

Segment

S69: Urban Survivors

Middle-age, older singles and single parents established in modest urban settings

Resource: Mosaic by Experian.

Religious Experience in a Nutshell

Religious perspective: *Hoping that prayer works*

Common Spiritual Issues: *Feeling lonely and frustrated, anxieties about guilt and death*

Potential Influence

Lifestyle Compatibility	Family Group S Economic Challenges	Frequent Neighbors
H28 Everyday Moderates	S68 Small Town Shallow Pockets	D18 Suburban Attainment
P59 Expanding Horizons	S69 Urban Survivors	E20 No Place Like Home
P60 Striving Forward	S70 Tight Money	O52 Urban Ambition
P61 Humble Beginnings	S71 Hard Times	R67 Hope for Tomorrow

General Comments

Urban Survivors may be widowed or divorced, and some may have children living with them. They're striving to improve their life for themselves and their neighborhoods. They are involved in their community, and usually involved in their church. The church helps them socialize with friends and provides meaningful opportunities to volunteer. And the church often provides social service options and advocates for health care, quality of life improvements, and job opportunities. Worship gives them inspiration and strength.

They often have very materialistic aspirations. Alongside their faith in God's purpose, they also believe that money is the key to a better life. They are willing to work at boring jobs if it will help them make money. They want to give their children things they never had, and get to a place of financial security so they can just enjoy life. The boundary between a theology of material success and a theology of unconditional grace may be blurred. They may feel grateful to God for good luck, but they may also feel estranged from God when they have bad luck. They expect the church to be active in the community and provide programs for self-improvement and community vitality, but also counseling to sustain self-esteem in hard times.

Faith is important, but systematic theology is not. Some are more liberal, and some more conservative, but their approach to faith is more pragmatic than dogmatic. Faith is optimistic about this life, and not just eternal life, God is active in their personal and community experience. They may see God's hand in little things as well as major achievements, and discern miracles in seemingly mundane events.

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		Discipler		Visionary
x	Enabler		Guru		Mentor
x	CEO				Pilgrim

Urban Survivors expect pastors to be good managers. They have often had previous experience in business, social services, or health care. They must be able to network effectively with government, non-profit, social service, and health care sectors and build community partnerships with police and emergency services. Fund raising will always be a challenge, and pastors may need to know how to write grant applications and collaborate with other agencies. The church often hosts or directs a variety of social services during the week, and the pastor may need to oversee or participate in multiple boards. Pastors take responsibility and authority to lead the church. They are assertive leaders among outspoken members, and don't wait for consensus before taking action.

Pastors are usually passionate motivational speakers, for whom the Bible is a primary resource. They frequently quote Biblical texts and apply them to daily living. Pastors connect their own stories of life struggle and spiritual victory with the lives of parishioners. Emergency counseling and personal support may be high priorities. Pastors need to be adaptive and flexible, helping each person discern their own place in God's plan and helping them follow Christ in their own way. Modeling a spiritual lifestyle is more important than telling people what to do or what to believe. They articulate core faith convictions, but are not overly concerned with agreement about all doctrines.

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		

Urban Survivors lead simple, frugal lives. However, they want to look good and appear successful. They dress in their Sunday best, and may travel in stylish (older model) upscale vehicles. They like to make an entrance, and greeters should honor them with warm welcomes. Wear name tags that proclaim the mission of the church, and remember or learn the names of visitors.

Basic coffee and tea brewed in big steel urns, milk or cream straight from the cartons, along with fresh donuts or bulk food store desserts, in quantity, is all they really want. Anything fancier seems pretentious, and the money could be spent for outreach. Make refreshments available before and after worship (or in between Sunday school and worship). Provide plenty of space for animated conversations. A resource table with various devotional guides, community news items, and social service brochures should be updated regularly and located near the refreshments.

Pot luck suppers, barbecues, and fellowship dinners help these older singles, couples, and families socialize with friends, assimilate newcomers, and supplement their diets. Churches often have regular monthly dinners as well as celebrations for special occasions. These dinners can be more intentional about nutrition, and provide fresh fruits and vegetables that may be hard to get in these often forgotten urban neighborhoods.

