

Global Anabaptist Profile

Belief and Practice in 24 Mennonite World Conference Churches

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GLOBAL ANABAPTIST PROFILE

Foreword

JOHN D. ROTH

The history of the Mennonite church in Indonesia nearly always begins with the story of Pieter and Wilhelmina Jansz, who arrived in the coastal town of Japara, Java, in 1851 as representatives of the Dutch Mennonite Mission Board. By all accounts, they were innovative and gifted missionaries. In 1854 Pieter baptized a group of five Javanese believers, marking the official birth of the Muria Javanese Mennonite Church.

As we now know, however, the true origins of the church were more complicated. A fuller account of that story must include a central role for Kyai Ibrahim Tunggul Wulung (ca. 1800-1885), a Javanese mystic and prophet who transformed a gospel expressed in a European idiom into images, concepts, and practices that made sense to the Javanese people. Tunggul Wulung envisioned the church as self-sustaining Christian communities, freed from the burdensome labor obligations imposed by the Dutch government and committed to preserving Javanese culture, language and folkways. In a jungle clearing in Bondo (Jepara), Tunggul Wulung helped to establish the first of several Christian settlements in Java that marked the true foundations of the Muria Javanese Mennonite Church.

Since then, the basic outline of that story—the “enculturation” of the gospel into terms that made sense within local contexts—has been repeated in settings around the world. During the first half of the twentieth century Mennonite missionaries from Europe and North America left a significant legacy—sharing the gospel, planting churches, and creating schools, hospitals, and relief organizations in many settings around the world. But in each instance, significant growth happened only when local leaders assumed responsibility for the future of the church and began to translate the gospel into their own cultural context.

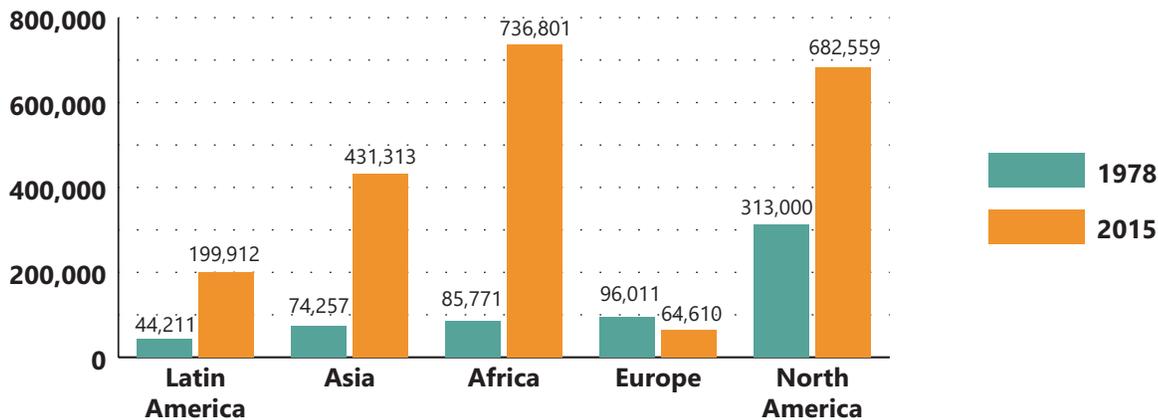
The results in the second half of the twentieth century have been profound.

In 1978 Mennonite World Conference estimated that there were 613,000 Anabaptists in the world, with the majority of them (67%) living in Europe or North America. By 2015, less than four decades later, that number had more than tripled to a total church membership of 2.1 million Anabaptists. Today, Europeans and North Americans account for only 36% of the global Anabaptist-Mennonite church, with the vast majority living in Africa, Asia and Latin America—the so-called “Global South.”

From the perspective of a 500-year-old tradition, this transformation is the single most important event in the history of the Anabaptist movement. It marks a profound reorientation, whose significance we are only slowly coming to understand.

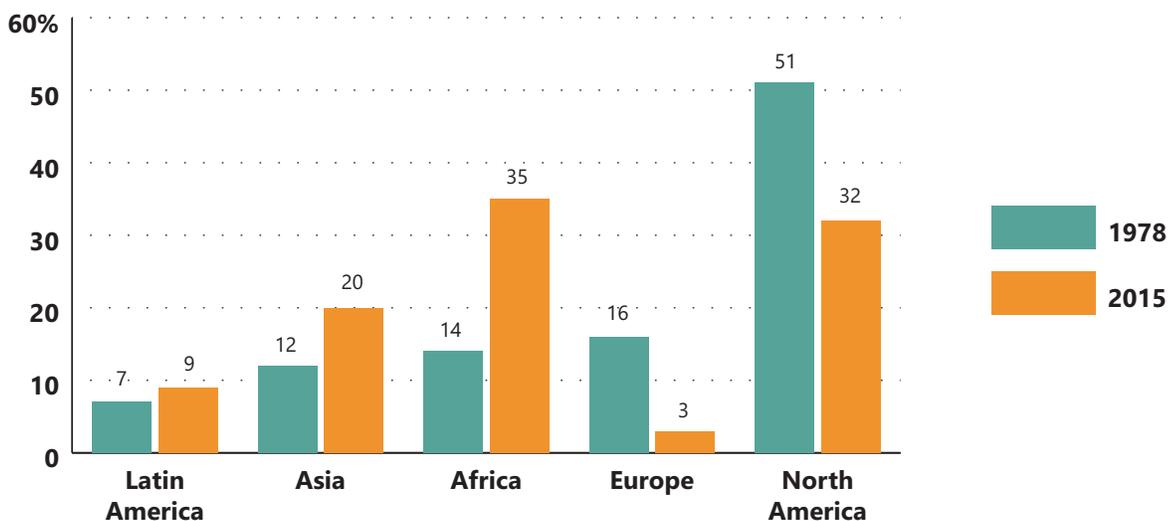
In 2012 I helped to establish the Institute for the Study of Global Anabaptism (ISGA) as an effort to focus the academic resources of Goshen College (Goshen, Indiana, USA), long a center of Anabaptist studies, on this new phenomenon of “global Anabaptism.” The Global Anabaptist Profile—a project initiated and carried out by the ISGA—is the first representative survey of global Anabaptist-Mennonite churches.

Growth and Decline of Anabaptists by Continent 1978-2015



The number of Anabaptists globally increased from 613,250 in 1978 to 2,115,195 in 2015. *Data from Mennonite World Conference.*

Changes in Percentage of Anabaptists by Continent 1978-2015



Data from Mennonite World Conference.

History and Methodology of the Global Anabaptist Profile

The original vision for this project emerged out of conversations in 2009 with Conrad L. Kanagy, a sociologist at Elizabethtown College, and Richard Showalter, then president of Eastern Mennonite Missions (EMM). With strong support from Showalter, Kanagy had just completed a church member profile of twelve church conferences that were affiliated with EMM. In 2010 I attended a consultation in Thika, Kenya, to review the findings of the project alongside church leaders from participating groups. I was deeply impressed by the level of conversation and new insights that emerged from that gathering.¹

Inspired by this project, I approached the Mennonite World Conference (MWC) Executive Committee in

1. The results of that study appeared as Conrad Kanagy, Tilahun Beyene, and Richard Showalter Conrad Kanagy, *Winds of the Spirit: A Profile of the Anabaptist Churches in the Global South* (Harrisonburg, Va.: MennoMedia, 2012).

2011 with a proposal for a broader survey that would be more representative of the global Anabaptist-Mennonite fellowship. I am deeply grateful to Danisa Ndlovu, then president of MWC, César García, MWC general secretary, and the Executive Committee for agreeing to collaborate with the ISGA in this project.

The goals of the “Global Anabaptist Profile” included the following:

- To provide participating churches with information to guide their mission and priorities.
- To strengthen relationships among MWC churches.
- To inform the development of MWC priorities.
- To establish a baseline against which to measure future change.
- To train leaders to conduct church profiles in the future.
- To strengthen a sense of Anabaptist-Mennonite identity among participating groups.

After a year of fundraising and many consultations with Mennonite mission agencies, Mennonite Central Committee, various church leaders, and a group of sociologists who had experience in conducting cross-cultural surveys, we identified a list of MWC churches who would be invited to participate in the Global Anabaptist Profile. All full members of MWC who had 1000 or more members were considered for the sample. Of the 67 groups who met that criteria, 24 were selected through a stratified sampling process, with proportionate representation among MWC’s five continental regions. We then invited leaders of those groups to join the study and to appoint a local Research Associate who would carry out the survey in their context.

