THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

Statistics for Mission 2024



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Published 2025 by Data Services

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Note, **June 2026:** this is an amended version of the originally published report, correcting an error in Figure 8 and associated text, p16.

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Commentary

The information contained within this report is based on figures provided by thousands of clergy, churchwardens, and others. I am extremely grateful to them, as I am to many colleagues in dioceses and elsewhere who have assisted with the collection of this dataset.

This report concentrates on national totals and trends, with diocesan figures being available in accompanying spreadsheets published online, as usual. Church- and parish-level information is available to diocesan colleagues, and is used extensively by people seeking to understand and support the work of local churches.

The annual Statistics for Mission survey seeks summary attendance and participation information from Church of England churches. The questions cover various aspects of church life, including attendance at worship (measured in several different ways), and numbers of baptisms, weddings, and funerals.

Among the information sought is usual Sunday attendance; average Sunday attendance across the first four Sundays in October; average weekly (i.e. Sunday plus midweek) attendance in October; and a church's Worshipping Community - the number of people who worship with that church at least once a month. By all four of these headline measures, attendance rose slightly from 2023 to 2024, while remaining some way below pre-pandemic levels. Some measures of attendance remained below projected pre-pandemic trends, while others are approaching or above projected trends.

There was a rapid recovery in attendance and participation from the pandemic-related lows of 2020; the speed of the recovery has slowed, with smaller increases in attendance from 2023 to 2024 than in previous years. The fact that attendance has increased in recent years does not mean that it will continue to increase; the fact that increases have slowed does not mean that the pre-pandemic pattern of gradual decline will be resumed: there is no predictive model of church attendance, so recent trends cannot tell us with any certainty what will happen next.

I am always happy to receive suggestions for other ways in which this detailed dataset can be used. There is an astonishing amount of detail, provided by many thousands of churches and stretching back over many years. If there is additional analysis that would be of value, please let me know (see contact details on page 2). The multiple aspects of church life covered in the Statistics for Mission dataset are interesting in their own right, but are most interesting and most useful when treated together rather than separately, since they all tell different parts of a bigger story. Numbers can't tell us everything, but they can surely, if used responsibly, tell us something meaningful about the lives of the Church of England's gloriously faithful and diverse church communities.

Church of England attendance and participation

2024 overview and recent trends

The Church of England's Worshipping Community – its number of regular worshippers – was 1,009,000 people in 2024.

The Church of England's all age average weekly attendance, which includes Sunday and midweek attendance, was 702,000 people in 2024 – 608,000 adults and 94,000 children aged under 16.

Many measures of church attendance and participation fell sharply from 2019 to 2020, because of the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, then recovered somewhat. For some measures there were further increases from 2023 to 2024. Almost all measures remain below their 2019 levels (Table 1).

Adult average weekly attendance in 2024, based on in-person attendance in October, was 18% lower than in 2019, and 1.8% higher than in 2023; child average weekly attendance in 2024 was 24% lower than in 2019, and 0.4% higher than in 2023.

The Worshipping Community of a church is defined as those people who attend worship regularly, once a month or more (whether in-person or "at home"). The total Worshipping Community of regular worshippers in 2024 was 9.4% lower than in 2019, and 0.6% higher than in 2023. Churches were once again encouraged to count their regular Church at Home worshippers in their Worshipping Community, to avoid excluding those people who were worshipping entirely at Church at Home services, and those people who attended a mixture of in-person and Church at Home services.

The number of people on church Electoral rolls in 2024 was 3.0% lower than in 2019, and 0.1% higher than in 2023.

Easter and Advent attendance were higher in 2024 than in 2023; Christmas attendance was lower in 2024 than 2023. All were below their 2019 levels.

The numbers of baptisms and marriages in 2024 were approximately 30% lower than in 2019, and approximately 10% lower than in 2023. The post-pandemic rescheduling of baptisms and marriages appears to have slowed.

The number of funerals taken by churches in 2024 was 24% lower than in 2019, and 10% lower than in 2023. The proportion of funerals taking place in churches rather than in crematoria/cemeteries continued to increase.

The number of confirmations in 2024 was 16% lower than in 2019, and 5.3% higher than in 2023.

Table 1: Changes in church attendance and participation from 2019 to 2020, from 2019 to 2024, and from 2023 to 2024

	Estimated change, 2019 to 2020	Estimated change, 2019 to 2024	Estimated change, 2023 to 2024
Worshipping Community	-7.3%	-9.4%	0.6%
Adult average weekly attendance (October)	-57%	-18%	1.8%
Child average weekly attendance (October)	-77%	-24%	0.4%
All age average weekly attendance (October)	-60%	-19%	1.6%
Adult average Sunday attendance (October)	-55%	-18%	1.8%
Child average Sunday attendance (October)	-74%	-23%	-0.8%
All age average Sunday attendance (October)	-58%	-19%	1.5%
School service attendance (October)	Not available	-11%	-11%
Adult Usual Sunday attendance	Not available	-14%	1.7%
Child Usual Sunday attendance	Not available	-17%	2.0%
All age Usual Sunday attendance	Not available	-14%	1.7%
Electoral roll	-1.3%	-3.0%	0.1%
Easter attendance	Not available	-19%	1.7%
Christmas attendance	-79%	-20%	-5.3%
Advent attendance (congregation and community services)	-78%	-12%	6.9%
Advent attendance (civic and school services)	-97%	-14%	4.8%
Baptisms and thanksgivings	-81%	-31%	-9.6%
Marriages and services of prayer and dedication	-71%	-32%	-8.9%
Funerals in church	-35%	-16%	-8.1%
Funerals at crematoria/cemeteries	48%	-36%	-15%
Funerals total	-3.9%	-24%	-10%
Confirmations	-84%	-16%	5.3%

Within each of the Church of England's 42 dioceses there has been a similar picture to the national summary in Table 1 (with, of course, some variation between dioceses): for almost all dioceses and for most measures of attendance and participation there was a gradual pre-pandemic decline, a steep fall in 2020, and a subsequent recovery to levels some way below what they were in 2019.

Comparing 2024 figures with 2023 and pre-pandemic figures

This section summarises some of the changes for several key measures of attendance and participation. Figures for 2019, the last pre-pandemic year, 2023, and 2024 are included. As far as possible, 2023 and 2024 figures in this section are based on the subset of churches that submitted information in both 2023 and 2024, while the 2019 figures are as published in the 2023 Statistics for Mission report, based on the subset of churches that submitted information in both 2019 and 2023.

Worshipping Community

The total Worshipping Community was 1,114,000 people in 2019; 1,003,000 people in 2023; and 1,009,000 people in 2024 (Table 2).

The Church of England's Worshipping Community in 2024 was 1.7% of the population of England.

The reported age distribution of churches' Worshipping Communities has changed somewhat since 2019, with a greater proportion aged 70 and over in 2023 and 2024 than in 2019. It continues to be the case that people aged 70 and over make up a considerably larger proportion of the Church of England's Worshipping Community than of the population of England.

Table 2: Worshipping Community age distribution, 2019, 2023, and 2024[1]

		Age 0-10	Age 11-17	Age 18-69	Age 70+	Total
2019	Number	155,000	62,000	526,000	371,000	1,114,000
	Percentage	13.9%	5.6%	47.2%	33.3%	100%
2023	Number	130,000	55,000	466,000	352,000	1,003,000
	Percentage	13.0%	5.5%	46.4%	35.1%	100%
2024	Number	129,000	58,000	470,000	353,000	1,009,000
	Percentage	12.8%	5.7%	46.5%	35.0%	100%
Population of England	Percentage	12.6%	8.2%	65.6%	13.5%	100%

Slightly under 5% of the members of churches' Worshipping Communities in 2024 were people who were entirely or predominantly Church at Home worshippers, compared to 10% in 2021, 6% in 2022, and 5% in 2023.

Average weekly and average Sunday attendance (October count)

Average weekly and average Sunday attendance figures are based on in-person attendance during October. Figures include attendance at church services and fresh expression of Church. Attendance at services for schools taking place in church is reported separately.

- The total all age average weekly attendance, which includes Sunday and midweek attendance, was 864,000 people in 2019; 691,000 people in 2023; and 702,000 people in 2024 (Table 8).
- 14% of the average weekly attendance was children and young people aged under 16 years old in 2019, and 13% in 2024.
- The total all age average Sunday attendance was 716,000 people in 2019; 573,000 people in 2023; and 581,000 people in 2024.

[1] 2023 and 2024 age distribution is based on 10,377 returns from churches that submitted information in 2023 and 2024 and for which the Worshipping Community age breakdown matched the Worshipping Community total. 2019 age distribution is as published in Statistics for Mission 2023. Population figures are 2021 census data for England, taken from https://www.ons.gov.uk/filters/71fa48fc-cbdf-44cd-8555-19908cb947e0/dimensions

- 14% of the average Sunday attendance was children and young people aged under 16 years old in 2019, and 13% in 2024.
- The total all age average weekly attendance at services for schools taking place in church was 182,000 people in 2019; 183,000 people in 2023; and 163,000 people in 2024.
- 77% of school service attendance was children and young people aged under 16 years old in 2019, and 76% in 2024.

Fresh expressions of Church

In October 2024, 17% of churches reported some attendance at in-person fresh expressions of Church (fxCs)[2], a similar proportion to 2023, compared to 21% of churches in October 2019[3] (Table 3).

The October attendance figures include attendance at church services and at fxCs. Some people attend both; in such cases, to avoid misleadingly inflating the figures through double-counting, we ask that, if possible, attendees are recorded only once per week. Reported attendance at fxCs should therefore be thought of as "additional" attendance, since it might not include those people who also attended a church service in that week.

In 2019 additional attendance at fxCs was 5.6% of the October average weekly attendance, with similar figures in 2023 and 2024.

Table 3: Attendance at fresh expressions of Church as a percentage of average weekly attendance (AWA), 2019, 2023, and 2024

	% of churches reporting some fxC attendance during October	fxC attendance as % of adult AWA	fxC attendance as % of child AWA	fxC attendance as % of total AWA
2019	21%	3.9%	16.0%	5.6%
2023	17%	3.9%	15.4%	5.5%
2024	17%	4.0%	15.6%	5.6%

Baptisms and thanksgivings

The total number of people baptised or for whom a birth or adoption thanksgiving service was held was 89,600 in 2019; 68,100 in 2023; and 61,600 in 2024 (Table 4).

Table 4: Age groups of people baptised and of people for whom there was a birth or adoption thanksgiving service, 2019, 2023, and 2024

		Infants (<1 year)	Children (1-4 years)	Children (5-10 years)	Young people (11-17 years)	Adults (18+)	Total
2019	Baptisms	49,000	22,800	5,200	2,300	7,300	86,700
	Thanksgivings	1,980	800	120	20	30	2,950
	Total	**51,000**	**23,600**	**5,300**	**2,300**	**7,400**	**89,600**
2023	Baptisms	28,700	22,700	5,200	2,100	7,800	66,400
	Thanksgivings	890	680	120	20	20	1,730
	Total	**29,600**	**23,400**	**5,300**	**2,100**	**7,800**	**68,100**
2024	Baptisms	26,100	17,800	5,200	2,400	8,600	60,100
	Thanksgivings	810	540	120	20	40	1,520
	Total	**26,900**	**18,300**	**5,300**	**2,400**	**8,700**	**61,600**

[2] A fresh expression of Church is a form of Church established primarily for people who are not yet "members" of any church – for more information see the notes on the Statistics for Mission survey in Appendix 2.
[3] Based on 12,082 returns from churches that submitted information in 2023 and 2024.

The fall in baptisms from 2019 to 2024 was accompanied by a change in the age groups of people baptised, with a greater fraction of baptisms in 2024 being of children aged 1-4 than in 2019[4]. In part this may be because some people who would have been baptised as babies in 2020 or 2021 were baptised in 2024 as older children.

Thanksgivings made up 3.3% of the total in 2019, and 2.5% of the total in 2023 and 2024.

Following an increase in baptisms from 2021 to 2022, most likely including some that had been rescheduled following pandemic-related disruption, the number of baptisms fell in 2023 and again in 2024, though remained above the projected pre-pandemic trend. Despite the substantial recovery in baptism numbers, there are in the region of 40,000 people not yet baptised who would have been baptised had there not been a pandemic[5].

Despite the fall in baptisms overall between 2019 and 2024, the number of adult baptisms has increased, from 7,400 in 2019 to 7,800 in 2023 and 8,700 in 2024. Some of this increase may be the result of baptisms that were postponed during the pandemic.