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	x	Mission-Connectional Worship
x	Educational Worship		Transformational Worship		Coaching Worship
	Healing Worship				

Urban Survivors connect with different kinds of worship to address emerging needs, but most consistently they expect worship to be highly inspirational, educational about the fundamentals of faith and morality, with a strong link to mission and community outreach. Worship is upbeat and interactive. Praise and thanksgiving are the most common themes of music. Music may be a mix of traditional hymns and contemporary genres (Gospel, R&B). Occasionally music might even mix the sounds of 1940's jazz with Hip Hop and Reggae. People immerse themselves in the music, either singing or listening. It is more of a spiritual than aesthetic experience. Musicians are often the front line of evangelism. Choir or band members should make a point of circulating during refreshments and talking with newcomers.

The sermon is grounded in scripture, but tends to be more motivational than expository. It is intended more to encourage and uplift than inform or explain. The preacher encourages people to interact with the message, and make an emotional commitment to the truth described. Sermons may start with a text, but the preacher frequently adds spontaneous asides and stories. Prayers of intercession and supplication are important parts of worship. Meditative music often provides a background to the pastoral prayer. Prayers are usually not written and unison, but a combination of directed and spontaneous. The length of the worship service is unimportant. It is the intensity of worship that matters. People expect to leave with greater optimism and strength for the week.

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

Urban Survivors value Sunday school for children and all youth programming. They want to influence the younger generations to have strong faith and moral principles that will shape healthy families and social responsibility. And they see the Sunday school and youth program as safe environments that surround children and youth with positive role models. Youth leaders may be younger singles or couples, but male role models are especially important. Programs are often built around sports, but always have a strong biblical foundation and prayer element. Teams are formed ad hoc for local mission and outreach.

Teachers are often matriarchs of the church, who apprentice younger women for future leadership. These people believe that the youth are the future of the church, and are prepared to volunteer their time to organize and facilitate traditional curriculums. The workbooks and printed material may be recycled over the years, but upgraded with fresh ideas for crafts, games, and other activities. The curriculum is usually centered on stories and bedrock beliefs from the Old and New Testaments, and is generally organized to follow the Christian Year. The basic goal of Sunday school is to apply timeless Biblical truths to daily, contemporary events. They are less interested in abstractions, and more interested in tips and tactics to improve their lives and daily routines.

The adults in this segment may also attend Sunday school classes. Some may be led by a senior who is highly respected for spiritual depth and Christian lifestyle. Other classes may rotate leadership by following a book or curriculum with discussion questions. The pastor often teaches a class that is often directed toward newcomers or younger members.

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		Curriculum Study
	Rotated Leaders	x	Shared Affinity

Urban Survivors are more likely to participate in large groups than small groups. Specific groups for women and men are common. There may be a speaker or a program, followed by food and fellowship. The topic is often current and practical, and provides expert advice to improve homes, relationships, health, and jobs. Allow plenty of time for questions or even debates. These are often held at church in the evening, and it is important to protect safety with outdoor illumination and oversight.

Small groups may be less attractive. They do not want to judge or be judged, and they don't want to appear separate or elitist to the larger congregation. It may be difficult to find and train self-confident group leaders. The pastor, or someone to whom the pastor can delegate spiritual authority, may need to lead the group. Such authority is rarely conveyed simply by holding an office, and is more likely a matter of age and experience. Small group leadership training can be an important strategy to mature elders or deacons for leadership. The pastor often needs to work hard to expand the leadership core, or risk burnout with a few overactive volunteers.

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

Urban Survivors have so many needs that any outreach program, on any topic, will be helpful to someone. The challenge for church leaders is to focus their money and energy for maximum impact, rather than fritter away resources trying to do everything at once. Churches often develop a major, signature outreach ministry that eventually becomes a registered 501(c)3 non-profit linked to the church pastor and board.