In August of 2013 the Research Associates and other collaborators (30 people from 19 countries) met at Goshen College for a week-long consultation. Together we finalized a questionnaire based loosely on the MWC “Seven Shared Convictions,” working carefully on the wording of each question. The seven-page survey included questions on demographics (e.g., age, gender, marriage status, etc.) as well as Christian doctrines and practices (e.g., church participation, religious identity, beliefs about Jesus, Scripture, witness and evangelism, peace and social justice, etc.). Together we also reviewed research methodology, created an interview protocol, and discussed details related to data entry. From a comprehensive list of congregations submitted by each Research Associate, we then randomly selected a set of congregations for participation in the project.

During the next six months, the questionnaire was translated from English into twenty-five languages, and then back-translated into English for comparison with the original to ensure accuracy.² Once the translations were completed, Research Associates visited or made direct contact with each of the selected congregations, inviting all members above the age of eighteen to complete the questionnaire, usually in the context of a congregational gathering.

Collecting the Data

By the middle of 2015 the data gathering stage was nearly complete. The response rates of congregations who agreed to participate in the survey, as well as the response rate of members who completed a questionnaire, varied substantially from conference to conference.

In the Global South (Africa, Asia, Latin America) 87% of the selected congregations participated as compared to 71% of congregations in North America and in Europe (Global North). In nine conferences, all of them in the Global South, 100% of the congregations in the original sample participated in the Global Anabaptist Profile by completing questionnaires.

The highest response rates for members also occurred in the Global South, where 31% of members from the original sample completed questionnaires as compared with 19% of members in the Global North. Altogether, the Global Anabaptist Profile includes data from 18,299 respondents representing 403 congre-

2. The languages included: Afrikaans; Amharic; Bahasa; Chichewa; Chishona; Dorze; English; Enlhet; French; German; Hindi; Javanese; Kikongo; Lingala; Oromo; Portuguese; Russian; Sindebele; Spanish; Swahili; Tagalog; Telugu; Tshiluba; Tumbuka; Xhosa; Yao.

gations, 24 MWC conferences, 18 countries, and 5 continents.

Challenges and Limitations of the Survey

As with all major research projects, the Global Anabaptist Profile faced a number of significant challenges, beginning with the design of the questionnaire itself. We wanted the survey to provide basic demographic information as well as insights into the beliefs and practices of a wide cross-section of MWC-member groups. Creating a survey to quantify such things accurately is difficult in the best of circumstances, but it is even more challenging to do so in cross-cultural settings where groups express theological and ethical convictions in very different ways. Some of the questions in the survey were borrowed from other research projects, while many more were developed or refined through careful conversation with Research Associates at the consultation in the summer of 2013.

Inadequacy of Survey Questions

Not surprisingly, perhaps, the strongest criticism of the survey came from a European group—the Arbeitsgemeinschaft Mennonitischer Gemeinden (AMG) in Germany. Although their Research Associate was present at the consultation and they participated in the survey, AMG leaders later expressed deep frustration at several specific survey questions, arguing that they seemed to reflect strongly evangelical understandings of Christian doctrine that were foreign to their context. For example, none of the options presented in a question related to the Bible adequately described a response that most members in their group could easily affirm. Church leaders expressed similar frustrations about questions related to the atonement, or attitudes toward people of other religions, or the use of the phrase “born again,” insisting that the questions were not framed in ways that aligned with their theological perspectives. These frustrations were certainly understandable: quantitative surveys are inherently limited by a finite number of possible responses, and abstract beliefs are difficult to quantify. Yet the questions appearing in the Global Anabaptist Profile reflected a collaborative process by the Research Associates who represented a cross-section of the global church. No other group who participated in the project expressed similar concerns.

Difficulty of Integrating the Interviews

Although the numerical results of a quantitative survey can be very illuminating, we recognize that the lived experience of the Christian faith in culturally diverse settings is not easily reducible to statistics. Thus, from the beginning we hoped to combine a quantitative approach represented by the survey with a qualitative component in which Research Associates would interview several members of each congregation to get a fuller picture of the life of the church. The interviews turned out to be only partially successful. Some Research Associates found it simply too time-consuming to add this additional task to their work; others had difficulty persuading members to participate, or they faced technological challenges with the recording equipment.³ Transcribing and translating the interviews proved to be another significant obstacle. In the end, the project generated 29 interviews in seven languages, which remain available for future researchers. But we have not integrated the interviews into our findings.

Logistical Challenges

Some of the challenges involved with the Global Anabaptist Profile were logistical. Research Associates in the Democratic Republic of Congo, for example, faced significant difficulties in reaching remote congregations while traveling on unpaved roads. Communicating with rural congregations was not easy; and some local pastors were suspicious of the intended purpose of the survey. In some settings, a large percentage of church members were illiterate. Even though we had a protocol for including responses from illiterate participants, the process was time-consuming and cumbersome. Compounding this challenge was the fact that in some contexts more men tended to be literate than women, resulting in a disproportionate number of male participants in the survey there. Entering the data was also a labor-intensive and tedious task. Research Associates

3. The ISGA provided each Research Associate with a small hand-held digital recorder, easily rechargeable, whose sound files could be downloaded to a laptop computer for storage.

and their colleagues worked extraordinarily hard, but sometimes the steps were confusing and data needed to be re-entered.

The Global Anabaptist Profile does not claim absolute certainty in its description of a particular group's faith or practices. The challenges of undertaking a cross-cultural survey, where experiences and assumptions differ widely, are real. The data that we present here is suggestive but not absolute. As with all surveys, the results call for an active process of interpretation and clarification, a task that started already on July 26-30, 2015 at a consultation of Research Associates and church leaders at Elizabethtown (Pa.) College.

That conversation will undoubtedly continue. The critique of the Global Anabaptist Profile by the AMG is part of that process; but we hope that discussions sparked by the results will also provide participating groups with opportunities for further reflection, and that the conversations emerging from those settings will lead to a deeper sense of theological identity, a more vibrant witness, and stronger relationships with other groups in the global Anabaptist-Mennonite family of faith.

Was it Worth the Effort?

In response to our early reporting on the results of the Global Anabaptist Profile, some noted that the overall outcome did not seem to contain any major surprises. It is true that the most significant differences in results tend to highlight the contrast between MWC churches in the Global North with those in the Global South, thereby reinforcing conclusions about differences in demographics, beliefs, and practices that are already generally well established. MWC churches in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, for example, are younger than those in Europe and North America; they tend to place a stronger emphasis on the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and their worship styles tend to be more expressive. Anyone who has read the work of Philip Jenkins or Lamin Sanneh on the broader trends in global Christianity is not likely to be surprised by these results of the Global Anabaptist Profile.⁴

Nevertheless, the potential fruits of the Global Anabaptist Profile go far beyond these general observations.

1. The results of the Global Anabaptist Profile provide significant insights into attitudes and practices related to the distinctive characteristics of the Anabaptist-Mennonite tradition. On several of these distinctive emphases—e.g., concern for reconciliation and peacemaking; commitment to service; a view of the church as community—the survey revealed widespread agreement among churches in both the Global North and the Global South. The Global Anabaptist Profile also creates the possibility of continental and denominational comparisons, resulting in a more finely-grained analysis than just North/South comparisons. And the survey provides an important framework for testing or challenging the stereotypes that groups might have of each other.
2. The survey provides churches, and especially church leaders, with specific information regarding their own groups. Most of the groups participating in the Global Anabaptist Profile had never taken part in a church member profile. This was their first opportunity to have a systematic overview of basic information about members, including beliefs and practices. The survey provides each group with a baseline for future studies that could reveal changes over time. And it gave Research Associates basic training in survey methodology that could be beneficial to their churches in the future.
3. Finally, and perhaps most significantly, the Global Anabaptist Profile provides a framework for informed conversations among MWC member churches about specific beliefs and practices, especially where the study has revealed similarities or differences. The consultation of Research Associates and church leaders at Elizabethtown in July, 2015 generated enormous energy as representatives of each group presented their findings and joined with other participants in animated conversation in interpreting the results. Some church leaders, for example, expressed surprise at the level of support in their

4. The literature on global Christianity is vast and growing rapidly. For a basic introduction see Philip Jenkins, *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity*, 3rd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), and Lamin Sanneh, *Encountering The West: Christianity and the Global Cultural Process: The African Dimension* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 1993).

church for the ordination of women. Some noted with concern that members were not completely united on certain ethical practices.

4. The responses to the question on persecution created a setting for personal sharing as church leaders recounted stories of courageous witness. At various times throughout the consultation we paused in our reporting to pray for a church that was confronting a particular challenge. While the Global Anabaptist Profile revealed some significant differences regarding theological emphases and church practices, those differences were also an occasion for listening and learning from each other.

The Challenges Ahead

Within the many detailed findings of the Global Anabaptist Profile several larger themes emerge that may have special relevance for MWC as it determines its priorities for the future.