Marriages

The total number of marriages and services of prayer and dedication after civil marriage was 31,700 in 2019; 23,800 in 2023; and 21,600 in 2024.

Following an increase in marriages from 2021 to 2022, most likely including some that had been rescheduled following pandemic-related disruption, the number of marriages fell in 2023 and again in 2024, though remained above the projected pre-pandemic trend.

Services of prayer and dedication after civil marriage made up 6.3% of the total in 2019, 7.4% of the total in 2023, and 8.4% of the total in 2024[6].

Funerals

The total number of funerals was 114,700 in 2019; 97,600 in 2023; and 87,400 in 2024.

In contrast to many other aspects of church life, churches were able to continue to offer funeral ministry during the pandemic. However, there was a pandemic-associated shift of funerals away from churches and to crematoria/cemeteries in 2020; this shift seems to have been temporary, with the percentage of funerals that took place in church now exceeding pre-pandemic levels (62% of funerals were in church in 2019, 42% in 2020, 66% in 2023, and 68% in 2024).

[4] Based on 12,082 returns from churches that submitted information in 2023 and 2024.
[5] Based on comparing baptism figures from 2020-2024 with the projected pre-pandemic trends.
[6] Based on 12,082 returns from churches that submitted information in 2023 and 2024.

Church-level summary information

The distribution of church sizes in 2019 and 2024 is shown in Table 5. In 2019, a "middle sized" church had an all age average weekly attendance of 34.5 people; in 2024 the equivalent figure was 26 people[7].

Table 5: Church size distribution summary, 2019 and 2024[8]

	5th percentile		25th percentile		**median (middle) church**		75th percentile		95th percentile		**mean (average) church**	
	2019	2024	2019	2024	2019	2024	2019	2024	2019	2024	2019	2024
Worshipping Community	9	8	21	18	**45**	**38**	95	82	249	226	77	70
All age average weekly attendance	3	1.5	13.5	9.5	**34.5**	**26**	79.5	62	195	161	62	50
Adult average weekly attendance	3	1.5	13	9	**31**	**24**	68	54	162	135	53	43
Child average weekly attendance	0	0	0	0	**3**	**1**	10	7	35	29	8.9	6.8
Adult Usual Sunday attendance	7	6	14	13	**25**	**23**	51	43	125	104	42	36
Child Usual Sunday attendance	0	0	0	0	**2**	**2**	7	5	26	22	6.3	5.3
Easter attendance	0	0	25	18	**52**	**41**	103	82	254	206	84	68
Christmas attendance	0	0	33	24	**82**	**63**	200	152	585	480	170	134
Baptisms and thanksgivings	0	0	1	0	**3**	**2**	8	6	24	17	6.3	4.3
Marriages and services of prayer & dedication	0	0	0	0	**1**	**1**	3	2	8	5	2.1	1.4
Funerals in churches, crematoria, & cemeteries	0	0	1	1	**4**	**3**	10	8	28	21	7.9	6.0

[7] For comparable figures from 2020-2023, see Statistics for Mission reports, available here: https://www.churchofengland.org/about/data-services/resources-publications-and-data#na.

[8] 2024 Worshipping Community figures are based on 10,923 churches for which single-church returns with non-zero Worshipping Community were received in 2023 and 2024. All other 2024 figures are based on 11,668 churches for which single-church returns were received in 2023 and 2024. All 2019 figures are as published in Statistics for Mission 2023.

Longer-term trends

It is often helpful to consider attendance and participation numbers over a longer time period than just a few years, particularly given the recent pandemic-related disruption. Figures 1-6 and Tables 8-10 make it clear how big an impact the COVID-19 pandemic had on church activities in 2020. For most measures, the sharp fall in 2020 was followed by a steep rise in 2021; some measures have seen further increases thereafter.

Figure 1: Summary attendance figures, 2009-2024

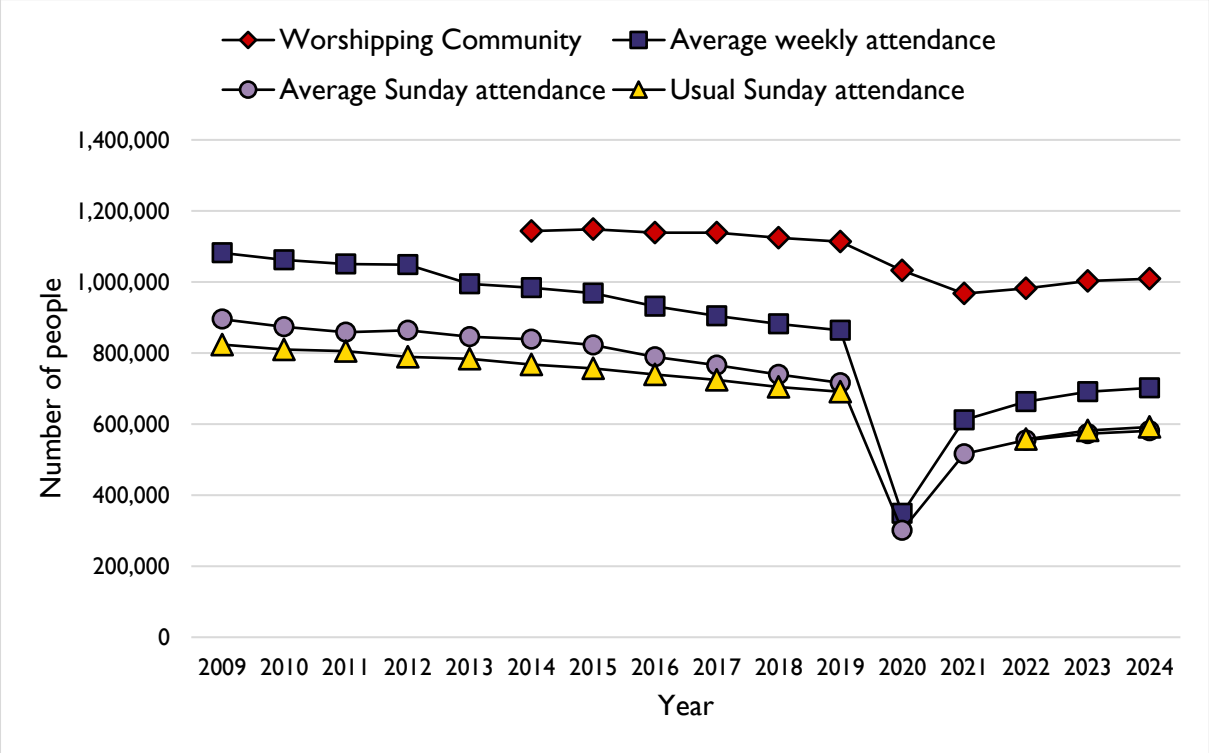
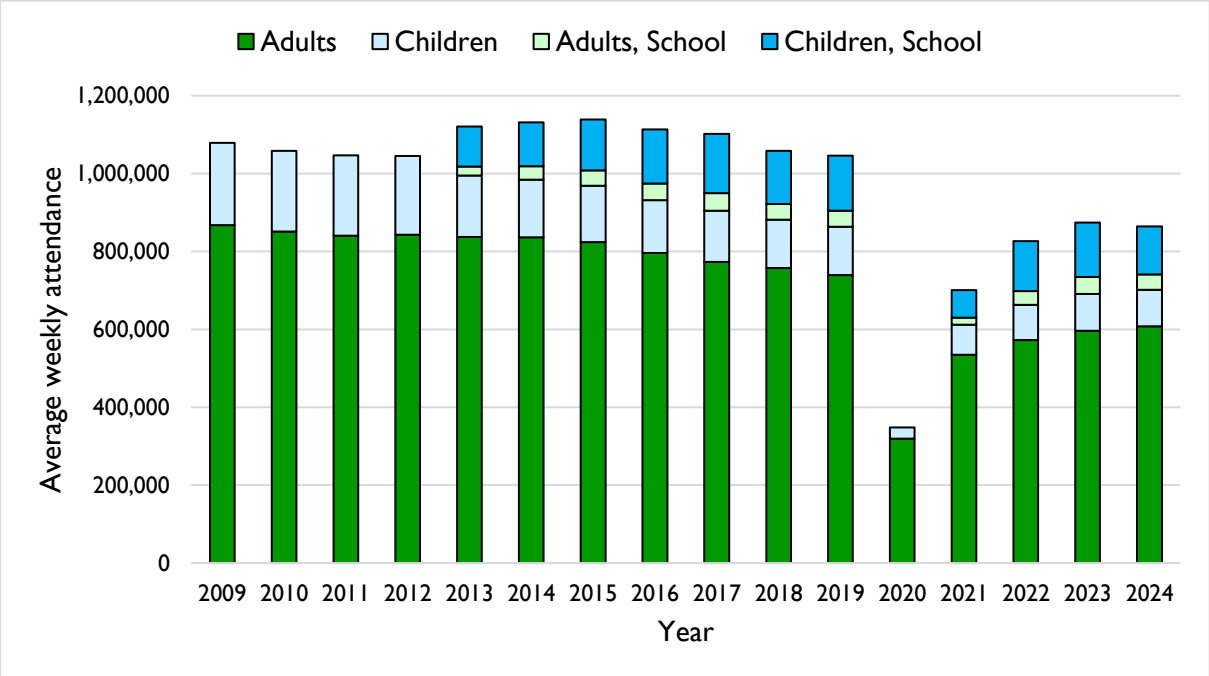


Figure 2: Average weekly attendance, and school service attendance, 2009-2024[9]



[9] Attendance at services for schools taking place in church was first collected separately in 2013 (but not collected in 2020). Prior to that, some churches included attendance at school services within their "church" attendance figures.

Figure 3: Easter attendance and communicants, 2009-2024[10]

