

SEEING AROUND CORNERS

Discerning the Future of Groups

What influences our thinking about the future?

- What/who we read
- Who we listen to
- Our past and current ministry context

#1 - _____ will rise in importance

“Growing churches...will realize that connection and community will win out over content in the end... Nobody should be able to out-community the local the church.” – Carey Nieuwhof’s 8 Disruptive Trends that will Rule the Church in 2021 (trend 5)

Questions to ponder:

- Why is connection so important to people today?
- How can group leaders balance content and community?

#2 – We will work harder _____ new people into groups

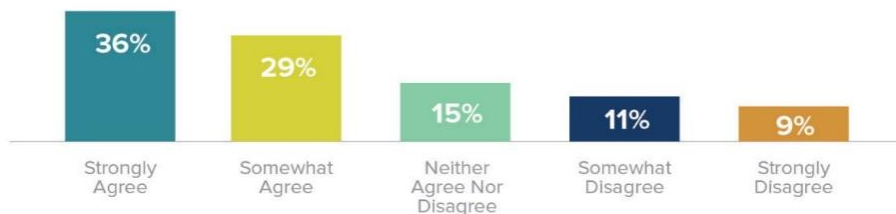


1994	85%
2000	72%
2005	68%
2010	65%
2015	65%
2017	63%

Percent of worship attenders in Sunday School or Small Groups

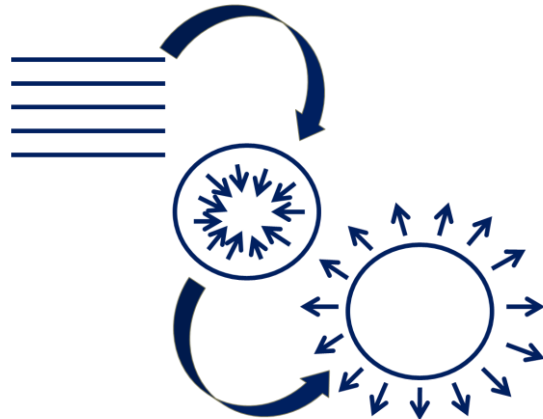
“I can walk with God without other believers”

From online survey for SWBTS Center for Revitalization of 2,500 churchgoers Jan. 2019



The LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone..." – **Genesis 2:18**

What does this graphic say to you?

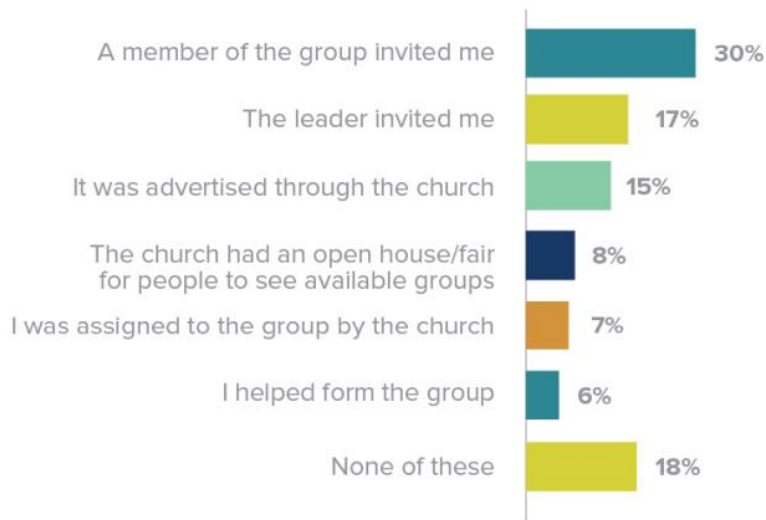


People are taking up to _____ months to find their place & join a church.

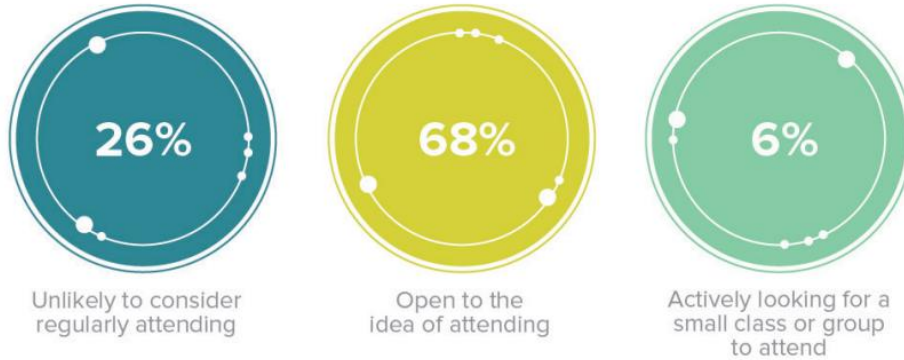
Question to ponder:

- How would you explain the reasons why a person and/or a family should join your church and/or a Bible study group?