1. *Growing Churches . . . and the Need for Theological Education:* The churches in the Global South tend to be relatively young, with a higher percentage of women in childbearing age than churches in the Global North. These churches are growing, either by virtue of large families or by mission outreach. At the same time, however, these growing churches often have relatively limited access to educational opportunities, especially to theological training from an Anabaptist-Mennonite perspective. The challenge of equipping and training young leaders will be a major concern for MWC in the future. The theological direction of MWC will be shaped by these decisions—if we do not help provide theological training that is accessible, affordable and appropriate to their circumstances, pastors of new congregations will find that training elsewhere.
2. *Responding to Muslim Neighbors:* The Global Anabaptist Profile makes clear that perceptions of Muslim neighbors vary significantly within our fellowship, a theme that became even clearer in our conversations at the consultation at Elizabethtown. Some MWC member groups have experienced direct persecution and regard Islam either as a threat or as the focus for missionary outreach. Other groups are working hard at identifying points of commonality with their Muslim neighbors, seeking to collaborate whenever possible. Although this topic was not a major focus of the Global Anabaptist Profile, it emerged frequently enough to merit more attention by MWC in the future.
3. *Experiences of Persecution:* Closely related was a surprisingly high percentage of MWC-member churches who reported experiencing some kind of persecution. Although the survey did not clarify the exact nature or extent of that persecution, the fact that so many groups identified this calls for more pastoral attention to the challenges some of our brothers and sister are facing in their witness to Christ.
4. *Differences in Ethical Practices:* All MWC member churches care about the ethical practices of their members—faith in Christ, we all agree, should bear fruit in a transformed way of life. But exactly how that commitment to following Christ is expressed in daily practices differs from group to group. We are not all united, for example, on the question of dancing or the use of alcohol; we have differences regarding divorce and remarriage; we are not in full agreement regarding Christian participation in government and politics; and we differ on how the gospel of peace is expressed in daily life. These differences are real. On the one hand, MWC is not a body that enforces uniform practice on its member churches. On the other hand, we value each other as brothers and sisters in Christ earnestly seeking to be faithful to the gospel. Do we have settings in which we can listen to each other? Can we continue to respect differences on these ethical practices? How important is it that we are all of one mind on these questions?
5. *Differences in Understandings of the Holy Spirit:* On the whole, church members in the Global South have broader and more frequent experiences with the charismatic gifts of the Spirit than those in the North. They also have a greater openness to the Holy Spirit speaking directly to individuals. And Anabaptist-Mennonites in the South are much more likely to think of God as the source of individual health and wealth. These differences have implications for differing approaches to worship, understandings of prayer, attitudes toward “prosperity gospel,” and assumptions regarding human agency

that we need to acknowledge.

6. *Negotiating Worldviews*: Behind some of these differences are even more basic differences in how we look at the world. In some ways, MWC member churches reflect premodern, modern, and postmodern worldviews. Some groups, for example, regularly experience the living presence of the Holy Spirit in clear and tangible ways—as a spiritual battle between good and evil that finds expression in miraculous healings, deliverance from demon possession, and an openness to God’s revelation in dreams, visions and prophecies. Some groups reflect a more modern approach to faith, with a strong emphasis on the authority of carefully-worded confessions of faith, a literal interpretation of Scripture, a concern for clarity of belief and practice, and aggressive forms of mission. A smaller number of groups might be characterized as postmodern. They tend to focus on general themes in Scripture, place a stronger emphasis on individual experience in ethical questions, recognize the presence of God in all cultures, and advocate religious toleration. These distinctions between premodern, modern, and postmodern are rarely absolute; in fact, the lines between them are frequently blurred. But they do suggest different beginning perspectives that MWC will need to recognize as we live together as a body.
7. *Visibility of MWC*: Fifty-eight percent of respondents in the Global Anabaptist Profile have heard of Mennonite World Conference; but this awareness differs significantly by hemisphere: 75 percent of those in the Global North are aware of MWC as compared to 55 percent in the Global South. Europeans (88%) were most likely to have heard of MWC, followed by North Americans (72%), Africans (65%), Asians (53%), and Latin Americans (49%). These differences by hemisphere and continent point to the efforts needed to raise awareness of Mennonite World Conference among its constituent conferences.

None of these challenges can be “fixed” with simple solutions. Addressing them will require courage, creativity, patience, and graciousness, and a deep trust in the presence of the Holy Spirit. Unity in the body of Christ is always a gift that we receive, not an outcome that we create through our own efforts. But we hope that naming some of these challenges will be a helpful step in our journey forward together in faith.

Acknowledgements and Thanks

This project has come to fruition only through the generous support of many individuals and groups. I am particularly grateful for the collegial expertise of my co-director in this project, Conrad Kanagy, professor of sociology at Elizabethtown College. Conrad brought to the Global Anabaptist Profile not only his considerable professional experience in conducting church member profiles, but also a deep love for the church in all its expressions. He has been a steady friend and guide at each step of the project. Elizabeth Miller, director of communications at the Institute for the Study of Global Anabaptism, has also played a key role in the Global Anabaptist Profile. Elizabeth oversaw many of the complex logistical details of the consultation of Research Associates and church leaders at Elizabethtown College (July 26-29, 2015) and has been a wise, cross-culturally sensitive consultant as the project moved forward. Along with Conrad, Elizabeth was closely involved at each stage of production of this volume.

The project would not have happened without the dedicated work of the Research Associates (listed below). They were the face of the Global Anabaptist Profile in their local settings. Their dedicated, often sacrificial, efforts stand behind all the data presented here. By the end of the project, the team of Research Associates had become friends—brothers and sisters in the global family of Christ.

We have also been blessed with a remarkable group of student assistants, including: Amira Allen, Justina Beard, Danielle Mitchell, Jennifer Preston, Amanda Robinson, Emilee Rhubright, Angeliky dos Santos, Mara Weaver, and Alex Wildberger. In addition, I want express deep gratitude to Iris Martin for creating powerpoints of the summary reports, Antonio Ulloa for his detailed attention to cleaning and entering data as it arrived from the field, and to SaeJin Lee for her work in the design of the book. We are also were blessed with strong institutional support from Goshen College, Elizabethtown College, and the Young Center for Anabaptist and Pietist Studies.

Each of the church conferences that participated in the Global Anabaptist Profile made a significant contribution to its success, either in labor or in other in-kind gifts, such as providing Research Associates with food and lodging as they traveled. Yet the project would have been impossible without the financial contributions of several key institutions and individuals. In particular I am pleased to name: Mennonite Central Committee, the Schowalter Foundation, the Fransen Family Foundation, Jon and Rhoda Mast, Virgil and Mary Ann Miller, Bob and Janie Mullet, Rick and Joy Hostetter, and Mark and Vicki Smucker.

At every step of the way, César García, general secretary of the Mennonite World Conference, along with other members of the MWC staff, provided crucial support. We are deeply grateful for the collaboration of MWC in this project, even though it should be clear that MWC bears no responsibility for the outcome.

The participating churches and Research Associates in the Global Anabaptist Profile are:

- Argentina (Iglesia Evangélica Menonita Argentina) / Delbert Erb
- Brazil (Aliança Evangélica Menonita) / Tiago Lemes
- Canada (Brethren in Christ Canada) / Roger Massie
- Canada (Evangelical Mennonite Conference) / Robyn Penner Thiessen
- Colombia (Iglesias Hermanos Menonitas de Colombia) / Diego Martinez
- Congo (Communauté Mennonite au Congo) / Joly Birakara Ilowa
- Congo (Communauté des Églises des Frères Mennonites au Congo) / Damien Pelende Tshinyam
- Ethiopia (Meserete Kristos Church) / Tigist Tesfaye Gelagle
- Germany (Arbeitsgemeinschaft Mennonitischer Brüdergemeinden) / Jonas Beyer
- Germany (Arbeitsgemeinschaft Mennonitischer Gemeinden in Deutschland) / Werner Funck
- Guatemala (Iglesia Evangélica Menonita de Guatemala) / César Montenegro
- Honduras (Organización Cristiana Amor Viviente) / Reynaldo Vallecillo
- India (Bihar Mennonite Mandli) / Emmanuel Minj
- India (Conference of the Mennonite Brethren Churches in India) / Chintha Joel Satyanandam
- Indonesia (Gereja Injili di Tanah Jawa) / Muhamad Ichsanudin Zubaedi
- Malawi (BIC Mpingo Wa Abale Mwa Kristu) / Francis Kamoto
- Nicaragua (Convención de Iglesias Evangélicas Menonitas) / Marcos Orozco
- Paraguay (Convención Evangélica Hermanos Menonitas Enlhet) / Alfonso Cabaña
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- Philippines (The Integrated Mennonite Churches of the Philippines) / Regina Mondez
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- The United States (Brethren in Christ Church in the U.S.) / Ron Burwell
- The United States (U.S. Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches) / Lynn Jost
- Zimbabwe (BIC Ibandla Labazalwane kuKristu eZimbabwe) / Jethro Dube

CHAPTER ONE

Characteristics of the Global Anabaptist Profile Conferences

CONRAD KANAGY

What characterized those who participated in the Global Anabaptist Profile? How many women? How many men? How rural and how urban are our churches? How old and how young? This chapter addresses these kinds of questions, summarizing the demographic profile of respondents in the Global Anabaptist Profile. We answer these questions by providing overviews at several levels—by comparing the Global North (Europe and North America) with the Global South (Africa, Asia, and Latin America); by comparing differences and similarities among the five continents; and, finally, by occasionally noting some distinctive characteristics of individual conferences.