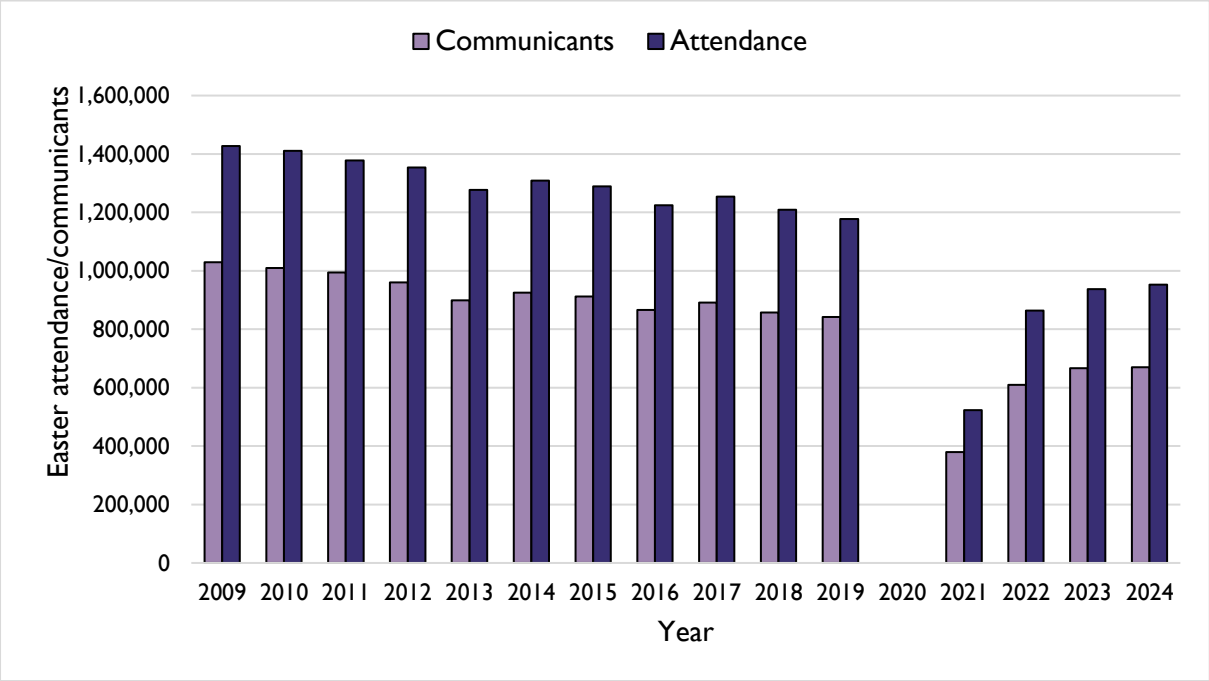
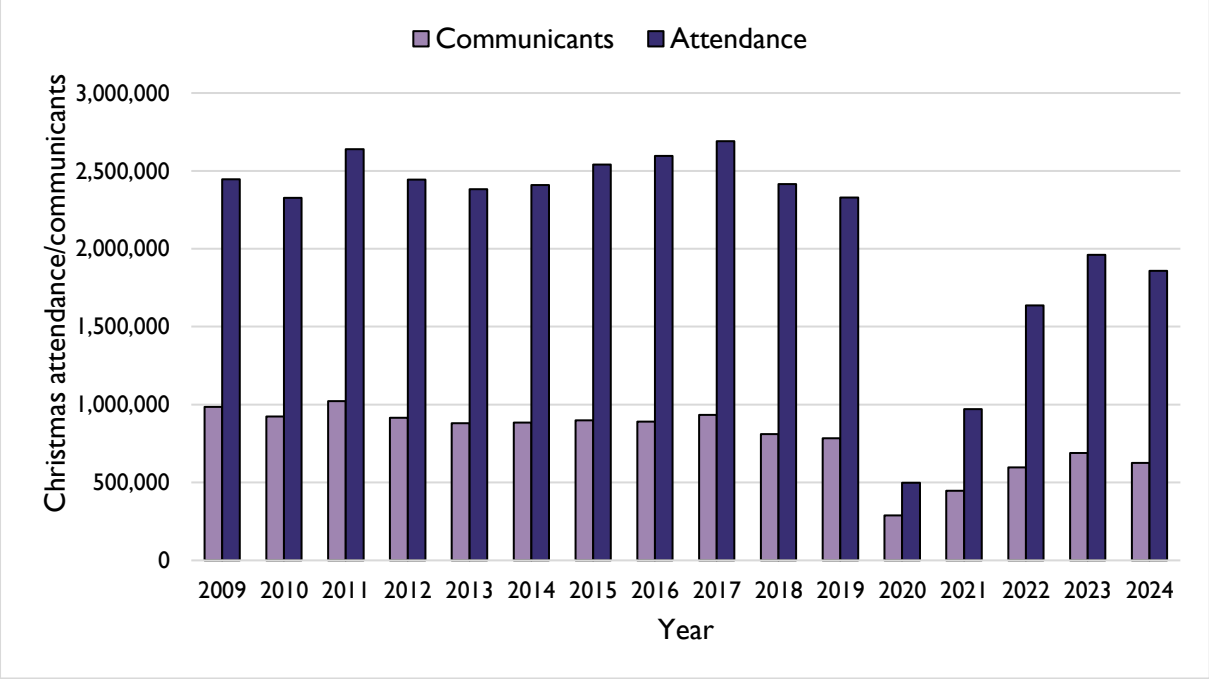


Figure 4: Christmas attendance and communicants, 2009-2024



[10] Easter communicants and attendance figures were not collected in 2020.

Figure 5: Numbers of baptisms, marriages, and funerals, 2009-2024

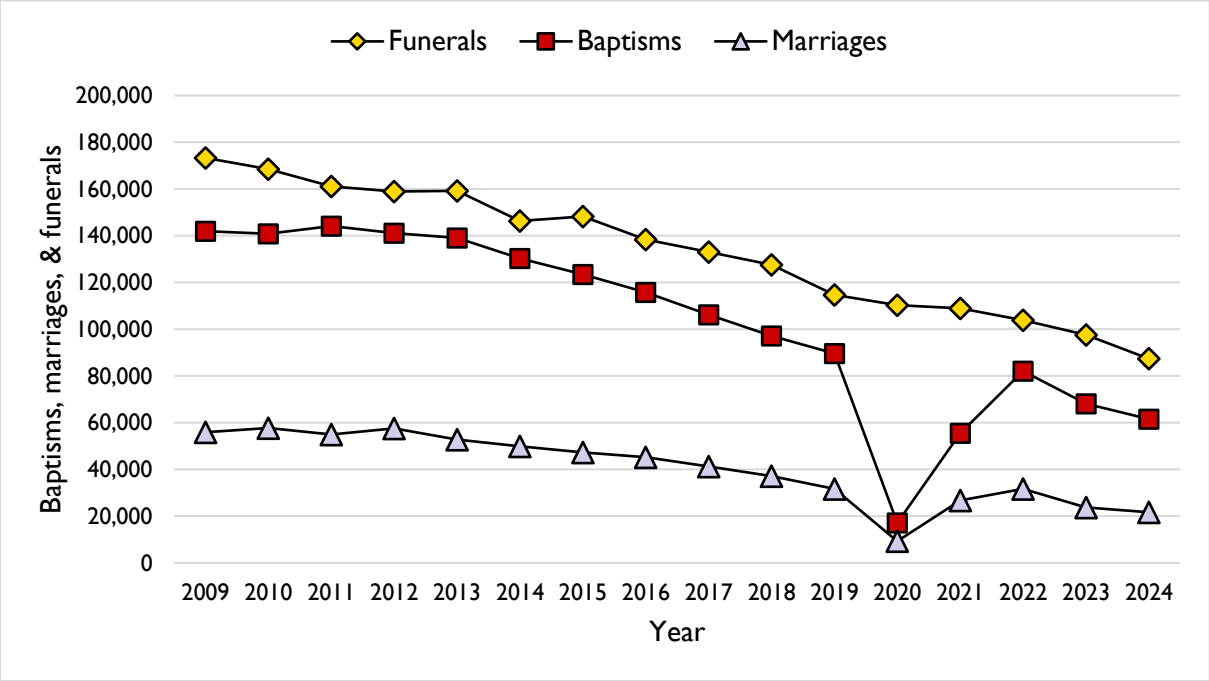
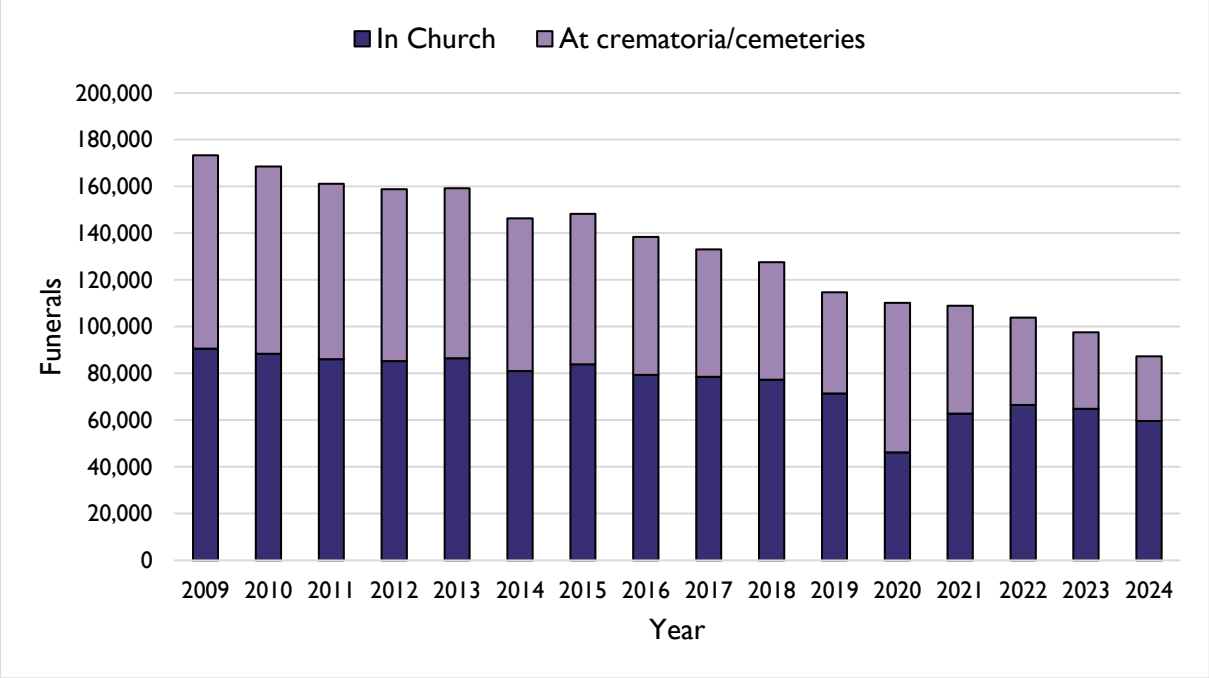


Figure 6: Numbers of church and crematorium/cemetery funerals, 2009-2024



Comparison with projected pre-pandemic trends

As previously reported[11], most measures of attendance and participation were showing a gradual decline over many decades until 2019. It is impossible to say what would have happened if there had not been a pandemic, but it is reasonable to assume that the decline would have continued. We would therefore not expect numbers to return to their 2019 values, even once all pandemic effects are over.

Figure 7 shows recent October attendance data alongside projected pre-pandemic trends. These trends are not telling us what would have happened if there had not been a pandemic; instead, they show what would had happened if the pre-pandemic trends (from 2014 to 2019) had continued.

Adult attendance in 2024 was below its 2019 levels, and remained below the projected pre-pandemic trend. Child attendance in 2024 was close to or above the projected pre-pandemic trend.

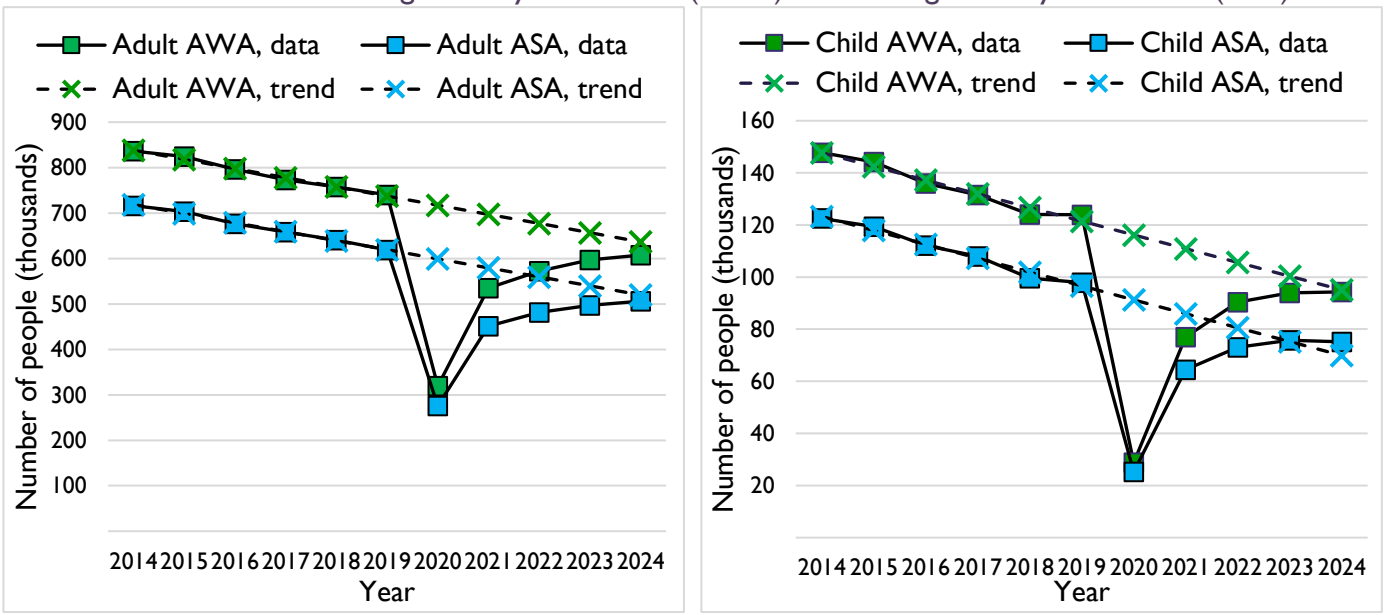
Table 6 shows the comparison between the 2024 figures and the projected pre-pandemic trend, for those variables where the trend is a good fit to the pre-pandemic data. While child attendance looks more positive than adult attendance, compared to the projected pre-pandemic trend, it should be noted that child attendance was declining at a faster rate than adult attendance prior to the pandemic.

Adult average weekly attendance (AWA) in 2024 was 5% below the projected pre-pandemic trend; Child average weekly attendance (AWA) was 1% below the projected trend.

