

Grassroots Evangelists: Who They Are and How They Share



Results from Wave 2 of the U.S. Congregational Life Survey

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Description of Data

- Wave 2 U.S. Congregational Life Survey data (data collected in 2008/2009)
- Worshiper survey Form K (with the back page of the survey focusing on Evangelism)



Describing Grassroots Evangelists

Who Is A “Grassroots Evangelist”?

- Feels at ease talking about his/her faith and seeks opportunities to do so
- Invited a friend or relative to worship in the past 12 months who was not attending a congregation
- All analyses include only respondents who attend the congregation or parish (not visitors); N=739
- Grassroots Evangelist variable: Grassroots Evangelists: N=68 (9%); Non-Grassroots Evangelists: N=651 (88%); Missing: N=20 (3%).

Evangelism by Demographics

	GE	Non-GE
Female	68%	63%
College degree	44%	42%
Employed	54%	60%
Under 45 years old	25%	28%
\$50,000/year or more	63%	57%
Married	60%	69%
Black or African American***	19%	5%

Significance levels: $<0.05=*$; $<0.01=**$; $<0.001=***$



Evangelism by Personal Religiosity

	GE	Non-GE
Devotional activities every day or most days***	74%	48%
Strongly disagree: All religions are equally good ways of helping a person find ultimate truth	19%	12%
Conversion experience***	70%	45%
Received training for reaching out to others/evangelism in past year***	49%	15%
Faith Group*** (excluding “Other” faith group)	N=68	N=649
Attends Catholic parish	31%	45%
Attends mainline Protestant congregation	25%	36%
Attends conservative Protestant congregation	44%	19%

Evangelism by Congregation Factors

	GE	Non-GE
Strong and growing sense of belonging to congregation***	74%	37%
Strongly agree: Spiritual needs being met in congregation***	69%	31%
Heard a sermon in past year on why you should invite others***	97%	67%
Inviting others/sharing faith is a top priority at congregation***	50%	19%
Strongly agree: Members relate openly and warmly to new people***	60%	35%
Congregation size		
Attends smaller congregation (1-149 avg. att.)	6%	11%
Attends larger congregation (150+ avg. att.)	94%	89%

A large, curved yellow graphic element on the left side of the slide, transitioning from a light yellow at the top to a slightly darker yellow at the bottom.

Inviting

... SO I'M GOING TO THIS CHURCH... OH, TOTALLY!!
EVERYONE'S DOING IT... IT'S TOTALLY RETRO ...
THEY ACTUALLY READ FROM THE ACTUAL BIBLE!!
... I KNOW! HOW COOL? ... OH, ABSOLUTELY!!
ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS ACCEPT JESUS AS YOUR...
...TOTALLY!! IT'S REALLY EASY! SO, I WAS GOING TO
INVITE YOU TO MY BAPTISM!... I KNOW!... YES, I'VE
GOT THE PERFECT OUTFIT ... ACTUALLY, YOU SHOULD
BECOME A CHRISTIAN!... NO WAY! YOU'D BE GREAT!!
... YES, THERE ARE BOYS... AND THE MUSIC'S GOOD...
OK, I'LL PICK YOU UP NEXT SUNDAY AT 6PM...



Invite to Worship/Activity

Number of people that respondents invited to worship services or another activity at the congregation in the last 12 months***	GE	Non-GE
None	8%	53%
One	3%	10%
2-5	50%	29%
6 or more	39%	8%

Number Invited Who Still Attend

Number of people that respondents invited in the last 12 months who still attend the congregation (Out of respondents who invited at least one person <u>and</u> who listed the number of people they invited.)	GE (N=57)	Non-GE (N=277)
None	53%	68%
One	19%	14%
2-5	21%	16%
6 or more	6%	2%

Types of People Invited

Who did you invite? (Mark <i>all</i> that apply.) (Out of respondents who invited at least one person to worship services or another activity at the congregation in the past 12 months.)	GE (N=57)	Non-GE (N=290)
A friend	70%	64%
A family member	46%	46%
A neighbor	23%	19%
A co-worker**	32%	17%
A stranger*	14%	5%
Other	9%	4%

Types of People Invited

	Catholic GE (N=17)	Catholic Non-GE (N=93)	MP GE (N=15)	MP Non-GE (N=115)	CP GE (N=25)	CP Non-GE (N=81)
A friend	59%	58%	87%	68%	68%	66%
A family member	65%	62%	20%	35%	48%	45%
A neighbor	24%	12%	27%	20%	20%	22%
A co-worker	35%*	10%	20%	12%	36%	30%
A stranger	0%	1%	27%*	7%	16%	8%
Other	6%	2%	7%	5%	12%	2%

Activities Invited Someone To

To what activity did you invite someone? (Out of respondents who invited at least one person to worship services or another activity at the congregation in the past 12 months.)	GE (N=57)	Non-GE (N=290)
Worship service	90%	86%
Sunday school*	19%	8%
Prayer/Bible study group**	23%	8%
Youth group	10%	9%
Social activity	21%	19%
Other group or activity**	21%	8%
Community service	7%	2%
Mission/service trip	4%	3%
Event/activity for visitors/community	18%	10%
Other	4%	7%