Sex. Overall, respondents of the Global Anabaptist Profile were evenly split by sex (50% male and 50% female), with a similar distribution within the Global South (50% male and 50% female) and slightly more women in the Global North. Comparisons across continents and affiliations, however, revealed greater differences. Respondents were slightly more likely to be male in Africa (57%) and Asia (54%) and slightly more likely to be female in Latin America (61%) and Europe (56%). We learned from conversations with Research Associates that higher rates of participation among men in Africa (particularly in the Congo) likely resulted from lower levels of literacy among women. We also know from our Research Associates in Latin America that rates of church participation among women are much higher than among men, which our findings confirmed. We also noted some differences in sex by church affiliation, with Brethren in Christ (58%) and Mennonites (55%) more likely to be women as compared to Mennonite Brethren where more were men (62%).

Churches	Rural	Urban
Africa	64%	36%
Asia	87%	14%
Latin America	35%	65%
North America	52%	48%
Europe	34%	67%

Table 1. Residence of members by continent

urban, with North Americans about evenly split in terms of residential distribution. Members of all three Global Anabaptist Profile conferences were more likely to be rural than urban, but a higher percentage of Brethren in Christ (66%) and Mennonite Brethren (67%) members reside in rural communities than is true among Mennonite members (58%).

Residence. Anabaptist respondents in the Global Anabaptist Profile are more likely to live in rural areas (62%) than in urban (38%), with Global Southerners more rural (64%) compared to Global Northerners (49%). Nearly nine of ten Asians (87%) and nearly two-thirds of African Anabaptists (64%) live in rural communities. Europeans (67%) and Latin Americans (65%) are more likely to be

Economic status. The Global Anabaptist Profile survey asked participants to rank themselves in terms of wealth and income relative to others in their country. Sixty-nine percent of African respondents placed themselves in the lower 50 percent of their country, as compared to Asians (27%), North Americans (36%), Latin Americans (47%), and Europeans (57%). Forty-three percent of members in the Global South placed themselves within the bottom 50 percent of their country in terms of income as compared to 39% of those in the Global North.¹

Churches	Age
Africa	44.4
Asia	45.9
Latin America	43.3
North America	53.5
Europe	51.9

Table 2. Mean age of members by continent

Important differences exist by continent as well. North Americans have the highest average age at 54 years, followed by Europe at 52 years. Church members in Latin America (43 years), Africa (44 years), and Asia (46 years) are nearly a decade younger on average than their northern counterparts. Results within conferences are less noticeable—Mennonite Brethren have the oldest members (48 years), followed by Brethren in Christ (47 years), and Mennonites who are about three years younger (45 years).

Average age is a good example of what we see throughout the Global Anabaptist Profile summary—continental or regional differences tend to outweigh affiliation differences in importance. This finding aligns with previous research, which has shown that affiliation differences and distinctives are less important in the Global South than they are in the Global North.

Members of childbearing age. The proportion of members still within childbearing age (18-45 years) is a significant consideration in terms of the overall trajectory of the global church. Churches in the Global Anabaptist Profile varied substantially on this point, from 84 percent among the Brethren in Christ of Malawi being 18-45 years of age as compared to 15 percent in Arbeitsgemeinschaft Mennonitischer Gemeinden in Deutschland (Germany).

Churches	Percent 18-45
Africa	55%
Asia	50%
Latin America	58%
North America	34%
Europe	33%

Table 3. Members of childbearing age (18-45 years old) by continent

These two churches characterize an important difference between Global Anabaptist Profile churches in the Global South and those in the Global North: 54 percent of church members in the South are between 18-45 years of age, while in the North just 34 percent of members are within childbearing age. Latin America has the highest percentage of members within childbearing age (58%), followed by Africa (55%) and Asia (50%). North America and Europe are nearly identical at 34 percent and 33 percent, respectively.

Again, there were fewer differences by affiliation, with Mennonites having the highest proportion within childbearing age (54%) followed by the Brethren in Christ (49%) and the Mennonite Brethren (46%).

1. At the July 2015 consultation, several Research Associates noted that some survey participants had difficulty understanding how to respond to this question, not knowing how their economic standing compared to that of others in their country.

Educational levels. Substantial North/South differences exist in educational levels. According to the survey, 90 percent of those in North America and Europe were high school graduates as compared to 53 percent of MWC members in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Within the Global South, 46 percent of African church members are high school graduates, compared with 58 percent of Asians, and 53 percent of Latin Americans. North Americans have the highest levels of education, with 93 percent being at least high school graduates followed by 78 percent of Europeans.

The lack of difference in educational levels by denominational affiliation (61 percent of Brethren in Christ are high school graduates; 62 percent of Mennonite Brethren; and 57 percent of Mennonites) likely contributes to the relatively small differences that we see in practice and belief by affiliation as compared to substantial differences by continent.

These findings, though not surprising, are nonetheless important since education is typically associated with upward mobility, affluence, power, and more rationalizing perspectives. Education helps to structure social and economic differences and also impacts theological differences. Sustained educational differences among Anabaptists by continent will likely continue to reinforce social and economic inequities in the global church as well as differences in theology and practice between hemispheres.

Year of conversion. Other scholars of global Christianity have clearly documented that the growth of the church in the Global South has come largely in the decades since the 1980s. Our findings in the Global Anabaptist Profile support these observations. Among all participants in the survey, nearly one-half became a Christian between 1991 and 2014 (47%), though there were substantial differences by conference and continent.

Churches	Before 1991	Since 1991
Africa	46%	54%
Asia	65%	35%
Latin America	35%	65%
North America	78%	22%
Europe	62%	38%

Table 4. Year of conversion by continent

The greatest growth in the last several decades has come among the MWC churches of Latin America—with 65 percent of members there coming to Christ since 1991. This explosion of conversions is exemplified by the Organización Cristiana Amor Viviente of Honduras where 76 percent of its members have become Christians since 1991. This strong growth is also mirrored in the conferences of Nicaragua, Guatemala, Brazil, and Colombia—

all with more than two-thirds of their members identifying as Christian since the 1990s.

The rapid growth of Latin America compares with 54 percent of African members who have converted to Christ since 1991, followed by 38 percent in Europe and 35 percent in Asia.

Only a small percentage of Anabaptists in North America, by contrast, became a Christian since 1991 (12%), ranging from 11 percent of Mennonite Brethren in the United States to 36 percent of respondents among the Evangelical Mennonite Church in Canada. European growth would be even slower than that of North America without the contribution of the Arbeitsgemeinschaft Mennonitischer Brüdergemeinden in Germany, among whom 46 percent have become Christian since 1991. Within the churches of the Arbeitsgemeinschaft Mennonitischer Gemeinden in Deutschland (Germany), only 7 percent of members became a Christian since 1991.

Of the three denominational affiliations, 51 percent of Mennonite MWC members have become a Christian since 1991, followed by the Brethren in Christ (49%) and more distantly the Mennonite Brethren (40%).

The average year of conversion by continent is 1975 in North America, 1982 in Europe, 1984 in Asia, 1991 in Africa, and 1995 in Latin America.

These findings, and others that follow, clearly point to a trajectory of recent and rapid growth in MWC member churches in the Global South, while the relative membership of churches in North America and Europe is stagnant or in decline.

Churches	Average year
Africa	1991
Asia	1984
Latin America	1995
North America	1974
Europe	1982

Table 5. Average year of conversion by continent

Convención de Iglesias Evangélicas Menonitas de Nicaragua (49%), and Aliança Evangélica Menonita of Brazil (49%).

Africa has the second highest percentage of converts since 2001 (28%) with Mpingo Wa Abale Mwa Kristu of Malawi (49%), Grace Community Church in South Africa (43%), and BIC Ibandla Labazalwane kuKristu eZimbabwe (43%) leading the way.

Recent Christian conversions in Asia follow (14%), with the Integrated Mennonite Churches of the Philippines far ahead of the others (44%).