Adult average Sunday attendance (ASA) in 2024 was 3% below the projected pre-pandemic trend; Child average Sunday attendance (ASA) was 7% above the projected trend.

Baptisms and marriages in 2024 were above the projected trend, suggesting that during 2024 there was some further catching up of baptisms and marriages that were postponed due to pandemic-related disruption.

Figure 7: Comparison of data with projected pre-pandemic trends; figures show attendance data derived from the October count: Average weekly attendance (AWA) and Average Sunday attendance (ASA)



[11] Statistics for Mission 2019, https://www.churchofengland.org/media/21969

Table 6: Comparison between 2024 and projected pre-pandemic trend[12]

	Difference between 2024 data and projected pre-pandemic trend
Adult average weekly attendance (October)	-5%
Child average weekly attendance (October)	-1%
All age average weekly attendance (October)	-4%
Adult average Sunday attendance (October)	-3%
Child average Sunday attendance (October)	+7%
All age average Sunday attendance (October)	-1%
Adult Usual Sunday attendance	-5%
Child Usual Sunday attendance	+6%
All age Usual Sunday attendance	-3%
Baptisms and thanksgivings	+29%
Marriages and services of prayer and dedication	+42%
Funerals total	+1%

Children and young people

One of the three priorities of the Church of England's Vision and Strategy is "to be a church that is younger and more diverse"[13]. Ministry with children and young people is, of course, of great importance in this.

Churches' engagement with children and young people is measured in a number of different ways, including: October attendance and Usual Sunday attendance; being part of a church's Worshipping Community; baptisms; school services taking place in church; leading acts of worship in schools.

Some of this information is summarised above. Additional information can be found below.

October attendance at school services taking place in church

As well as the children included in each church's average weekly attendance and average Sunday attendance, described above, the October count includes attendance at services for schools taking place in church. 18% of churches reported some child attendance at services for schools in October 2024, with an average weekly attendance at school services taking place in church of 123,000 children, down by 13% from 2019 and down by 12% from 2023.

Acts of worship in schools

Churches' ministry teams were less likely to have led acts of worship in schools in 2024 than in 2019. In 2019, 40% of churches led an act of worship in schools at least monthly; the equivalent figure in 2023 and 2024 was 35%[14] (Table 7).

[12] Table 6 only contains information for those variables where the straight-line trend has a correlation of >0.9 with the data from 2014-2019

[13] https://www.churchofengland.org/about/vision-and-strategy

[14] Based on 12,082 returns from churches that submitted information in 2023 and 2024.

Table 7: Frequency with which churches led acts of worship in schools, 2019, 2023, and 2024

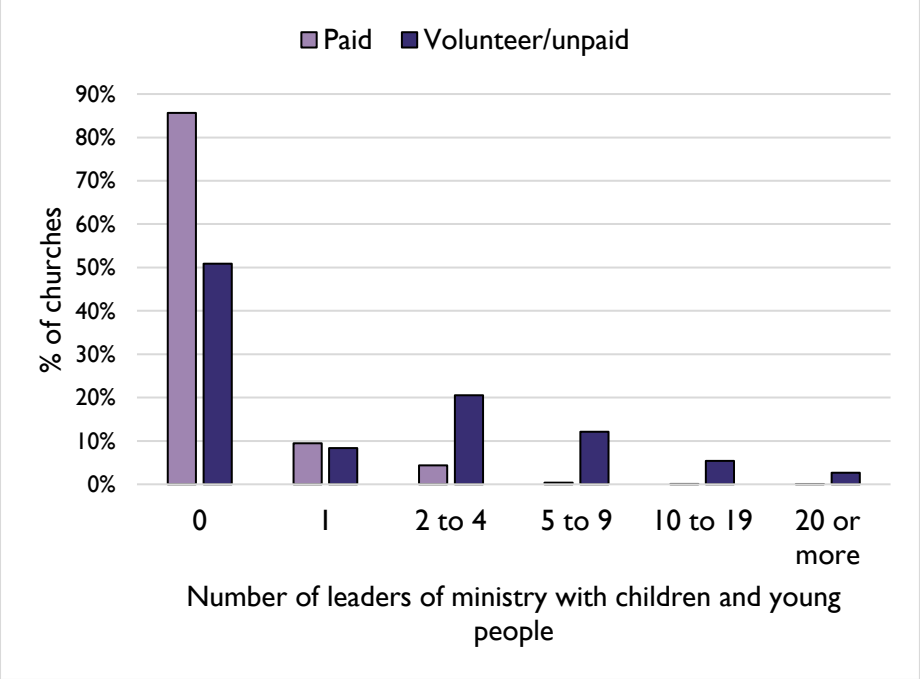
	More than weekly	Weekly	Fortnightly	Monthly	Once or twice a term	Occasionally	Never
2019	3.4%	17.5%	9.0%	10.3%	11.7%	11.0%	37.0%
2023	2.7%	15.5%	7.9%	8.7%	12.2%	14.4%	38.6%
2024	2.8%	15.0%	8.0%	8.8%	12.8%	14.3%	38.4%

Numbers of leaders of ministry with children and young people

Churches were asked to report how many people – excluding clergy – were involved in leading their ministry with children and young people.

14% of churches reported having one or more paid leaders of ministry with children and young people. 49% of churches reported having one or more unpaid leaders of ministry with children and young people (Figure 8). In those churches with some paid leaders of this ministry, most (66%) had one paid leader and 30% had two to four paid leaders. Of those churches with some volunteer/unpaid leaders of this ministry, 17% had one volunteer/unpaid leader, 42% had two to four volunteer/unpaid leaders, 25% had five to nine volunteer/unpaid leaders, and 16% had ten or more volunteer/unpaid leaders.

Figure 8: Numbers of leaders of ministry with children and young people



Churches with no children and young people

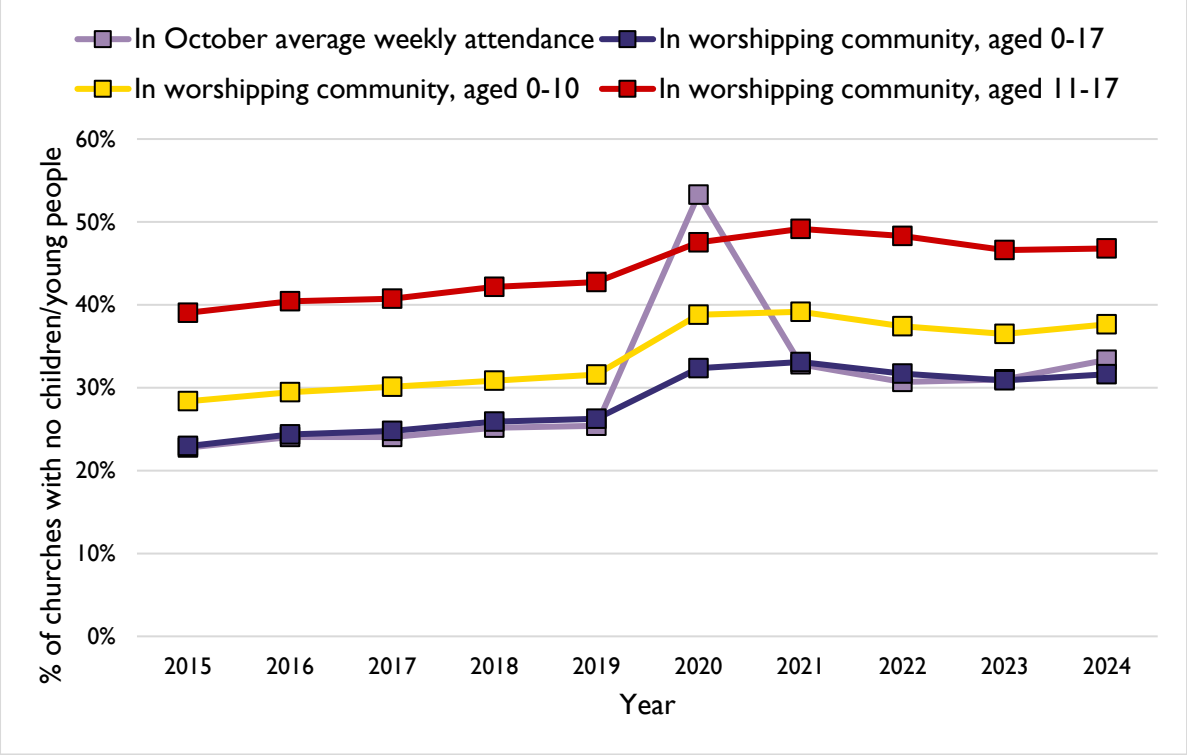
As shown in Table 5, above, a significant number of churches report no children/young people worshipping with them in October, or as part of their Usual Sunday attendance. Similarly, a significant number of churches report no children/young people in their Worshipping Community of regular worshippers.

In 2024, 33% of churches had an October average weekly attendance of zero children aged under 16, compared to 25% of churches in 2019. In 2024, 32% of churches had no children in their Worshipping Community, compared to 26% of churches in 2019.[15]

[15] Average weekly attendance figures are based on those churches that submitted data; Worshipping Community figures are based on those churches with a non-zero worshipping community for which the total matched the age breakdown. A different set of churches is included each year, so the comparison over time is not perfectly like-for-like.

Figure 9 shows trends in the proportion of churches with no children worshipping with them in October and with no children as part of their Worshipping Community.

Figure 9: Percentage of churches with no children/young people, 2015-2024



Churches with large numbers of children and young people

In 2024 there were 850 churches with an October average weekly attendance of 25 or more children aged under 16, compared to 830 such churches in 2023, 760 churches in 2022, and 1,270 churches in 2019[16].

In 2024, there were 1,770 churches with an October average weekly attendance of between 10 and 25 children aged under 16, compared to 1,810 such churches in 2023, 1,750 churches in 2022 and 2,300 churches in 2019.

Trends in the proportion of churches with large numbers of children/young people are shown in Figure 10. This figure shows "large" churches as a proportion of churches from which information was received; it does not include estimated figures for non-responding churches.

Figures 9 and 10 both illustrate the gradual reduction of children and young people in church prior to the pandemic. The large impact of the pandemic on child average weekly attendance is very clear, along with some post-pandemic recovery.

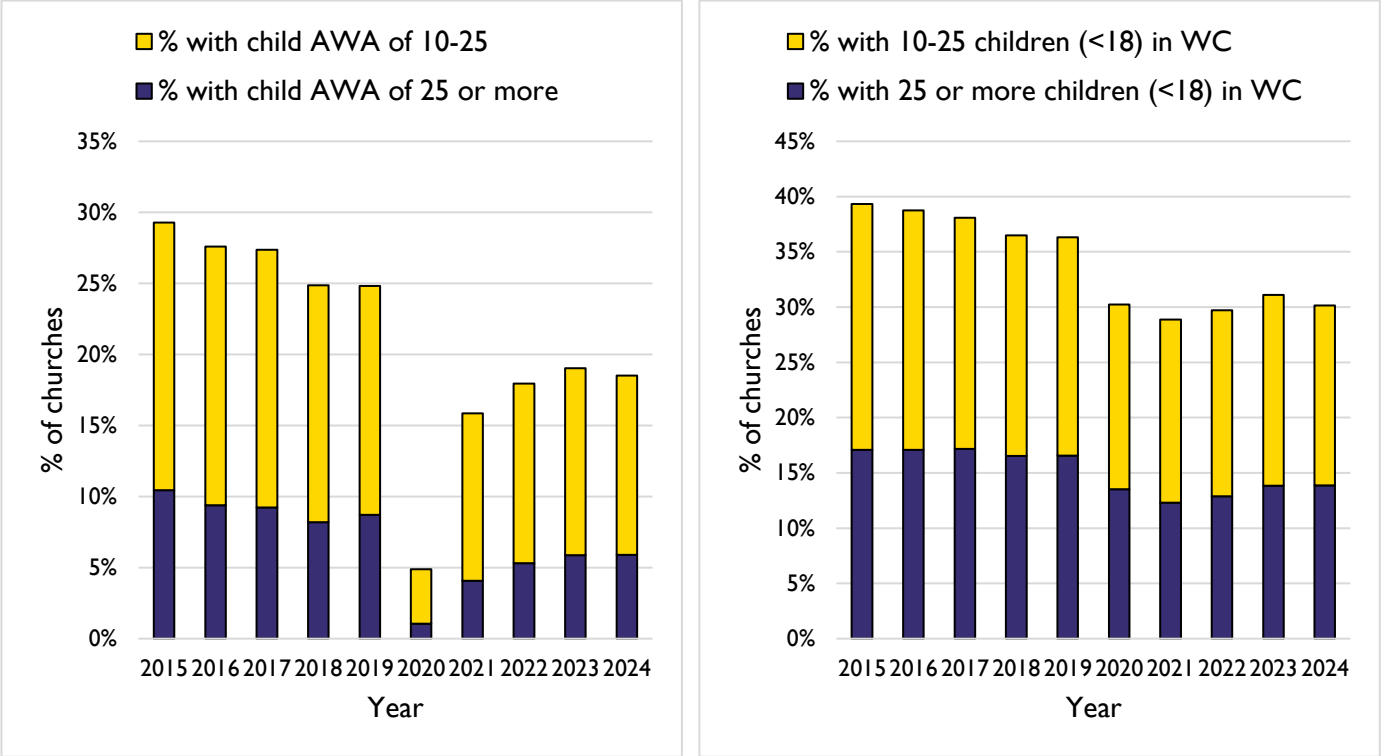
Children's attendance appears, in recent years, to have become more concentrated in the largest churches. As an illustration of this, in 2024 the 10% of churches with the largest child average weekly attendance contributed 59% of all child average weekly attendance, compared with 53% in 2019 and 51% in 2015[17].