#3 - The #1 reason people attend groups will continue to be #1



Attitude of those not in groups toward attending a small class or group through their church in the future

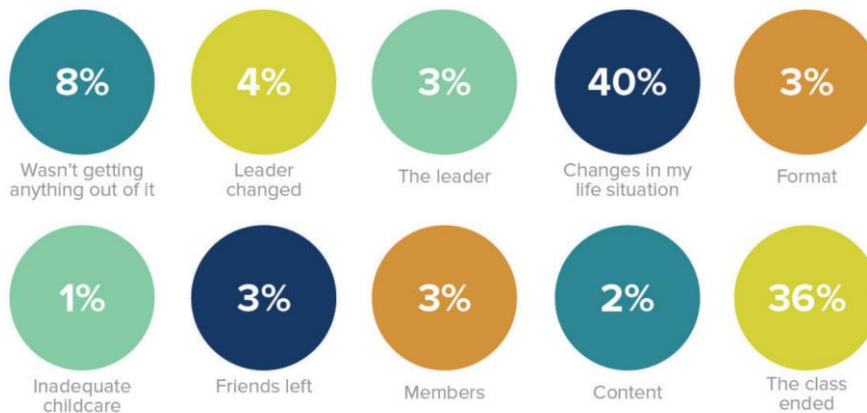


Questions to ponder:

- Why are churchgoers hesitant to invite others?
- If people are open to attending groups, how can your church encourage them to do that?

#4 – The top reasons people _____ groups will remain the same

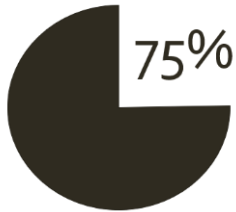
What caused non-attendees to stop attending?



Question to ponder:

- Based on the information in the graphic, what insights can you gain to help you lead your group to retain people?

#5 – _____-groups / D-groups will grow in popularity



Average percentage of people who have returned to worship & Bible study in SBC churches

All of Lifeway's *Daily Discipleship Guides* have a micro-group/D-group feature

Question to ponder:

- In what ways would Micro-groups/D-groups be beneficial in a post-COVID world?

#6 – Savvy groups will have multiple _____ in the water

In-person group sessions

Virtual Bible study options (Zoom, etc.)

Micro-groups / D-groups

Virtual mid-week check-ins

Regular fellowship opportunities

Community ministry projects

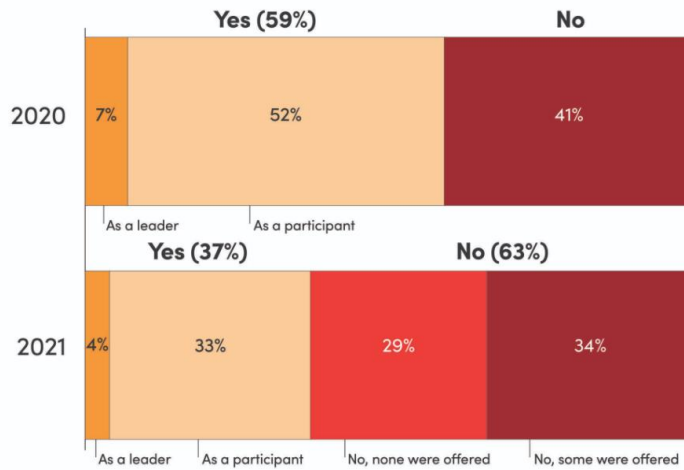
Bottom line: Sunday School won't be 9am - noon on Sunday mornings

#7 – Reaching the _____ will be required

The average church & Bible study groups we've heard from are at 75% of pre-COVID attendance levels

How many participated in small groups?

Among U.S. churchgoers



Question to ponder:

- What steps can you take to reclaim the people who've drifted away from your group and/or department?

#8 - _____ leaders will be the future of our Bible study ministries

Apprenticeship has a long history dating back to the earliest times in Egypt and Babylon. Apprentices were developed so that skills could be passed down from craftsman to craftsman, ensuring that there were always enough artisans to serve the needs of society.

Religious Volunteering Continues Pandemic Decline

Percentage of Americans who said they had volunteered with a religious organization in the past year. Volunteer rates also fell during the Great Recession.

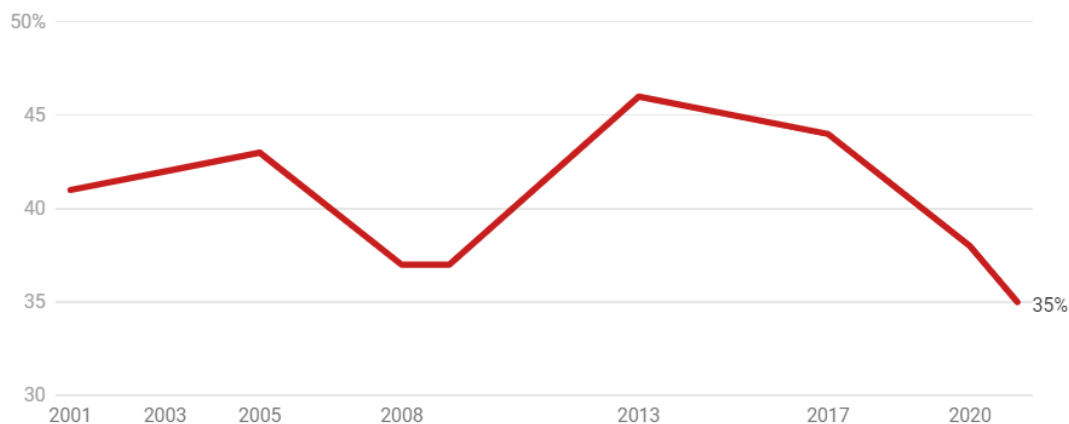


Chart: Christianity Today • Source: Gallup • Created with Datawrapper

Apprentice leaders help the church in 3 important ways

1. They replenish the supply of leaders we must have. They are the lifeblood of Sunday School.
2. They keep a group's focus outward, because they start new groups.
3. They allow people to use their spiritual gifts in significant ways.

Question to ponder:

- What things would an apprentice need to know to lead one of your groups?

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