There has been little recent growth among North American and European churches.

Among the three Global Anabaptist Profile denominational affiliations, the Mennonite Brethren stand out as the denomination with the lowest percentage of members who have come to Christ since 2001 (19%) as compared to Brethren in Christ (28%) and the Mennonites (26%).

Among all recent converts (2001 to the present) globally, 93 percent have been among churches in the Global South as compared to just 7 percent from the Global North. In other words, more than nine in ten converts since 2001 have been among churches of Asia, Africa, and Latin America.

To be sure, population growth has been greater in the Global South than in the Global North over the past several decades, which has affected conversion rates in both hemispheres. Demographic variables alone, however, are an insufficient explanation for the growth of Christianity in the Global South and its decline in North America. Populations have grown in both Europe and North America—in Europe from 721 million in 1990 to 735 million in 2010 and from 253 million in the United States in 1990 to 310 million in 2010.² In addition, demographics do not explain the nature of Christianity which is growing in the Global South—a more charismatic/Pentecostal variety than that of Christian faith in the Global North.

Age of conversion. The age at which a respondent became a Christian tells us something about the evangelistic activity of a church. Previous research suggests that the longer a church exists, the more it relies for growth upon internal conversions of its own children and youth. In these cases, the average age of conversion will be relatively young. Newer churches, by contrast, tend to be more active in attracting adult members from outside of the church; here the average age of conversion is likely to be older.

The average age of conversion among MWC churches is 19.0 years of age, with a great deal of variation across churches and continents. In North America the average age of conversion is 13.6. In Asia the average is slightly higher (16.3), and even higher in Europe (17.3), Africa (20.7), and Latin America (23.2). The high age of conversion in Latin American churches is consistent with the high rate of recent conversions there that we noted above.

Intergenerational church membership. To what extent did respondents to the survey attend the same MWC church as their parents? Among Global Anabaptist Profile respondents as a whole, 57 percent grew up in a home where one or both parents attended a congregation that was part of the same MWC-related

If we consider more recent growth since 2001, the North/South contrast among MWC churches becomes even sharper. In the Global South 27 percent of church members have come to Christ since 2001 compared to 10 percent of Global Northerners.

Once again Latin America has the most expansive growth—with 39 percent of members accepting Christ in the past 15 years. The Latin American conferences with the greatest recent growth are Organización Cristiana Amor Viviente of Honduras, (46%),

2. United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2015).

conference (stated the other way around, 43 percent of MWC church members are first-generation attenders or members of their church). Somewhat surprisingly, more members were second-generation attenders in their churches in the Global South (61%) than in the Global North (38%).

MWC conferences with 50 percent or more of members who were at least second-generation attenders included:

- U.S. Conference of Mennonite Brethren of Churches (51%)
- BIC Mpingo Wa Abale Mwa Kristu of Malawi (52%)
- Bihar Mennonite Mandli in India (54%)
- Vereinigung der Mennoniten Brüder Gemeinden Paraguays (55%)
- Communauté des Églises des Frères Mennonites au Congo (61%)
- Arbeitsgemeinschaft Mennonitischer Gemeinden in Deutschland (61%)
- Communauté Mennonite au Congo (67%)
- Gereja Injili di Tanah Jawa of Indonesia (82%)
- Convención Evangélica Hermanos Menonitas Enlhet of Paraguay (89%)
- Conference of the Mennonite Brethren Churches of India (96%)

Within the five MWC regions, we would expect that continents with the greatest recent membership growth would have the lowest levels of intergenerational church attendance. This turned out to be partially true, but the results also revealed an interesting twist. As we might expect, Latin America had lowest percentage of intergenerational attenders (40%); Asia, with relatively low overall church growth had the highest number (82%), and Africa was between (55%) the two. The rates of intergenerational membership were much lower than we might expect in both Europe (45%) and North America (36%).³

Lower rates of conversion in North American and European churches, accompanied by low rates of intergenerational church attendance, point to two simultaneous realities—MWC churches in the Global North are failing to evangelize new converts and failing to retain their young people.

Among the three Global Anabaptist Profile affiliations, the Mennonite Brethren have the highest rates of intergenerational membership (71%), followed by Mennonites (55%) and the Brethren in Christ (38%). In other words, nearly two-thirds of the Brethren in Christ are made up of more new members, as compared to just under one-half of Mennonites and less than one-third of Mennonite Brethren.

Churches	Neither parent	Both parents	One parent
Africa	45%	38%	17%
Asia	18%	76%	6%
Latin America	60%	27%	13%
North America	64%	34%	2%
Europe	55%	33%	12%

Table 6. Childhood membership in the same GAP conference by parents by continent

Churches	Neither parent	Both parents
Brethren in Christ	62%	25%
Mennonite Brethren	29%	63%
Mennonite	45%	45%

Table 7. Childhood membership of parents in the same GAP conference by affiliation

3. The European figures were heavily influenced by the recent growth of the Arbeitsgemeinschaft Mennonitischer Brüdergemeinden.

CHAPTER TWO

Beliefs and Practices of MWC Churches

In addition to gathering basic demographic information, the Global Anabaptist Profile also asked respondents questions about both their personal and congregational beliefs and practices. Some of these questions emerged out of the MWC “Shared Convictions;” others were developed in collaboration among the Research Associates from the various conferences.

Churches	Very Important
Africa	95%
Asia	94%
Latin America	96%
North America	93%
Europe	86%

Importance of being born again. When asked about the importance of being “saved” or “born again,” 94 percent of all Global Anabaptist Profile respondents agreed that it is very important. Across the continents, responses to this question varied by only ten percentage points—from 96 percent in Latin America to 86 percent in Europe.

Table 1. Importance of being saved by continent

Belief that Jesus is the only way to God. Differences between North/South and among the continents were more pronounced on this question than on the previous one. Whereas 91 percent of all Global Anabaptist Profile participants believe that “Jesus is the only way to God and that those without faith in Jesus will not be saved,” the number is considerably higher in the Global South (93%) than it is in the Global North (80%). Within the Global North, 74 percent of Europeans and 82 percent of North Americans agreed with this statement compared with 92 percent of respondents in Latin America and 94 percent in both Africa and Asia. We noted some differences among denominational affiliation on the question: Brethren in Christ (88%); Mennonites (91%); and Mennonite Brethren (94%).

Belief that Christians and others worship the same God. Nearly three-fourths (73%) of Global Anabaptist Profile respondents do not believe that Christians and those of other religions worship the same God; 16 percent do believe this and 11 percent are not sure. Continental differences were less substantial on this question than on some others—79 percent in the Global South and 71 percent of those in the Global North reject the idea. Several Research Associates noted in the 2015 consultation that some respondents expressed uncertainty about the nature of the questions (e.g., “as a monotheistic faith, Christians *must* answer ‘yes’ to this question, even if people of other faiths are confused about the nature of the one true God”). Those in Latin America were most likely to affirm the statement that “Christians and people of other religions do *not* worship the same God” (80%), while only 67 percent of those in Asia believed the statement to be true. Fewer Mennonites (62%) accept the argument that “Christians and people of other religions do *not* worship the same God” than either Mennonite Brethren (86%) or Brethren in Christ (86%).

Religious identity. Respondents were asked to identify any of the following words that closely described their religious beliefs: *Anabaptist*; *Pentecostal/Charismatic*; *Mennonite*; and *Evangelical*. A slight majority noted *Evangelical* (51%), followed by *Mennonite* (47%) and *Anabaptist* (30%). Only 10% chose *Pentecostal/Charismatic*.

Again, there were important differences on this question between North and South: 52 percent of those in

the Global North identify as *Anabaptist* as compared to 26 percent of church members in the Global South, while respondents in the Global South were more likely to identify as *Mennonite* (50%). Those in the North are slightly more likely to identify as *Evangelical* (56%) than those in the South (50%). There are also North/South differences in identifying as *Charismatic/Pentecostal*—10% in the South and 6% in the North.

Churches	Anabaptist	Pentecostal/ Charismatic	Mennonite	Evangelical
Africa	38%	17%	55%	33%
Asia	23%	10%	60%	43%
Latin America	21%	4%	33%	79%
North America	58%	7%	31%	61%
Europe	41%	5%	62%	47%

Table 2. Religious identity by continent

North Americans were far more likely than those from other continents to identify as *Anabaptist* (58%). Africans were more likely than members of other continents to identify as *Pentecostal/Charismatic* (17%). Europeans (62%), Asians (60%), and Africans (55%) were more likely than North Americans (31%) or Latin Americans (31%) to identify as *Mennonite*. And nearly four-fifths of Latin Americans identify as *Evangelical*—far more than other continents. This may be because the Spanish word for non-Catholic Christians is *evangélico* or evangelical.