Adult attendance is less concentrated in the largest churches than child attendance, and levels of concentration of adult attendance appear to have been relatively stable over the past decade: in 2024 the 10% of churches with the largest adult average weekly attendance contributed 41% of all adult average weekly attendance, compared with 39% in 2019 and 38% in 2015.

[16] These figures include data submitted by churches as well as estimated figures for churches that did not submit returns; some of the records are joint returns on behalf of more than one church. Church-level estimates are not available for all churches, so these figures are likely to be slight undercounts.

[17] Based on those churches that submitted data. A different set of churches is included each year, so the comparison over time is not perfectly like-for-like.

Figure 10: Percentage of churches with large numbers of children/young people, 2015-2024[18]: October average weekly attendance (AWA), left; Worshipping Community (WC), right



Church at Home

Many churches began offering "Church at Home" services – those services offered online, by phone, post, email, and other means – in 2020. Many churches have continued to offer Church at Home services since.

In 2020, 71% of churches reported offering at least one type of Church at Home service during October. Directly comparable figures are not available for 2022, because of a reduction the number of questions asked of churches; however, a direct comparison can be made between the number of churches reporting offering Church at Home services during October 2024 (29%), October 2023 (31%)[19], October 2022 (35%) and October 2021 (51%)[20].

Church at Home services, for those churches that offer them, are generally part of their weekly pattern of worship, rather than being occasional events. However, in 2024, churches offering Church at Home services did so less frequently than in previous years. Of churches that offered Church at Home services in October 2024, 75% offered them each week, compared to 78% in October 2023, 79% in October 2022, 84% in October 2021, and 90% in October 2020.

Churches were asked about the number of people attending their Church at Home services. These numbers are almost impossible to collect consistently, given that it is hard to know how many people are viewing a service on any one device and the fact that many of the headline measures offered by popular online platforms refer to very short-duration views, often unhelpfully and artificially boosted by "autoplay". While large reported figures can help to highlight those churches whose Church at Home services might be particularly popular, because of the variable and sometimes wildly misleading numbers that online platforms provide, aggregating the figures to produce national or

[18] More precisely, this is the percentage of records, not churches, some records being joint returns on behalf of more than one church. Average weekly attendance figures are based on those churches that submitted data; Worshipping Community figures are based on those churches with a non-zero worshipping community for which the total matched the age breakdown. A different set of churches is included each year, so the comparison over time is not perfectly like-for-like.
[19] Based on 11,874 returns from churches that submitted information in 2023 and 2024.
[20] Based on 11,225 returns from churches that submitted information in 2021 and 2022.

diocesan totals would be not be meaningful[21]. However, it is likely that tens of thousands of people each week attend Church at Home services, some of whom may also attend services in person.

Although Church at Home attendance numbers should not be aggregated because of the challenges involved in counting such attendance accurately, the *trends* may be informative; overall Church at Home attendance halved from 2021 to 2022, fell by a quarter from 2022 to 2023, and by 20% from 2023 to 2024[22]. Church at Home attendance in 2024 was therefore approximately 30% of what it was in 2021.

Churches were also asked to report the number of people in their Worshipping Communities who were entirely or predominantly Church at Home worshippers. Given the anonymity of many online platforms, this is not necessarily straightforward, so the figures need to be treated as rough estimates. As an indicative aggregate figure, churches reported that approximately 5% of their Worshipping Community at the end of 2024 was people who were entirely or predominantly Church at Home worshippers, compared to 10% in 2021.

New congregations and new worshipping communities

One of the three priorities of the Church of England's Vision and Strategy is "to be a church where mixed ecology is the norm", as part of which there is a mission to create "ten thousand new Christian communities across the four areas of home, work/education, social, and digital"[23]. Therefore each church was asked to report the number of new congregations/new worshipping communities that began in 2024, and the number of congregations/worshipping communities that came to an end in 2024. It is likely that some of those things that started in 2024 were revivals of congregations/worshipping communities that had ceased to meet during the pandemic. The same question was asked in 2023.

In total, 1,300 new congregations or new worshipping communities were reported as having been started in 2024, while 570 congregations/worshipping communities came to an end in 2024 – i.e. a net increase of 730 congregations/worshipping communities. In 2023, 1,400 new congregations/worshipping communities were reported as having started, with 540 coming to an end.

Because information was not received from all churches, these numbers are likely to be a slight underestimate.

8% of churches started at least one new congregation/worshipping community in 2024, while in 4% of churches at least one congregation/worshipping community came to an end in 2024.

Of those churches starting a new congregation/worshipping community in 2024, 80% started one, 16% started two, and 5% started three or more.

Of those churches where a congregation/worshipping community came to an end in 2024, in 88% one came to an end, in 10% two came to an end, and in 2% three or more came to an end.

Recent revival in Church of England attendance

It is very clear that Church of England attendance and participation have recovered considerably since the disruption of the COVID-19 pandemic. It is also very clear that attendance and participation levels remain lower in 2024 than they were in 2019.

In April 2025 a report – The Quiet Revival[24] - was published based on results from people who chose to complete a poll about churchgoing. Results suggested that church attendance in England and Wales had risen by 50% from 2018 to 2024, and that Church of England attendance rose by 25%.

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[21] Further discussion of this point can be found in Church at Home 2020, https://www.churchofengland.org/media/25151

[22] Based on the proportion of churches offering Church at Home services in each year, with "attendance" trends estimated from the subset of churches that reported some Church at Home attendance in both of the years in question.

[23] https://www.churchofengland.org/about/vision-and-strategy

[24] The Quiet Revival; authors Dr Rhiannon McAleer & Dr Rob Barward-Symmons, published by the Bible Society: https://www.biblesociety.org.uk/research/quiet-revival

As the Statistics for Mission figures clearly demonstrate, by almost every measure, in almost every diocese, Church of England attendance and participation was still significantly lower in 2024 than in 2018.

It would be naive to believe that the Statistics for Mission figures are accurate to the nearest person; however, I am confident that the national totals and trends calculated from the Statistics for Mission dataset are broadly accurate. I base that confidence on the high response rate, consistent methodology applied year on year, detailed church-by-church data checking, and consistency of results across variables and across dioceses.

Of course, while nationally and in almost every diocese attendance was lower in 2024 than in 2018, across 16,000 Church of England churches there is wide variation. Some churches have declined faster than the average, some less fast, and some have grown.

Church-level figures can be affected by unusual events, which can mask genuine trends, particularly in point comparisons; there is therefore not always a clear trend when looking at an individual church. Nevertheless, however one chooses to look at it, more Church of England churches became smaller from 2019 to 2024 than grew. As an illustration: in approximately 12% of churches the usual Sunday attendance, average Sunday attendance, and average weekly attendance were all higher in 2024 than in 2019; in approximately 48% of churches the usual Sunday attendance, average Sunday attendance, and average weekly attendance were all lower in 2024 than in 2019[25].

That is not to say that there are not positive signs: the post-pandemic recovery has been encouraging, as has the fact that attendance continued to rise, albeit slightly, from 2023 to 2024. Some churches are growing. There were more adult baptisms in 2024 than in 2019. As has always been the case, people are continuing to come to faith, and to find a welcome in Church of England churches.

[25] For more detail, see the response to Question 58 at the July 2025 sessions of General Synod, available here: https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2025-07/questions-notice-paper-annex.pdf

Table 8: Attendance and participation summary, 2010-2024[26]

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Worshipping Community	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1,143,000	1,148,000	1,139,000	1,139,000	1,124,000	1,114,000	1,032,000	967,000	982,000	1,003,000	1,009,000
Adult average weekly attendance	851,000	840,000	843,000	837,000	836,000	824,000	796,000	773,000	758,000	740,000	319,000	535,000	572,000	597,000	608,000
Child average weekly attendance	208,000	207,000	202,000	158,000	148,000	144,000	136,000	132,000	124,000	124,000	29,000	77,000	90,000	94,000	94,000
All age average weekly attendance	1,062,000	1,050,000	1,049,000	995,000	984,000	969,000	932,000	904,000	882,000	864,000	348,000	612,000	663,000	691,000	702,000
Adult average Sunday attendance	741,000	728,000	733,000	722,000	716,000	703,000	677,000	658,000	640,000	619,000	276,000	451,000	481,000	497,000	506,000
Child average Sunday attendance	130,000	127,000	128,000	124,000	123,000	119,000	112,000	108,000	100,000	98,000	25,000	64,000	73,000	76,000	75,000
All age average Sunday attendance	874,000	858,000	864,000	846,000	839,000	823,000	789,000	766,000	740,000	716,000	301,000	516,000	554,000	573,000	581,000
Adult average school service attendance	n/a	n/a	n/a	23,000	35,000	40,000	42,000	46,000	40,000	41,000	n/a	18,000	36,000	44,000	39,000
Child average school service attendance	n/a	n/a	n/a	103,000	113,000	131,000	139,000	152,000	137,000	141,000	n/a	71,000	128,000	140,000	123,000
All age average school service attendance	n/a	n/a	n/a	126,000	148,000	171,000	182,000	198,000	177,000	182,000	n/a	89,000	164,000	183,000	163,000
Adult Usual Sunday attendance	692,000	689,000	675,000	672,000	659,000	652,000	640,000	629,000	613,000	602,000	n/a	n/a	489,000	510,000	519,000
Child Usual Sunday attendance	118,000	116,000	114,000	112,000	108,000	104,000	100,000	96,000	92,000	89,000	n/a	n/a	68,000	72,000	73,000
All age Usual Sunday attendance	810,000	805,000	789,000	784,000	767,000	756,000	740,000	725,000	705,000	691,000	n/a	n/a	557,000	582,000	592,000

[26] In 2013 the October count question was altered to ask explicitly about attendance at school services taking place in church, and therefore October attendance figures pre- and post-2013 should be compared with caution, particularly in the case of child attendance, since it is clear that prior to 2013 some school service attendance had been reported in the October figures.