Activities Invited Someone To

	Catholic GE (N=17)	Catholic Non-GE (N=93)	MP GE (N=15)	MP Non-GE (N=115)	CP GE (N=25)	CP Non-GE (N=81)
Worship service	94%	83%	93%	83%	84%	94%
Sunday school	6%	2%	27%*	8%	24%	15%
Prayer/Bible study group	29%**	2%	33%**	7%	12%	15%
Youth group	12%	4%	7%	11%	12%	11%
Social activity	24%	19%	27%	23%	16%	12%
Other group or activity	18%	9%	40%**	6%	12%	11%
Community service	12%*	0%	7%	5%	4%	1%
Mission/service trip	6%	6%	0%	2%	4%	1%
Event/activity for visitors/community	24%	7%	7%	12%	20%	10%
Other	0%	9%	0%	4%	8%	8%

Outreach Activities

In the last 12 months, have you ... ? (Mark <i>all</i> that apply.)	GE	Non-GE
Called to invite***	30%	6%
Invited through emails/text messages**	15%	5%
Distributed fliers	10%	5%
Visited people in community about congregation*	7%	2%
Contacted visitors **	18%	5%
Contacted inactive in the congregation**	18%	5%
Contacted new people	8%	5%
None of the above***	31%	77%

Outreach Activities

In the last 12 months, have you ... ? (Mark <i>all</i> that apply.) (Out of respondents who participated in at least one of the following activities.)	GE (N=42)	Non-GE (N=133)
Called to invite	43%	28%
Invited through emails/text messages	21%	23%
Distributed fliers	14%	20%
Visited people in community about congregation	10%	8%
Contacted visitors	26%	23%
Contacted inactive in the congregation	26%	23%
Contacted new people	12%	22%

Hindrances to Evangelism

Factors Discouraging Inviting

What most discourages you from inviting people to this congregation? (Mark up to <i>two</i> .)	GE	Non-GE
Don't know anyone interested	3%	11%
Don't know non-attenders**	7%	24%
Friends/contacts too far away	7%	10%
Services not impressive	2%	2%
Don't see need to invite	0%	4%
Not comfortable**	0%	15%
Have trouble explaining why to attend	2%	7%
Nothing: Generally happy to invite people***	82%	37%
Other	2%	4%
Don't know	3%	8%

Factors Discouraging Inviting

What most discourages you from inviting people to this congregation? (Mark up to two.) (Out of respondents who indicated a response other than “Nothing: I am generally happy to invite people.”)	GE (N=15)	Non-GE (N=410)
Don't know anyone interested	13%	16%
Don't know non-attenders	27%	34%
Friends/contacts too far away	27%	13%
Services not impressive	7%	3%
Don't see need to invite	0%	5%
Not comfortable*	0%	22%
Have trouble explaining why to attend	7%	10%
Other	7%	6%
Don't know	13%	11%

Factors Discouraging Inviting

What most discourages you from inviting people to this congregation? (Mark up to two.) (Out of respondents who indicated a response other than “Nothing: I am generally happy to invite people.”)	Catholic Non-GE (N=195)	MP Non-GE (N=147)	CP Non-GE (N=67)
Don't know anyone interested**	22%	9%	12%
Don't know non-attenders	36%	37%	24%
Friends/contacts too far away**	10%	12%	27%
Services not impressive	3%	4%	4%
Don't see need to invite	8%	3%	2%
Not comfortable*	20%	28%	13%
Have trouble explaining why to attend	7%	14%	12%
Other*	3%	8%	9%
Don't know	10%	10%	16%

Main Reason For Not Inviting

If you have <i>not</i> invited others to your congregation recently, what was the <i>main</i> reason? (Mark only <i>one</i> .)***	GE	Non-GE
Not important or appropriate to discuss faith	4%	10%
Few/no opportunities to do so	2%	32%
Fear of other people's reactions/damaging relationships	2%	5%
Tried, but others not interested	22%	12%
Lack of confidence in talking about faith/answering difficult questions	4%	7%
Other	0%	1%
Don't know	7%	11%
Not applicable	58%	22%

Over 20% of cells have expected frequencies less than 5; the reported significance level may be inaccurate

Main Reason For Not Inviting

If you have <i>not</i> invited others to your congregation recently, what was the <i>main</i> reason? (Mark only <i>one</i> .)** (Out of respondents who indicated a response other than “Not applicable.”)	GE (n=19)	Non-GE (n=409)
Not important or appropriate to discuss faith	10%	13%
Few/no opportunities to do so	5%	41%
Fear of other people’s reactions/damaging relationships	5%	6%
Tried, but others not interested	53%	16%
Lack of confidence in talking about faith/answering difficult questions	10%	9%
Other	0%	1%
Don’t know	16%	14%

Over 20% of cells have expected frequencies less than 5; the reported significance level may be inaccurate

Main Reason For Not Inviting

If you have <i>not</i> invited others to your congregation recently, what was the <i>main</i> reason? (Mark only <i>one</i> .)*** (Out of respondents who indicated a response other than “Not applicable.”)	Catholic Non-GE (N=190)	MP Non-GE (N=148)	CP Non-GE (N=70)
Not important or appropriate to discuss faith	12%	14%	14%
Few/no opportunities to do so	50%	34%	27%
Fear of other people’s reactions/damaging relationships	5%	7%	9%
Tried, but others not interested	10%	14%	34%
Lack of confidence in talking about faith/answering difficult questions	6%	15%	4%
Other	1%	1%	0%
Don’t know	16%	14%	11%

Future Research

- Which factors most significantly identify “Grassroots Evangelists”?
- How do congregational factors influence “Grassroots Evangelism”?
- Identify a “Grassroots Evangelist” worldview.