Churches	Anabaptist	Pentecostal/ Charismatic	Mennonite	Evangelical
Brethren in Christ	72%	16%	23%	75%
Mennonite Brethren	26%	8%	61%	38%
Mennonite	25%	10%	50%	56%

Table 3. Religious identity by affiliation

Summarizing by continent, Africans identified themselves most frequently as *Mennonite* (55%) followed by nearly equal percentages for *Anabaptist* (38%) and *Evangelical* (33%). Asians were most likely to identify as *Mennonite* (60%) and *Evangelical* (43%). Latin Americans identified largely as *Evangelical* (79%). North Americans identified as *Anabaptist* (58%) and *Evangelical* (61%). Europeans preferred *Mennonite* (61%) and then *Evangelical* (47%) and then *Anabaptist* (41%).

When considering the three different affiliations, Brethren in Christ showed the greatest degree of difference from the other two affiliations. Brethren in Christ were much more likely to identify as *Anabaptist* (66%) than were the Mennonite Brethren (26%) or Mennonites (25%). Brethren in Christ members also had a stronger preference for *Evangelical* (65%), followed by Mennonites (56%) and then Mennonite Brethren (38%). Brethren in Christ members were far less likely to identify themselves as *Mennonite* (16%) as compared with the Mennonite Brethren (61%) and Mennonites (50%).

When considering the unique differences across the three affiliations, Brethren in Christ tend to see themselves as *Anabaptist* and *Evangelical*, Mennonite Brethren as *Mennonite*, and Mennonites as *Evangelical* and *Mennonite*.

Communion and membership. When asked who should be able to take communion, 46 percent said anyone who has received Jesus as their Savior and Lord; 26 percent replied that anyone baptized as an adult should be able to do so; 10 percent said only members of my congregation; 8 percent said only Mennonites or Anabaptists; 5 percent indicated anyone who was baptized including as an infant; and another 5 percent

said communion should be open to anyone regardless of their religion.

There were interesting hemisphere differences for this question, with Global Northerners more likely to affirm communion for anyone (8%) as compared to Global Southerners (4%). Those in the Global South were more likely to prefer a closed communion—open only to congregational members, Mennonites or Anabaptists, or those baptized as adults. Fifty-two percent in the Global South affirmed this more exclusive posture, compared to just 5 percent of those in the Global North.

These findings reflect what we have consistently seen as a difference between the Global North and Global South in the Global Anabaptist Profile. Those in the North tend to reflect a more open and inclusive position relative to those of other faiths and the broader culture, while those in the Global South show greater clarity in articulating Christian distinctiveness and a willingness to draw clear lines between themselves and the cultures around them.

Beliefs about the Bible. In a section regarding views of the Bible, participants in the Global Anabaptist Profile were asked identify the description that most closely matched with their own understanding from the following alternatives:

- The Bible is the inspired Word of God and is to be taken literally, word for word.
- The Bible is the inspired Word of God, but needs to be interpreted in context.
- The Bible is an ancient book of stories, history, and moral guidelines recorded by humans.
- The Bible has no relevance for today.
- The Bible tells us about experiences people have with God.

MWC members in the Global South were most likely to affirm that the Bible is the inspired Word of God and is to be taken literally (55%). Only 20 percent of Mennonites in Europe and North America identified with this view of the Bible; they were much more likely (74%) to say that the Bible “is the inspired Word of God, but needs to be interpreted in context.” Just 31 percent of Global Southerners took this position. Fourteen percent of respondents from the Global North selected one of the three other options—“the Bible is an ancient book”; “has no relevance”; or “tells about experiences people have with God.” This compares to 6 percent of members from Asia, Africa, and Latin America who chose one of these three alternatives.

Sixty percent of African respondents believe that the Bible “is inspired and must be taken literally,” while just 23 percent believe the Bible “needs to be interpreted within context.” Asians were similar to Africans in their responses, with 55 percent believing that the Bible needs to be taken literally and 27 percent that the Bible needs to be interpreted within context. Latin Americans were about evenly split with 49 percent saying that the Bible needs to be taken literally and 44 percent that it needs to be interpreted within context.

By contrast, 78 percent of North Americans and 59 percent of Europeans believe the Bible needs to be interpreted in context. Europeans were more likely than any other continent to choose one of the three latter alternatives—that the Bible is an ancient book, has no relevance, or tells about experiences people have with God (17%).

Mennonite Brethren were more likely than the Brethren in Christ or Mennonites to say that the Bible needs to be taken literally, while Brethren in Christ were the most likely to believe that the Bible needs to be interpreted within context.

Respondents were also asked which Testament—Old or New—was most relevant to them. Here again, the survey revealed important differences between the Global South and Global North. Two-thirds (66%) of the respondents in Asia, Africa, and Latin America answered that “both are equally relevant” compared to less than one-half (49%) of respondents in the Global North. Half of Europeans and North Americans identified the New Testament as most relevant as compared to just 28 percent of those in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. In the Global South, 6 percent identified the Old Testament as most relevant compared to less than 0.5 percent of those in the Global North.

The survey showed relatively little variation among continents of the Global South, with 68 percent of

Africans identifying both Testaments as relevant compared to 61 percent of Asians and 69 percent of Latin Americans. Latin Americans were most likely to affirm the Old Testament as most relevant (7%), compared to 5 percent of Asians and 6 percent of Africans.

These findings suggest that there is a much higher view of the relevance of the Old Testament in the Global South than in the Global North, a finding that is consistent with previous research on North/South differences in views of the Bible.⁴

When asked which part of the New Testament has influenced them the most, those in the Global North were more likely to say “the Gospels” (32%) than those in the Global South (26%), while those in Asia, Africa, and Latin America were more likely to identify the book of Acts (8%) than were those in North America and Europe (2%).

Beliefs and experience of the Holy Spirit. The Global Anabaptist Profile asked two questions about beliefs and experience regarding the Holy Spirit. The first focused on how the Holy Spirit works and revealed interesting differences between North and South. Forty percent of respondents in the Global South affirmed the statement that “the Spirit speaks directly to individuals in a personal way” as compared to 28 percent of those in the Global North. On the other hand, those in the Global North were more likely to affirm that “The Spirit speaks to individuals directly, and also through the church” (65%), compared to those in the Global South (40%). In other words, those in the Global North lean more toward community discernment of the Spirit’s direction than do those in the Global South, while those in the South express more openness to personal direction from the Holy Spirit than do those in the North.

Continent	Speaks to individual	Speaks to individual and church	Speaks primarily to church	Spirit is human insight
Africa	34%	38%	19%	9%
Asia	49%	30%	15%	6%
Latin America	33%	55%	10%	2%
North America	28%	67%	4%	1%
Europe	30%	60%	4%	6%

Table 4. Beliefs about how the Holy Spirit works by continent. Respondents answered all categories that applied to them.

Churches varied by continent in how they responded to this question:

- In Africa, respondents were nearly equally split between those who said the Holy Spirit speaks directly to individuals through a personal way (38%) and those who said the Spirit speaks directly to an individual and through the church (34%).
- Asian members were more likely than those of any other continent (49%) to say that the Holy Spirit speaks directly to individuals, followed by 30 percent who said that the Spirit speaks through both the individual and the church.
- A majority of respondents in Latin America (55%) said that the Holy Spirit speaks to the individual and the church, followed by 33 percent who responded directly to the individual.
- Europeans (60%) and North Americans (67%) were more likely than those of other continents to say that the Holy Spirit speaks to individuals and through the church and then secondarily directly to the individual (28% in North America and 30% in Europe).

When asked how they experienced the charismatic gifts of the Holy Spirit, 22 percent of global respondents reported that they have never experienced any of the gifts described. Nearly three in five (59%) of all North American respondents reported not having experienced these gifts. This compares with 57 percent of

4. Cf. Philip Jenkins, *The New Faces of Christianity: Believing the Bible in the Global South* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006).

Europeans who had not experienced these gifts, followed by 21 percent of Latin Americans, 16 percent of Africans, and 13 percent of Asians. In other words, Asians and Africans have the highest levels of experience with the charismatic gifts, followed closely by Latin Americans.

Again, the experience of the charismatic gifts is a major point of distinction between churches in the Global South and the Global North.