Table 9: Easter, Christmas, and Advent attendance summary, 2010-2024

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Easter communicants	1,010,000	994,000	960,000	898,000	926,000	912,000	866,000	891,000	857,000	842,000	n/a	379,000	610,000	666,000	670,000
Easter attendance	1,411,000	1,378,000	1,354,000	1,277,000	1,308,000	1,289,000	1,224,000	1,254,000	1,209,000	1,177,000	n/a	523,000	864,000	937,000	953,000
Christmas communicants	923,000	1,023,000	916,000	880,000	885,000	898,000	891,000	934,000	810,000	784,000	288,000	447,000	596,000	690,000	626,000
Christmas attendance	2,327,000	2,639,000	2,445,000	2,382,000	2,409,000	2,541,000	2,596,000	2,691,000	2,416,000	2,328,000	499,000	970,000	1,636,000	1,961,000	1,858,000
Advent attendance (congregation & community services)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2,229,000	2,377,000	2,481,000	2,334,000	2,551,000	2,547,000	563,000	1,309,000	1,894,000	2,104,000	2,248,000
Advent attendance (civic & school services)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2,578,000	2,780,000	2,878,000	2,808,000	3,009,000	2,873,000	95,000	800,000	2,059,000	2,351,000	2,464,000

Table 10: Numbers of baptisms, marriages, funerals, and confirmations, 2010-2024

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Baptisms and thanksgivings	140,900	144,200	141,100	139,100	130,300	123,400	115,800	106,200	97,200	89,600	17,200	55,500	82,100	68,100	61,600
Marriages and services of prayer and dedication	57,700	55,000	57,600	52,800	49,900	47,300	45,300	41,300	37,200	31,700	9,300	26,800	31,700	23,800	21,600
Funerals in church	88,400	86,000	85,300	86,600	81,000	83,800	79,400	78,500	77,400	71,400	46,200	62,800	66,400	64,900	59,600
Funerals at crematoria/cemeteries	80,200	75,100	73,500	72,700	65,400	64,500	59,000	54,500	50,300	43,300	64,100	46,200	37,400	32,700	27,700
Funerals, total	168,600	161,100	158,900	159,300	146,400	148,300	138,400	133,100	127,600	114,700	110,300	109,000	103,900	97,600	87,400
Confirmations	22,300	22,200	22,500	19,900	18,000	16,700	15,900	15,300	14,500	13,400	2,200	6,400	10,900	10,700	11,300

Diocesan statistics

Diocesan summary information is shown in Table 11. Diocesan attendance and participation trends, showing figures from 2009-2024, can be found in an electronic appendix: https://www.churchofengland.org/about/research-and-statistics/key-areas-research#church-attendance-statistics

Table 11: Diocesan summary statistics, 2024

Ref. no.	Diocese/area	Province	Population (2021 census)	Area (square miles)	Population density (people per square mile)	Number of benefices	Number of parishes	Number of churches	% of churches providing figures in both 2023 and 2024
1	Bath & Wells	C	980,000	1,610	600	173	457	557	82%
2	Birmingham	C	1,599,000	290	5,420	137	147	179	93%
3	Blackburn	Y	1,384,000	930	1,480	167	225	276	86%
5	Bristol	C	1,065,000	470	2,230	99	167	198	87%
6	Canterbury	C	981,000	970	1,020	99	197	313	83%
7	Carlisle	Y	498,000	2,570	190	104	224	320	78%
8	Chelmsford	C	3,279,000	1,530	2,130	302	464	573	97%
9	Chester	Y	1,677,000	1,030	1,600	210	263	336	67%
10	Chichester	C	1,704,000	1,450	1,180	271	346	467	94%
11	Coventry	C	896,000	700	1,320	124	202	240	90%
12	Derby	C	1,064,000	990	1,080	135	253	310	95%
13	Durham	Y	1,475,000	980	1,530	165	204	257	82%
14	Ely	C	803,000	1,530	500	137	303	325	79%
15	Exeter	C	1,214,000	2,570	470	138	482	592	72%
16	Gloucester	C	690,000	1,130	610	90	294	373	87%
17	Guildford	C	1,077,000	530	2,020	140	159	211	90%
18	Hereford	C	322,000	1,650	200	77	338	397	79%
19	Leicester	C	1,086,000	830	1,290	103	245	311	83%
20	Lichfield	C	2,202,000	1,730	1,270	230	422	540	88%
21	Lincoln	C	1,093,000	2,670	410	180	476	621	51%
22	Liverpool	Y	1,621,000	390	4,130	116	152	227	93%
23	London	C	4,246,000	280	16,010	409	403	468	80%
24	Manchester	Y	2,233,000	420	5,330	176	256	317	94%
25	Newcastle	Y	832,000	2,100	400	115	170	236	74%
26	Norwich	C	928,000	1,800	520	157	554	639	65%
27	Oxford	C	2,511,000	2,210	1,100	286	606	809	87%
28	Peterborough	C	971,000	1,140	830	125	347	379	84%
29	Portsmouth	C	784,000	420	1,900	101	128	163	96%
31	Rochester	C	1,375,000	540	2,570	170	210	258	96%
32	St. Albans	C	1,978,000	1,120	1,750	187	338	400	84%
33	St. Edms & Ipswich	C	684,000	1,430	480	111	444	482	79%
34	Salisbury	C	1,148,000	2,130	539	163	459	608	74%
35	Sheffield	Y	1,278,000	610	2,140	139	166	207	87%
36	Sodor & Man	Y	86,000	220	390	11	15	36	83%
37	Southwark	C	2,880,000	320	9,030	261	294	352	87%
38	Southwell & Nottingham	Y	1,152,000	840	1,390	151	229	296	97%
39	Truro	C	573,000	1,390	420	81	213	298	77%
41	Winchester	C	1,255,000	1,130	1,100	127	225	348	81%
42	Worcester	C	908,000	670	1,350	84	167	273	81%
43	York	Y	1,457,000	2,670	550	228	438	572	61%
44	Europe	C	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	176	93%
46	Leeds	Y	2,777,000	2,630	1,060	256	437	567	89%
	Church of England		**56,766,000**	**50,630**	**1,120**	**6,535**	**12,119**	**15,507**	82%

In a change to previous years, figures for the Channel Islands are reported under Salisbury.

In a change to most previous years, Table 11 includes the chaplaincies of the Diocese in Europe.

The final column shows the percentage of churches on which the comparison between 2023 and 2024 figures was based.

Appendix 1: Methodology

Where possible, the 2024 Statistics for Mission data collection and analysis followed similar steps to previous years. Some changes were necessary because of the changed circumstances resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. I have noted changes below.

This report uses data submitted through annual Statistics for Mission returns from churches, and from government statistics. The majority (89%) of the Church of England's churches submitted data (the figure was also 89% in 2019). Most returns were on behalf of a single church; 4% of returns were joint returns submitted on behalf of several churches. Most returns were submitted through the online parish returns system (https://parishreturns.churchofengland.org/). One diocese used a different electronic system, and some churches completed paper forms.

As usual, though unlike in 2020-2022, finalised attendance and participation figures from cathedrals were ready in time for incorporation in this report; I have replaced the estimated cathedrals data from 2022 with the information received from cathedrals for 2022. The 2020 and 2021 figures used estimated figures for cathedrals.

In several places in this report I have shown comparisons between 2019, 2023, and 2024 figures. Wherever possible, the 2023-2024 comparison has been calculated using data from the subset of churches that submitted information in both 2023 and 2024, in order that the comparison really is "like for like". The 2019 figures for such comparisons are, in general, those published in the 2023 Statistics for Mission report. The 2019 information shown in those comparisons differs slightly from any stand-alone figures published for 2019, and from year-on-year comparisons published in recent years.

As usual, because of late returns and corrections, this report contains updates to some previously-published figures.

The content of Statistics for Mission

The annual Statistics for Mission survey measures several different aspects of church life. While no study could cover every facet of the life of the Church of England, Statistics for Mission seeks to provide a broad picture of those key elements that are common to the vast majority of churches. For reference, the 2024 Statistics for Mission form, including all questions and explanatory notes, can be found in Appendix 2.

A large part of Statistics for Mission is related to attendance at worship services. Attendance is measured in several different ways:

1) Worshipping Community: those people attending the church regularly, for example at least once a month (or those who would attend if not prevented by illness, infirmity, or temporary absence), including attendance at church services and fresh expressions of Church; in a change from previous years, since 2020 churches have been asked to include in their Worshipping Community people who regularly "attended" their "Church at Home" services – e.g. services that were live streamed, or offered by telephone, or post.
2) October count: the number of adults and children attending in person during each of the first four weeks of October, at church services, fresh expressions of Church, and at services for schools taking place in church. Sunday and weekday attendance is asked about, with the instruction that those attending on Sunday and during the week in any given week should only be counted once that week (on Sunday) if possible. Churches were not asked to report their attendance at services for schools taking place in church in October 2020 (few such services took place in autumn 2020); these questions were re-introduced in 2021. N.B.: In 2013 the October count question was altered to ask explicitly about attendance at school services taking place in church, and therefore October attendance figures pre- and post-2013 should be compared with caution.
3) Usual Sunday attendance: the number of adults and children attending in person on a usual Sunday. This question was not asked in 2020 or 2021 (since "Usual Sunday" did not really apply to much of 2020 and 2021), but was reintroduced in 2022.
4) Number of people attending and number of people receiving communion at Easter and Christmas (Christmas Eve and Christmas Day). Churches were not asked to report their Easter attendance and communicants figures in 2020 (most churches were closed at Easter 2020); these questions were re-introduced in 2021.
5) The Electoral roll of the church.

Churches were asked to report the age distribution of their Worshipping Community and the numbers of adults and children leaving and joining their Worshipping Community.

The October count data are used to calculate average weekly and average Sunday attendance, for adults and children. Average Sunday attendance is defined as the total attendance at church services or fresh expressions of Church on Sundays over the four weeks of the October count, divided by four. Average weekly attendance is defined as the total attendance at church services or fresh expressions of Church on Sundays or weekdays over the four weeks of the October count, divided by four. Churches are asked to include attendance at baptisms in their October count, since baptisms often take place as part of normal worship services, but not attendance at weddings and funerals.

Statistics for Mission asks about the numbers of baptisms and services of thanksgiving for the gift (birth or adoption) of a child; marriages and services of prayer and dedication after civil marriages; and funeral services conducted on behalf of the church/parish by any minister held in church or at a crematorium or cemetery (excluding committal only and burial of ashes only). Note that funerals conducted by licensed Church of England ministers that are not held on behalf of a church/parish might not be included in the reported figures.

Additionally, Statistics for Mission asks about attendance at special services during Advent and details of fresh expressions of Church.

Churches were not asked about members of ministry teams leading assemblies in schools in 2020; this question was reintroduced in 2021.

In 2020 a question was included asking about the "Church at Home" services that churches may have been offering or referring people to; a slightly shorter version of this question was asked in 2021; a further shortened version of this question was asked in 2022-2024.

In 2023 a one-off question was asked about the number of new congregations/worshipping communities that started in 2023, and about the number of congregations/worshipping communities that came to an end in 2023. This question was repeated in 2024. A question was added in 2024 asking about the number of people leading ministry with children and young people.

Information about the number of confirmations taking place in each diocese was provided by diocesan Bishops' offices.

Data accuracy and data checking

Data reported by each church were compared with figures from previous years, and substantial changes were queried with churches and/or dioceses. Predominantly, these checks corrected typographical errors during data entry, although they also highlighted occasions when questions had been misinterpreted. The first stage of checks was automatic, at the point of data entry, for those returns submitted through the online parish returns system. Further checking was carried out by staff in the Data Services team, with particular scrutiny of figures that had changed significantly from year to year, and of unusually large (or small) values. Useful additional explanation and information was often provided by churches in the comments box on the Statistics for Mission return; as far as resources permitted, comments were read and acted on where appropriate. Where it was necessary to query any of the figures submitted, in the vast majority of cases we did this directly with the person who entered the figures; we are grateful for their prompt and helpful responses to our queries.

I checked the 2020-2022 datasets using adapted versions of the usual process. In normal times, large increases or large decreases would be queried; given the circumstances, for some variables it did not seem sensible to query large decreases from 2019 to 2020, or large increases from 2020 to 2021 or 2022 where those large increases took figures back towards 2019 levels.

Where estimation has been required to provide national or diocesan totals, the figures used in this report have been calculated using several different approaches. Figures up to 2019 are based on the methodology as described in detail in Statistics for Mission 2019 (https://www.churchofengland.org/media/21969). In broad summary, for those churches that did not send in their figures estimates were carried out church-by-church based on data received from those churches in other years.

I calculated estimated figures for 2020-2023 using a different approach, since the disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic means that church-level estimates calculated using the previous method were unlikely to be useful or reliable. I calculated figures for these years by looking at the subset of churches that submitted data in 2019 and the year in question, and used data from these churches to estimate diocesan and national trends, with 2019 as the baseline. In 2023, this subset comprised 77% of Church of England churches. I used these calculated trends to estimate diocesan totals. I assumed that the trend in these churches was representative of the diocese as a whole. Estimation for 2024 was carried out in a similar way, but used data from those churches that submitted data in 2023 and 2024 to calculate trends; this subset comprised 82% of Church of England churches.

Unlike for most other variables, until 2019 no estimation of school service attendance or Advent attendance was carried out for those churches that did not submit figures; as a consequence of the change in estimation methodology, estimation for these variables was carried out from 2020 onwards. Changes in school service and Advent attendance over time up until 2019 will therefore, in part, be related to changes in the set of churches from which information was received.

