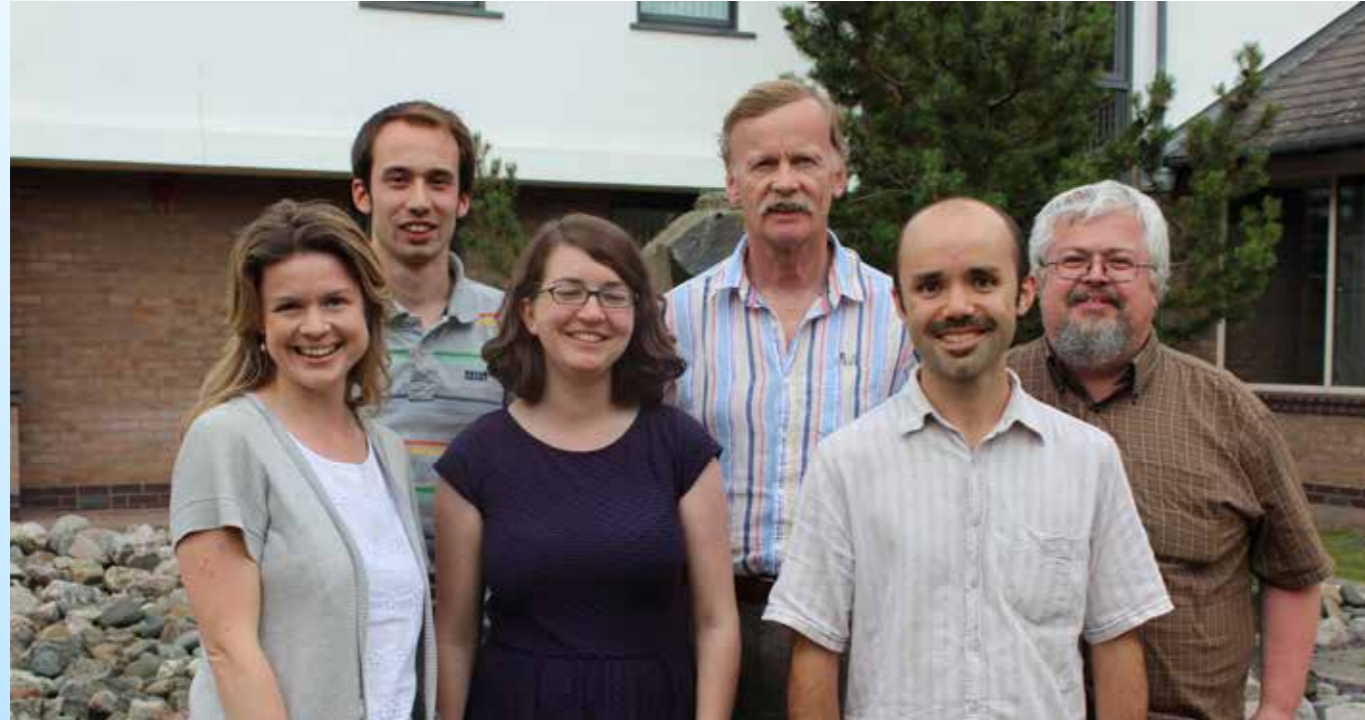


To download free PDF copies of the four reports, go to:
www.churcharmy.org/fxcresearch

Also available on the webpage are PDF copies of our individual reports on 21 dioceses



Church Army's Research Unit

Seeing and sharing what God is doing in mission

Since 1997 we have been researching and publishing stories about fresh expressions of Church, of all kinds, and how they have grown up as part of the Church of England.

From 2012 we have shifted our focus to statistics. It was the response to a lack of hard evidence about some important questions:

- How many fresh expressions of Church are there?
- Who have they reached in mission?
- How did they grow in maturity as young churches?
- How significant are they in the mission of the Church of England?

We are glad in this research to have been financial and academic partners with the Strategy and Development Unit of the Church of England, as part of the Renewal and Reform agenda.

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Seeing the bigger picture

Four reports on fresh expressions of Church



from Church Army's Research Unit



The Day of Small Things

An analysis of fresh expressions of Church in 21 dioceses of the Church of England
by George Lings

- Across the 21 dioceses we counted 1109 fresh expressions of Church
- They make up around 15% of a diocese's church communities
- Mostly they are small - 67% have 10-55 attenders
- Mostly they are young - about three-fifths are under five years old
- Four times as many are starting now, compared with ten years ago
- They are varied - with some 14 types that are common and with their own characteristics
- For every one person sent out to begin one there are now more than two-and-a-half extra people
- Over 50,000 people attend these fresh expressions of Church – about 6% of diocesan AWA
- 38% of those who come are under 16 - twice the average proportion in parish churches
- The leaders think the majority of those joining are not existing church attenders
- Men and women are equally likely to lead a fresh expression of Church
- 36% of the leaders are unrecognised lay people – the so called 'lay-lay' – who do just as well
- The picture of what works in the capital city is not typical of elsewhere
- Nothing else, as a whole, in the Church of England has this level of missional impact and contributes to the re-imagining of Church



Who's there?

The church backgrounds of attenders in Anglican fresh expressions of Church
by Claire Dalpra and John Vivian

- The terms 'churched', 'de-churched' and 'non-churched' were too simplistic as research definitions - this is a complex phenomenon because people's lives are complex
- The fresh expressions of Church surveyed had made some progress in connecting with people who aren't existing churchgoers
- On the other hand, the inherited Sunday congregations surveyed contained very few non-churched attenders, though a reasonable proportion of people from a de-churched background
- Taken as a whole, the attenders at fresh expressions of Church showed more evenness of age and gender than the attenders at inherited Sunday congregations
- It is important for leaders to be as self-aware as they can about who is attending so that fresh expressions of Church can remain effective in mission



What happens after research?

How do dioceses react to and utilise large scale research into their fresh expressions of Church?
by Elspeth McGann

- There was a wide range of responses from the first 11 dioceses we surveyed when asked about the impact of our research
- Some admitted that nothing at all had come of it, but in others there was the creation of dynamic diocesan strategy
- Our 10 criteria for being a fresh expression of Church proved to be helpful to a large majority of the dioceses who are making use of them
- Details of fresh expressions of Church continue to be kept in over half the 11 dioceses, and in all the dioceses there is some form of support for leaders (although this varies greatly)



Sustaining young Churches

A qualitative pilot study of fresh expressions of Church in the Church of England
by Andy Wier

- This research is a first attempt at an explorer's guide to previously unmapped territory
- Talk of sustainability needs to take seriously the reality that most Anglican fresh expressions of Church still operate within the parish of their sending church
- The sustainability of a fresh expression of Church is often intimately connected to the sustainability of its parent church - most are sustainable only as part of a wider whole
- Sustaining fresh expressions of Church requires discovering sustainable rhythms and practices, adapting and evolving, involving others, receiving and giving, persevering and following (in discipleship)
- Dioceses and the wider Church need to be more creative, imaginative and discerning in the way it uses money and other resources to support fresh expressions of Church