- Twenty-eight percent of all Global Anabaptist Profile respondents—32 percent in the Global South and 6 percent in the Global North—have been delivered from demonic oppression or have cast out demons themselves. Africans (41%) are most likely to have experience with demonic oppression, followed by Asia (37%), Latin America (18%), North America (7%), and Europe (2%).
- Fourteen percent of church members taking the survey have spoken in tongues, with some difference between hemispheres (11% in the North and 14% in the South). Africans and Latin Americans most frequently reported that they had spoken in tongues (both at 17%), followed closely by North Americans (11%), Asians (10%), and Europeans (7%).
- Fourteen percent have shared prophetic words, with those in North and Latin America (18%) most likely to do so, followed by Africa (14%), Asia (8%) and Europe (8%).
- Finally, 41 percent of all respondents reported having had a miraculous experience of some kind, such as healing from an illness or injury—44 percent in the Global South and 27 percent in the Global North. Latin Americans were most likely to claim these experiences (53%), with respondents from the remaining four continents ranging from 24-41 percent.

One of the defining differences between MWC members in the Global North and the Global South is their

Continent	Deliverance from demons	Have spoken in tongues	Shared prophetic words	None of these experiences
Africa	41%	17%	14%	16%
Asia	37%	10%	8%	13%
Latin America	18%	17%	18%	20%
North America	7%	11%	18%	59%
Europe	2%	7%	8%	57%

Table 5. Personal experiences of the charismatic gifts of the Holy Spirit by continent. Respondents answered all categories that applied to them.

experience of the charismatic gifts of the Holy Spirit, with Europeans and North Americans much less likely to identify with these experiences. Of these gifts, the greatest difference across hemispheres is the experience of overcoming demonic oppression—a reality much more common among Anabaptists especially in Africa and Asia, but also in Latin America. These kinds of distinctions in theology and practice have nothing to do with regional population growth or decline, but rather with worldviews and perspectives shaped in very different social, cultural, and historical contexts. Pentecostalism is the most rapidly growing expression of Christianity in the world, and Anabaptists are not foreigners to this reality.

Military service. Obligatory military requirements vary widely among MWC-member churches. The survey asked respondents how they would react "if the government required you to serve in the military," providing several alternatives. Among all the respondents, 62 percent reported that they would reject any kind of military service (with strong affirmation for the option of alternative service), 24 percent would choose non-combatant military service, and 14 percent would choose military service.

Interestingly, there was no difference between South and North on this question, with 62 percent of MWC members in both hemispheres rejecting all forms of military service.

When comparing responses from the different continents, 91 percent of Europeans would reject any form of military service, compared to 76 percent of Africans, 62 percent of Latin Americans, 55 percent of North

Americans, and 52 percent of Asians.

In the North, North Americans were most likely to say they would choose regular or non-combatant military

Continent	Regular service	Non-combatant	Alternative service	Refuse participation
Africa	10%	14%	29%	47%
Asia	18%	31%	25%	27%
Latin America	13%	25%	25%	37%
North America	15%	30%	47%	8%
Europe	4%	4%	89%	3%

Table 6. “If the government required military service, what would you do?”

service (45%), while the Europeans were the least likely (8%). Among churches of the Global South, Asians were most likely to choose regular or non-combatant military service (49%), with Africans being the least likely (24%) and Latin Americans between the two (38%).

Among the three denominational affiliations, Mennonites are most likely to choose regular or non-combatant military service (43%) followed by Brethren in Christ (36%) and by Mennonite Brethren (31%).

Overall, 27 percent of respondents agree that it is okay to fight in a war, but the percentage who accept war is higher in the Global North (36%) than in the Global South (25%). Asians (44%) are most likely to say that fighting in a war is okay, followed by 41 percent of North Americans, 15 percent of Latin Americans, and 12 percent of both Africans and Europeans. Interestingly, there was almost no difference between affiliations on this question.

These findings make it clear that continent and hemisphere do not predict who among Anabaptists in MWC will be more disposed to participating in war and who is more likely to reject it. Global Southerners are less likely to say that war is okay than those in the Global North; North Americans are more open to military service than are Africans or Latin Americans. In listening to our Research Associates, it is clear that a conference’s history and experience with war helps to shape whether a conference is likely to accept or reject participation in state violence.

Politics. When asked whether Christians should participate in politics, 47 percent agree that they should. Europeans (78%) and North Americans (82%) are much more likely than respondents in Asia (55%), Africa (27%), and Latin America (33%) to endorse political engagement.

Participation in public protests. Thirty-four percent of respondents believe that it is okay for Christians to participate in public protest movements, but support for this activity varies greatly by continent as well as by cultural and political contexts. North Americans (68%) and Europeans (70%) are much more likely than respondents from any other continent to support public protest movements—Asia (34%); Africa (24%), and Latin America (23%).

Within continents there was some variation on the question of public protests. In Latin America, for example, the Enlhet Mennonite Brethren of Paraguay were least likely to favor public protests (5%) followed closely by Mennonites in Nicaragua (6%). On the other hand, 48 percent of Brazilians support public protests.

In Africa, no member of the South African church favored public protests compared with 34 percent of Zimbabwean Mennonites who expressed support.

In Asia, responses to this question ranged from 17 percent of Philippine Mennonites in favor of public protests to 38 percent of Indonesian Mennonites.

Persecution. In acknowledging their experiences with persecution, 17 percent of respondents said that per-

Churches	Agree
Africa	36%
Asia	9%
Latin America	17%
North America	2%
Europe	1%

Table 7. Members experience of persecution by continent

secution was “often” the case, with the highest percentages coming from church members in Africa (36%). In Latin America, 17 percent have often experienced persecution. These numbers were considerably smaller in Asia (9%), North America (2%), and Europe (1%).

Churches where members are most likely to often experience persecution are:

- 73% of members in the Communauté des Églises des Frères Mennonites au Congo
- 41% of members in Communauté Mennonite au Congo
- 25% of members in BIC Mpingo Wa Abale Mwa Kristu of Malawi
- 24% of members in the Integrated Mennonite Churches of the Philippines
- 24% of members in the Iglesias Hermanos Menonitas de Colombia
- 21% of members in the Meserete Kristos Church of Ethiopia
- 23% of members in the Iglesia Evangélica Menonita Argentina

Moral beliefs. Respondents were given a list of questions having to do with certain kinds of behaviors that some may favor and others reject. The responses indicated wide variance regarding some behaviors, but also fairly strong agreement on others.

Sixty-eight percent of respondents believe that divorce is never acceptable, but continental differences on this question were significant. The strongest opposition to divorce came from Asia (90%), with Africa (84%), Latin America (60%), Europe (15%) and North America (12%) following. North/South differences were profound: 79 percent in the South believing that divorce is never acceptable as compared to 13 percent in the North.

Ninety-one percent of MWC church members believe that premarital sexual activity is never acceptable (93% in the Global South and 82% in the Global North), with continental differences ranging from Asia (95%) to Europe (68%). Rejection of premarital sexual activity among other continents registered at 93 percent of Africans, 91 percent of Latin Americans, and 85 percent of North Americans.

When asked about homosexual relationships, 95 percent of the Global Anabaptist Profile sample always opposes such relationships (98 percent in the Global South compared to 82 percent in the Global North). Asian, Latin American, and African respondents expressed the strongest opposition (97-98%), followed by North Americans (83%) and Europeans (78%).

Eighty-eight percent said bribery is never acceptable. This figure was lowest among Asian respondents (76%). Members of the remaining continents were somewhat stronger in their opposition to bribery: North Americans (87%), Europeans (93%), Latin Americans (95%) and Africans (96%).

Research Associates in the Global South were very interested in how their members felt about being present at ancestral worship. The survey suggests that 90 percent reject this practice overall, with more than 90 percent of Mennonites in the Global South doing so. The groups least likely to reject the practice were those who almost certainly have never experienced it—North Americans (69%) and Europeans (84%).

The survey showed similar results on another question proposed by Research Associates from the Global South: offering food to idols. Africans were most likely to say that this practice is never acceptable (96%), followed by Latin Americans (94%), Asians (75%), Europeans (61%), and North Americans (59%). Again, groups in those continents with the least exposure to this practice were the most accepting of the practice.

Continent	Divorce	Premarital sex	Homosexuality	Bribes	Ancestral worship	Food offered to idols
Africa	84%	93%	97%	96%	93%	96%
Asia	90%	95%	98%	76%	92%	75%
Latin America	60%	91%	98%	95%	96%	94%
North America	12%	85%	83%	87%	69%	59%
Europe	15%	68%	78%	93%	84%	61%

Table 8. Attitudes about various behaviors by continent

Global Anabaptist Profile Research Associates selected the specific behaviors to include in this portion of the survey. In nearly every case—with the exception of marriage to a non-Christian; premarital sex; use of bribes; and littering—the differences between South and North on these questions were fairly dramatic. In our conversations at the July 2015 Global Anabaptist Profile consultation, participants acknowledged these differences and expressed some concern about what it meant for our churches be at variance on certain of these behaviors. Most of these differences—which likely reflect differences in education, social and cultural contexts, and theological worldviews—were shared across denominational affiliations in the Global South. Mennonite World Conference will need to be attentive to these differences across regions and conferences.