Values in the data tables are reported to the nearest 1000, 100 or 10, as appropriate. Percentages are reported to the nearest 1%, 0.1%, or to two significant figures, as appropriate. Totals, percentages, and averages have been calculated before rounding, so row and column totals may not always agree with the sums of the amounts shown.

Reliability of the figures

For most variables, there is no reason to suppose that figures have been reported less accurately since the pandemic than previously. The exception is Worshipping Community, where churches are endeavouring to include their regular "Church at Home" worshippers. Given the anonymity of many forms of Church at Home this is more challenging than reporting an in-person Worshipping Community, and there is likely to be more estimation involved.

As far as it is possible to tell this has not resulted in any particularly odd numbers once figures are aggregated to diocesan level, but I advise treating the Worshipping Community figures with more caution than was previously the case.

Representativeness of the sample

It is impossible to tell whether non-responding churches differed from responding churches in terms of the impact of the pandemic and the subsequent recovery. However, on the basis of their 2019 All age average weekly attendance, the dataset included in the analysis is broadly representative, slightly oversampling large churches. The effect of this oversampling is likely to be small and not worth attempting to adjust for.

I calculated estimated figures for 2024, using the same methodology (i.e. based on the subset of churches from whom data had been received in 2023 and 2024) at several points as data were coming in, as I did in 2021-2023. I found no indication that the earlier-responding churches were notably different in terms of their attendance and participation trends than the later-responding churches.

Preliminary information based on early returns was shared internally in January 2025, and updated summary preliminary figures were published in May 2025. The final figures contained in this report are very close to the preliminary values, with differences resulting from the incorporation of additional late returns and changes following data checks.

Projected pre-pandemic trends

In order to get a sense of how recent figures compare to what might have been if the COVID-19 pandemic had not taken place, I have calculated projected pre-pandemic trends. The projection was based on a straight-line fit to data from 2014-2019. In all cases where I have referred to the projected pre-pandemic trend, a straight line was a close fit to the data (correlation>0.9). Although there is, of course, no guarantee that, had there not been a pandemic, the figures would have continued to follow this straight line, and no expectation that such a projection would continue to be appropriate it were to be continued for many years, in my judgement it is a suitable model for the purpose to which I have put it.

Age groups

Ideally, a single set of age groups would be used throughout the Statistics for Mission return. However, for a variety of reasons, this has not been the case in the past, and the desire to be able to make comparisons with historical data has discouraged further changes.

- October count attendance and Usual Sunday attendance are divided into adults (aged 16 and over) and children and young people (aged under 16). It should be noted, therefore, that for these variables the "adult" figure includes some people who are legally not adults.
- Worshipping Community age groups are 0-10; 11-17; 18-69, and 70+, while leavers and joiners are categorised as adults (aged 18+) and children and young people (aged under 18).
- Baptisms and thanksgivings are categorised as infants (aged <1 year); children aged 1-4 years; children aged 5-10 years; young people aged 11-17, and adults (aged 18+); this is a slight change from the age groups used until 2018, when there was a group for children aged 5-12 and young people/adults aged 13 and over were grouped together.

Diocesan boundaries

Diocesan and parish boundaries as of 1st January 2024 were used as the basis for the collection of Statistics for Mission data.

Unlike in earlier years, figures for the Channel Islands have been included with those for the Diocese of Salisbury. However, given that the pandemic followed a different course in the Channel Islands from that on the mainland, estimated totals were calculated separately for the Channel Islands before being added to figures relating to churches on the mainland.

Population data

Diocesan population statistics were estimated using 2021 census data published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS: http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/index.html), mapped on to diocesan boundaries. This mapping is an approximation, since the boundaries of regions at which population data are reported do not coincide with diocesan boundaries. Data for the Isle of Man have been taken from http://countrymeters.info/en/Isle_of_Man; data for the Channel Islands have been taken from http://countrymeters.info/en/Channel_Islands (both relating to the 1st of January 2021, and accessed 5th September 2023).

Further information

I would be delighted to talk about the methodology with anyone who would be interested. Any reader who would like further details regarding the methodology behind this report is very welcome to get in touch: please see the contact details on page 2.

Appendix 2: 2024 Statistics for Mission form

Statistics for Mission: January to December 2024

Church name:	Parish name:
Deanery:	Diocese:

We hope that most questions will be simple to answer, but we recognise that others might be difficult to answer in your context. We're keen to find out anything you can tell us, and your best approximation is fine if you don't have precise numbers.

Reminder: please complete this form online if possible
https://parishreturns.churchofengland.org/

The online returns system includes existing information about your church. It automatically checks for typographical errors and minor mistakes and gives you the opportunity to revise your figures before final submission. You can see the data for your church over time and download copies for your records.

- ✓ Please complete this form for your **Church**. If there is more than one church in your parish, then please complete and submit a separate form for each church
- ✓ Where activities – e.g. acts of worship in schools or conducting funeral services at crematoria - are shared between several churches then please ensure, where possible, that they are only reported once
- ✓ Questions 1a and 1b about the **Electoral Roll** refer to the **ecclesiastical Electoral Roll**. Question 1a asks about the ecclesiastical Electoral Roll for your **parish**. Question 1b is optional and only applies if you are in a multi-church parish AND keep a separate roll for your church
- ✓ **Fresh expressions of Church** should be included in your numbers, unless they have submitted a separate return. For help in identifying fresh expressions of Church please use the "Choice tree" at the end of this form or visit https://freshexpressions.org.uk/about/what-is-a-fresh-expression/
- ✓ Please complete all questions as far as possible, using "0" or "unknown" or "no services" if necessary. Unless otherwise indicated, empty fields will be treated as incomplete and may be queried later as missing data
- ✓ In rare circumstances where a single congregation worships evenly between several churches (i.e. there is no difference in who attends and how often at each church), a single return may be submitted. The churches included in the return should be noted below

A single return is submitted on behalf of (please list all included churches here, with church codes if known*):

* *N.B. church codes are not needed if you are planning to submit this return online.*

1a. How many people were on the ecclesiastical Electoral Roll for your parish, as reported at your Annual Parochial Church meeting in 2024?

- ✓ Please write "unknown" if the figure is not available

1a. Number on the ecclesiastical Electoral Roll for your PARISH	

If your parish has more than one church **and** keeps a separate roll for your church, please **also** provide the total electoral roll for your church.

- ✓ Please write "N/A" if this is not applicable to your church

1b. How many people are on your church Electoral Roll?

1b. Number on the CHURCH Electoral Roll	

2. How many people attend your church in person on a usual Sunday, when there is a service?

- ✓ A usual Sunday is one that is not a major festival or contained in a peak holiday period
- ✓ Wherever possible, please do not count the same person multiple times – if someone attends more than once on a usual Sunday, please only count them once
- ✓ Only think about the Sundays when you hold at least one service (ignore the Sundays when you do not hold a service at your church)

2a. Adults (16 years old and over)	
2b. Children and young people (under 16 years old)	

The following questions are about **how many people came in person** to a service or act of worship at **Easter** (Easter Day and vigil services on Easter Eve), **Advent** (Advent Sunday until 23rd December) and **Christmas** (Christmas Eve and Christmas Day).

- ✓ If you did not hold any services or acts of worship at your church during these periods, please enter "0" in the relevant box

3. How many people came in person to your church at Easter 2024?

3a: Number of communicants at service(s) on Easter Day and vigil service on Easter Eve	
3b. Total number of people attending worship (including communicants) at service(s) on Easter Day and vigil service on Easter Eve	

4. How many people came in person to special services run by your church during Advent 2024?

- ✓ Include attendance at special services – e.g. nativities, carol services, carols on the green, crib services - run by your church from Advent Sunday until 23rd December

4a. Total number of people attending special services held for the **congregation and local community**	
4b. Total number of people attending special services held **specifically for civic organisations or schools**	

5. How many people came in person to your church at Christmas 2024?

5a. Number of communicants at service(s) on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day	
5b. Total number of people attending worship (including communicants) at service(s) on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day	

The next section is the **OCTOBER COUNT** of the number of people attending your church **in person** for **services and other acts of worship** during the first 4 weeks of October. This includes the number of people attending on Sundays and during the week (Monday-Saturday). We will ask later about people who have engaged in other ways (such as online or through other means such as telephone or posted service sheets).

You are asked to enter a count for each of the first 4 weeks of October 2024. The count is split into Sundays and weekdays; adults and children; and type of service (Church, fresh expressions of Church and school services).

Wherever possible, please **do not count the same person multiple times in the same week** – if someone attends your church more than once during Sunday, please only count them once. If someone attends on a Sunday, please do not include them again in the midweek count for that week.

Number of services: The number of services or fresh expressions of Church held on Sundays & weekdays. Enter "0" if there were none.
School services: These are services held in your church (or church building) that are attended by a school(s). There is a later question about acts of worship held in schools.
Adults: 16 years old and over. Please include those leading the service(s).
Children and young people: Under 16 years old.

Please INCLUDE:
- ✓ People attending your church **in person** – we will ask later about people who have engaged in other ways
- ✓ Clergy and other ministers attending or leading services
- ✓ Adults and children attending Sunday schools or equivalent activities
- ✓ Attendance at baptisms, including any visitors
- ✓ Any **fresh expressions of Church**, unless they have submitted their own return. A fresh expression of Church is a form of church established primarily for the benefit of people who are not yet "members" of any church. For help identifying fresh expressions of Church, please use the "Choice tree" at the end of this form or visit https://freshexpressions.org.uk/about/what-is-a-fresh-expression/
- ✓ Any other of your church's activities in which worship is the primary purpose and predominant feature, including any new congregations/new worshipping communities (include as Church or Fresh expression attendance, as appropriate)
- ✓ Attendance at services outside the church, e.g. at home, in care homes, prisons, or hospitals (include as Church or Fresh expression attendance, as appropriate)

Please DO NOT INCLUDE:
- ✗ People who did not attend in person
- ✗ Attendance at weddings or funeral services
- ✗ Activities with only some worship element, such as house groups, parent and toddler groups, youth clubs, Alpha courses, and social events such as harvest supper

6. How many people attended your church in person in October 2024?

- ✓ If possible, please count each person only once in any week, even if they attended more than once
- ✓ If there were exceptional circumstances that led to unusual October attendance figures in 2024, let us know in the comment box at the end of this form

6a.1	Number of services	Adult			Children and young people		
		Church	Fresh expressions	School service	Church	Fresh expressions	School service
Sunday 6th October							
Weekdays 7th-12th							

6a.2	Number of services	Adult			Children and young people		
		Church	Fresh expressions	School service	Church	Fresh expressions	School service
Sunday 13th October							
Weekdays 14th-19th							

6a.3	Number of services	Adult			Children and young people		
		Church	Fresh expressions	School service	Church	Fresh expressions	School service
Sunday 20th October							
Weekdays 21st-26th							

6a.4	Number of services	Adult			Children and young people		
		Church	Fresh expressions	School service	Church	Fresh expressions	School service
Sunday 27th October							
Weekdays 28th-2nd							

7. How often does your ministry team lead acts of worship in schools?

- ✓ This question refers to acts of worship in school buildings rather than in your church or church building (services held for schools in your church should be included within the October count, Easter, or Christmas figures where appropriate)
- ✓ Include any school-based acts of worship led by a person who holds office or responsibility for ministry (ordained or lay) within your church, whether or not the school is in your parish
- ✓ 'Usually' refers to during term-time or when the school is open, ignoring school holidays
- ✓ Tick one box as the closest estimate

Never	Occasionally/ ad hoc	Usually once or twice a term	Usually once a month	Usually once a fortnight	Usually once a week	Usually more than once a week

If there is no school in your parish, tick here: ☐

'Church at Home' Services

By "Church at Home services" we mean "any and all services offered remotely", including online services (live streamed or pre-recorded), services by telephone, or services that were emailed or posted. These services may be "attended" from home or in some cases from another location such as a hospital or whilst on holiday. For some churches the focus has been pastoral care and practical ministry, with people being referred to 'Church at Home' services from elsewhere, such as from other local churches or the cathedral.

8a. Did your church offer any 'Church at Home' services during October 2024? You may have offered these at church, parish or benefice level or as other groups of churches.

☐ Yes ☐ No

8b. If Yes, in how many weeks during October did your church offer any 'Church at Home' services?

☐ 4 weeks ☐ 3 weeks ☐ 2 weeks ☐ 1 week

8c. If Yes, What was the usual number of people "attending" your 'Church at Home' services each week that you offered Church at Home services in October?

