills, they are most intentional about paying insurance premiums and church obligations. These people trust the church leaders to invest or spend money appropriately. Financial malfeasance seriously undermines the credibility of the church, and financial responsibility seriously reinforces the credibility of the church.

The major thrust of a stewardship campaign is to help young struggling families develop a lifestyle of Christian generosity. They may welcome a budget and annual financial statement, but want coaching to develop a Christian family financial plan that allows them to minimize interest payments on debts and maximize giving to the church. The church is their primary target for charitable giving, and they often strive to tithe (although they may or may not succeed each month).

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

Red White and Bluegrass are often dual career households with long commutes and busy households, so they increasingly rely on mobile telephones and some email. They are also investing more time in social media. Churches should create an email database and remind church members of important meetings or events by text. Develop a significant social media platform that is monitored carefully.

They are not necessarily open to print. They may not read orders of service, printed announcements in the bulletin, printed newsletters, or mass mailings. They respond positively to radio advertising and talk programs, listen to verbal announcements (especially if they are also streamed electronically during worship or coffee hour). They are open to personal visits, provided you make an appointment ahead of time. The best way to communicate information within the church is during large and small group gatherings.

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.