Any kind of fellowship gathering is considered important outreach. *Urban Survivors* are apt to feel lonely and isolated. They welcome large group activities with food, amateur entertainment, bingo, and card games. They can gather around a large screen TV to watch a football or baseball game. They may also gather in support groups for people with disabilities, chronic illnesses, and addictions. Twelve Step groups are common. *Urban Survivors* may be unhappy with their economic position, living conditions, and the fate of their neighborhoods. They are keenly aware of continuing racism and economic discrimination. They both support and benefit from social service ministries that provide food, used household items and appliances, winter clothes, coats, gloves, and boots, and financial assistance in emergencies. Churches often create large discretionary funds for the use of the pastor, in addition to providing food banks, clothing depots, and other services.

These outspoken people can become aggressive in behalf of their communities. They often encourage the church to advocate public policy changes. They will challenge bigotry and the hidden racism that pervades urban development. They will challenge abuses by absentee landlords and advocate for human rights. They can participate in rallies and protest marches. They can also be aggressive about evangelism (which may be seen as the flip side of social action), because faith commitment changes attitudes and not just social conditions.

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
	Utilitarian		Postmodern		Contemporary Post–Christendom

Urban Survivors have often grown up in the church and appreciate the ambiance and symbolism of a church building. Even if it difficult to maintain, they tend to prefer buildings that “look like a church”. The exterior often has some identifying architectural elements (like steeple, archways, pointed doors or windows) even if they are not fancy. The sanctuaries are often traditionally designed with rows of chairs (pews), center aisles, and pulpits. Classic Christian symbols and pictures or murals depicting Biblical events are typical. Nevertheless, they are pragmatic about property, and willing to change almost anything if there is a clear and beneficial mission purpose.

Urban Survivors place a higher priority on the relevant programming and useful services that can be provided in a church building. The building is more of a multi-purpose community center or “launching pad” for useful programs than a theological statement. These people are not technologically savvy, and cannot really afford computers, internet, and fancy video screens in the sanctuary. They may or may not have basic audio systems and old-fashioned flip charts and blackboards are more common than overhead projectors and screens. Offices, parlors, and classrooms are often an eclectic mix of old, recycled furniture and equipment. Volunteers usually supply the expertise and elbow grease to maintain the building. If professional help is required, it is usually the friend of a friend and cash only.

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

Urban Survivors have low and often intermittent incomes. They have some savings and insurance, but probably don't use credit cards and prefer to pay cash. They often want the church to keep enough reserve funds in the bank to pay the bills for a month or two in case of emergency, but often manage the church on a shoestring. They rely heavily on property rentals and denominational subsidies. If they can create a non-profit agency within the church, they will try to obtain grants that partially cover costs for maintenance, utilities, and even personnel. They are unlikely to launch a capital campaign unless absolutely necessary, although they will partner with denominations and government agencies to create low income housing, assisted living apartments, medical clinics, and continuing education space.

Urban Survivors may be poor money managers, and they are financially cautious as a result. They will participate in a traditional church stewardship campaign, and want to be informed about financial shortfalls and legacies, debts and liabilities. However, a narrative budget that reveals how money is used is preferred to a line budget that describes how money is managed. They try to be generous toward the church, and some may tithe, but are often hesitant to pledge money in advance. Special fund raising projects are common, whether it is for emergency building repairs or outreach projects. They try to be extra generous with their time and talent, in order to make up for their inability to donate much money to the church.

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

Urban Survivors generally favor traditional media for church communications. They read newspapers cover to cover, read and reread magazines, pick up brochures and flyers. They like printed church newsletters that update prayer concerns, coming events, church finances, and mission projects ... plus extra information about service agencies and public policies. In order to save money for postage, the church often creates a mailbox in the vestibule for every member.

They may discourage too many verbal announcements in church because it interrupts the spiritual experience, but they do value announcements inserted in the Sunday bulletin or handouts at the door. Oral repetition during refreshments or at other gatherings keeps them mindful of important dates and special concerns, and it also contributes to the atmosphere of personal support and care giving in worship and congregational life.

In their private lives, *Urban Survivors* are increasingly involved in social media. Churches may wish to create a basic website and develop their own social media page to promote congregational communications. *Urban Survivors* also watch TV and listen to radio. Churches can extend their reach among these people through radio advertising and local cable stations. Exterior signs and interior bulletin boards help people keep up with church news, prepare for coming events, and track the progress of missions.

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.