- ✓ Please see https://www.churchofengland.org/media/25032 for some guidance about how to count 'Church at Home' attendance
- ✓ If you do not have exact figures, please give **your best estimate**
- ✓ If 'Church at Home' services were offered as a group of churches, for example as a parish, benefice or group, then please agree which church will report the 'Church at Home' attendance to avoid double counting attendance

Worshipping Community

The following questions are about your **"worshipping community"**. Think about your regular worshipping community at the **end of 2024**. For more information about worshipping communities, please refer to https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2017-12/WorshippingCommunity.pdf

- ✓ Do include anyone who attends your church regularly, for example at least once a month, or would attend if they were not prevented by illness, infirmity or temporary absence
- ✓ Do include anyone who regularly attends (on any day of the week):
  - any of your congregations/worshipping communities whose purpose is worship and whose practices include two or more of: prayer, scripture, praise, sacrament, and acts of service
  - your fresh expressions of Church
  - your 'Church at Home' services

- ✗ Do not include visitors, e.g. holidaymakers, baptism parties etc.
- ✗ Do not include people who consider their 'home' church to be another church
- ✗ Do not include people who left your church earlier in the year (they are counted in the next question as 'leavers') and were not part of your worshipping community at the end of 2024

9. How many people were in your "worshipping community" at the end of 2024?

- ✓ Please complete all boxes, as far as you can. If there is no-one in a category, please write "0". If the age groups of your worshipping community are unknown, please use your best estimates. If you are unable to estimate people's ages, please enter the total figure only
- ✓ Please include both those people who attend regularly in person and those who regularly attend your 'Church at Home' services

TOTAL	Children (Age 0-10)	Young people (Age 11-17)	Adults (Age 18-69)	Adults (Age 70+)

10. How has your worshipping community changed during 2024?

- ✓ Please enter the number (or your best estimate) of people who have joined your worshipping community. This includes people new to your church (whether in person or through 'Church at Home' services), and people who are now worshipping more frequently
- ✓ Please enter the number (or your best estimate) of people who have left your worshipping community. This includes people who have left your church, people who are now worshipping less often than monthly, and people who have died
- ✓ If there is no-one in a particular category, please write "0"
- ✗ Do not count as joiners or leavers members of your worshipping community who have moved from "Children and young people" to "Adult"

How many adults and children joined or left your worshipping community during 2024?		
	TOTAL joined	**TOTAL left**
Adults (Age 18+)		
Children and young people		

11. How many of the people in your worshipping community, as reported in question 9, are entirely or predominantly "Church at Home" worshippers? If you are not sure, please give your best estimate

The next questions are about **fresh expressions of Church**. A fresh expression of Church is a form of Church established primarily for the benefit of people who are not yet "members" of any church. Here you are asked to describe aspects of the way the fresh expression of Church is run, rather than providing numbers attending.

- ✓ For help in identifying fresh expressions of Church please use the "Choice tree" at the end of this form or visit https://freshexpressions.org.uk/about/what-is-a-fresh-expression/. If you remain unsure about whether an activity or service meets the definition of a fresh expression, please DO include it here
- ✓ If you have more than three fresh expressions of Church, please continue on an additional sheet
- ✗ Do not include Alpha courses or outreach activities that do not include worship

12. What regular fresh expressions of Church are supported by your church?

☐ **No fresh expressions of Church** (If your church did NOT support fresh expressions of Church during 2024 please tick here and leave the rest of this section blank)

Name of fresh expression	
Description of activity	
Where is it held? (please tick all that apply)	□ Church □ Church Hall □ Online □ Other (please note where): _____
How often?	□ Weekly □ Fortnightly □ Monthly □ Quarterly □ Other (please note how often): _____
Age group aimed at? (please tick all that apply)	□ ALL ages □ Family □ 0-4 □ 5-10 □ 11-17 □ 18-39 □ 40-69 □ 70+
Who attends? (please tick all that apply)	□ Attendees include people who regularly come to other services □ Attendees include people who occasionally come to other services □ Attendees include people who never come to other services

Name of fresh expression	
Description of activity	
Where is it held? (please tick all that apply)	□ Church □ Church Hall □ Online □ Other (please note where): _____
How often?	□ Weekly □ Fortnightly □ Monthly □ Quarterly □ Other (please note how often): _____
Age group aimed at? (please tick all that apply)	□ ALL ages □ Family □ 0-4 □ 5-10 □ 11-17 □ 18-39 □ 40-69 □ 70+
Who attends? (please tick all that apply)	□ Attendees include people who regularly come to other services □ Attendees include people who occasionally come to other services □ Attendees include people who never come to other services

Name of fresh expression	
Description of activity	
Where is it held? (please tick all that apply)	□ Church □ Church Hall □ Online □ Other (please note where): _____
How often?	□ Weekly □ Fortnightly □ Monthly □ Quarterly □ Other (please note how often): _____
Age group aimed at? (please tick all that apply)	□ ALL ages □ Family □ 0-4 □ 5-10 □ 11-17 □ 18-39 □ 40-69 □ 70+
Who attends? (please tick all that apply)	□ Attendees include people who regularly come to other services □ Attendees include people who occasionally come to other services □ Attendees include people who never come to other services

13. How many baptisms and thanksgivings for the gift of a child were held in your church during 2024?

- ✓ If separate services of thanksgiving and baptism were held for an individual both should be recorded here

	Infants (<1 year)	Children (1-4 years)	Children (5-10 years)	Young people (11-17 years)	Adults (18+)
Number of persons **baptised**					
Number of persons for whom a birth or adoption **thanksgiving** service was held					

14. How many marriages and services of prayer and dedication after civil marriage were held in your church during 2024?

Number of couples **married** in your church	
Number of couples for whom **a service of prayer and dedication after a civil marriage** was held in your church	

15. How many funeral services were held at or on behalf of your church during 2024?

- ✓ Include all funerals that were held at your church
- ✓ Include all funerals conducted by any member of your ministry team (including Readers, stipendiary clergy, self supporting clergy, and retired clergy) at a crematorium, cemetery, or other non-church location

Number of deceased for whom a **funeral service was held at your church**	
Number of deceased for whom a full **funeral service** was conducted by a member of your ministry team **at a crematorium, cemetery**, or other non-church location, excluding committal only & burial of ashes only	
Number of deceased for whom a committal only or a burial of ashes only was conducted by a member of your ministry team	

16. A special focus question about new congregations/new worshipping communities.

A "new congregation" or "new worshipping community":

- Has as its purpose the worship of Jesus Christ and helping people grow in their faith. Its practices will include two or more of: prayer, scripture, praise, sacrament, and acts of service.
- Aims to reach people who were not previously attending church regularly and to make new Christian disciples.
- Meets at least once a month on any day of the week, in your church building or elsewhere (such as in a café, in a school, or online). It is connected with the wider Church through the parish church, deanery, or diocese.

If your church supports fresh expressions of Church, as reported in section 12, above, some or all of those fresh expressions of Church might meet the definition of a new congregation/new worshipping community. If so, please include them in your responses to the questions below.

Q16a: How many new congregations or new worshipping communities did your church start in 2024?

☐ None ☐ One ☐ Two ☐ Three or more

Please list them below:

	Name of new congregation/new worshipping community that began in 2024
1	
2	
3	
Any additional	

Q16b: How many of your church's congregations or worshipping communities came to an end in 2024?

☐ None ☐ One ☐ Two ☐ Three or more

Please list them below:

	Name of congregation/ worshipping community that came to an end in 2024
1	
2	
3	
Any additional	

17. A special focus question about leadership of ministry with children and young people.

- By "Leading" we mean people who have a leadership role in running sessions, or significant parts of sessions. We do not mean people whose role is assisting with sessions, preparing resources, hosting/tidying up (vital though such people are in enabling this ministry!).
- By "Ministry" we mean something with significant Christian content, e.g. a children's service; Sunday school; a fresh expression of Church focused on children, such as Messy Church; religious content in a school assembly; Bible study; confirmation classes; a youth group with specific Christian content. We do not mean things with little or no Christian content, such as play groups, some youth groups, or social action projects.
- By "Children and young people" we mean people aged under 18.
- The people leading such ministry would be expected to have been Safely Recruited, including a DBS check, and to have undertaken appropriate Safeguarding training.
- We are interested in finding out about lay people's ministry, including that of licenced lay ministers, hence specifically excluding clergy.

Q17. As at the end of 2024, how many people – excluding clergy - are involved in leading your church's ministry with children and young people?

For paid and for volunteer/unpaid leaders, please report an exact number if you can. If you are unable to do so, please tick one of the options on the right:

	Exact number (if known)	Range (if exact number unknown)					
		0	1	2-4	5-9	10-19	20 or more
Paid		☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Volunteer/unpaid		☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Were there any **exceptional circumstances** (e.g. an interregnum or building works) or **significant changes** that may have led to **unusual** figures in this return?

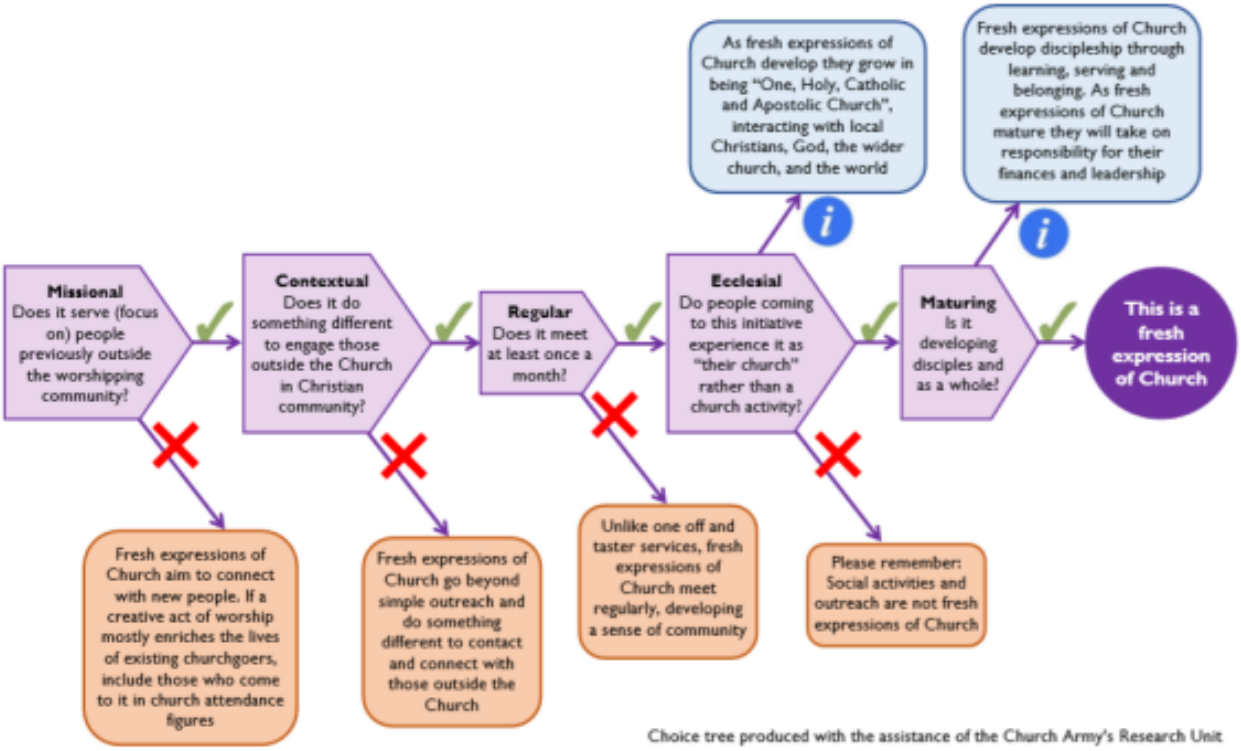
Thank you for completing your annual return on behalf of your church. Your contribution is essential to the on-going care and understanding of our churches and congregations; your diligence, time, and effort are greatly appreciated. Please take a moment to review your answers. Make sure that you have completed every question as far as possible and not left any answers blank (use "0" or "unknown" or "no services" if necessary). Blank answers may be queried with you later.

Please record below the contact details for the person who has completed this form.

Name: **Position:**

Email address: **Date of completion:**

Identifying fresh expressions of Church: fresh expression choice tree



Choice tree produced with the assistance of the Church Army's Research Unit