Continent	Yes
Africa	70%
Asia	69%
Latin America	65%
North America	7%
Europe	7%

Table 9. “Bible promises that followers of Christ will be more blessed and have better health.”

Blessings of Christians. “Does the Bible promise that followers of Christ will be more blessed and have better health than non-Christians?” Overwhelmingly, Mennonites in the Global South were more likely to respond positively to this statement (68%) than were those in Europe and North America (7%). The strongest affirmation came from Africa (70%) and Asia (69%), with Latin America not far behind (65%).

It is possible that church members in the Global North are reacting against the “health and wealth” prosperity gospel so prominent among TV evangelists; whereas such messages seem less troubling among members in the Global South? Or is it possible that conversion experiences in the Global South have a more dramatic economic and social effect than those in the Global North—resulting in greater stability in the home and the broader community? Or has the upward mobility of the Global North led to a greater self-reliance and a decreased recognition of God’s providence in caring for one’s personal needs? Whatever the case, it remains interesting that in those regions with the greatest poverty, God is much more likely to be seen as the source of one’s blessings.

Evangelism and outreach. The Global Anabaptist Profile also included a set of questions intended to measure the evangelism and outreach efforts of MWC church members. When asked how often they speak of their faith to people outside their church and family, 51 percent of African and Latin American respondents replied “at least weekly,” followed by 39 percent of Asians, 23 percent of North Americans, and 13 percent of Europeans. Forty-six percent of those in the Global South speak of their faith “at least weekly” as compared to 22 percent of those in the North.

When asked how often they help their congregations in serving their local communities, those in the Global South were nearly twice as likely (34%) to do so “on a weekly basis” as those in North America and Europe (16%). Forty-seven percent of Africans responded that they served their local community weekly or more, followed by 30 percent of Asians, 27 percent of Latin Americans, 16 percent of North Americans, and 17 percent of Europeans.

When asked about inviting non-Christian friends to church, 51 percent of African respondents replied that they did so “at least weekly,” as compared to 33 percent of Asians, 26 percent of Latin Americans, 11 percent of Europeans, and 9 percent of North Americans. Overall, 36 percent of church members in Africa, Asia and Latin America invite guests to church on a regular basis, compared to 4 percent of those in North America and Europe.

Giving. What percentage of household income do MWC members give to church and charitable causes? Among all respondents 55 percent reported giving 10 percent of their income or more (22% report giving more than 10%). Seventy-seven percent of North American members reported giving 10 percent or more of their income, as compared to 62 percent of Europeans, 57 percent of Africans, 53 percent of Latin Americans, and 48 percent of Asian respondents.

Socioeconomic status did not appear to have a substantive impact on the percentage of income one gives to the church and charitable causes. Of those in the lowest 50 percent of their country in terms of wealth and income, 54 percent report giving 10% or more. Of those in the highest 50% of their country, 57 percent give 10 percent or more of their household income.

Roles of women. On the question of whether or not their congregation allowed men and women to have equal ministry roles, 78 percent of all respondents stated that men and women could have equal ministry roles (80% in the Global South; 65% in the Global North). Africans (87%) were most likely to agree that this was the case, followed by those in Latin America (77%), Asia (76%), North America (69%) and Europe (46%).

At the same time, only 64 percent of those surveyed said that it was acceptable for women to preach, with 74 percent of North Americans embracing the preaching of women, 73 percent of Latin Americans, 65 percent of Africans, 55 percent of Asians, and 49 percent of Europeans.⁵

In other words, there is some inconsistency between what respondents say that their congregation allows in terms of equal opportunities for men and women and the fact that fewer respondents say that they personally find these roles acceptable for women.

Continent	Yes
Africa	65%
Asia	54%
Latin America	49%
North America	72%
Europe	88%

Table 10. Have heard of Mennonite World Conference

Awareness of MWC. Those in the Global South are less aware of Mennonite World Conference, with 55 percent expressing awareness as compared to 75 percent of Global North respondents. By continent, 65 percent of Africans are aware of MWC, 54 percent of Asians, 49 percent of Latin Americans, 72 percent of North Americans, and 88 percent of Europeans. There were substantial differences

by denominational affiliation on this question, with 76 percent of Mennonite Brethren aware of MWC, 66 percent of Brethren in Christ, and 46 percent of Mennonites. Conferences that were least likely to have heard of MWC included Meserete Kristos Church in Ethiopia (15%), Organización Cristiana Amor Viviente of Honduras (24%), and Gereja Injili di Tanah Jawa of Indonesia (31%). Conferences with the highest levels of awareness of MWC are Grace Community Church in South Africa (100%), Arbeitsgemeinschaft Mennonitischer Gemeinden in Deutschland (99%), the Conference of the Mennonite Brethren Churches in India (88%), and Vereinigung der Mennoniten Brüder Gemeinden Paraguays (87%).

5. The low figures among Europeans here were influenced by differences between the European groups participating in the survey. A full one hundred percent of the AMG affirmed women in pastoral leadership whereas only 29 percent of the AMBD responded positively.

CHAPTER THREE

Some Conclusions and Questions for Reflection

The Global Anabaptist Profile provides the most comprehensive window to date into the differences and similarities of beliefs and practices among member conferences of MWC. In this summary we have attempted to describe the distinctive characteristics of individual conferences while also noting several general areas of unity and diversity across the global Anabaptist church.

In this final chapter we pull back from the particularities in order to suggest some final conclusions, recognizing that such broad brush strokes can disguise important caveats and nuances. Given these challenges, what can we conclude?

First, Mennonite World Conference is clearly being shaped and defined by the rapid growth of the conferences in the Global South and the relative plateauing and decline of the conferences in the Global North. This has immediate implications, but the greater consequences of this shift have yet to be realized. The church has three engines of growth—retention of its children and young people, the addition of new recruits by conversion, and increases in birth rates. The data from the Global Anabaptist Profile suggest that these engines are functioning more successfully in the Global South than in the North. What does the Global Anabaptist Profile reveal along these lines?

- Ninety-three percent of all converts in the Global Anabaptist Profile sample since 2001 have been from the Global South—or nine out of ten.
- In terms of percentage of new members, Latin America has grown most rapidly in recent decades; Africa is second.
- Differences in growth exist among the three affiliations—Mennonite conversions have been greatest since 1991 (51%), followed by the Brethren in Christ (49%) and, more distantly, the Mennonite Brethren (40%).
- Converts in the Global South are generally older—these churches are successfully winning to Christ adults from other religious traditions or who are not religious. The younger average age of converts in the North suggests that these churches are depending on their own children for membership growth.
- Members in the Global South are more likely to have parents who were part of their conference when the respondent was a child, suggesting that Global Southern churches are more effectively retaining the next generation at a higher rate.

Second, the differences among member conferences in the Global Anabaptist Profile are best explained by the differences between southern and northern hemispheres rather than by affiliation as Mennonite, Mennonite Brethren, or Brethren in Christ. In terms of demographic variables, two important findings stand out: those in the North are much more highly educated and those in the South are much younger. We also know that those in the South are more rural and experience greater poverty and deprivation.

There are also differences in faith and practice:

- Members in the Global South are more actively engaged in evangelism and more vocal about its importance.

- Those in the South are more likely to read the Bible literally; those in the North are more likely to read it within a broader context.
- Those in the South see both Testaments as having equal relevance; those in the North are more likely to believe that the New Testament is most relevant.
- Europeans and North Americans are more likely to believe that the Holy Spirit speaks through individuals and through the church, while those in the South are more likely to believe that the Holy Spirit speaks directly to individuals. Those in Asia, Africa, and Latin America are also much more likely to have experiences with the charismatic gifts of the Holy Spirit than are those in the North.
- Respondents in the Global South are much more likely to believe that the Bible promises that followers of Christ will be more blessed and have better health than non-Christians.

Several differences regarding engagement with the broader culture and society also stand out:

- Global Southerners are more committed to cultural non-conformity in their opposition to divorce, alcohol use, tobacco, premarital sex and homosexual relations, eating food offered to idols, bribery, and being present at ancestral ceremonies.
- Northern MWC members are much likely to believe that Christians can, and should, engage in public protests.
- Those in Africa, Asia, and Latin America are more likely to have experienced persecution, with the greatest likelihood being among African members.

And there are some differences between South and North on questions of identity:

- Southerners are more likely to identify as *Mennonite*, while those in the North are more likely to claim an *Anabaptist* identity. Those in Asia, Africa, and Latin America are more likely to claim a *Charismatic/Pentecostal* identity than are those in Europe and North America.
- Members of northern conferences are much more aware of Mennonite World Conference than are those in the South.

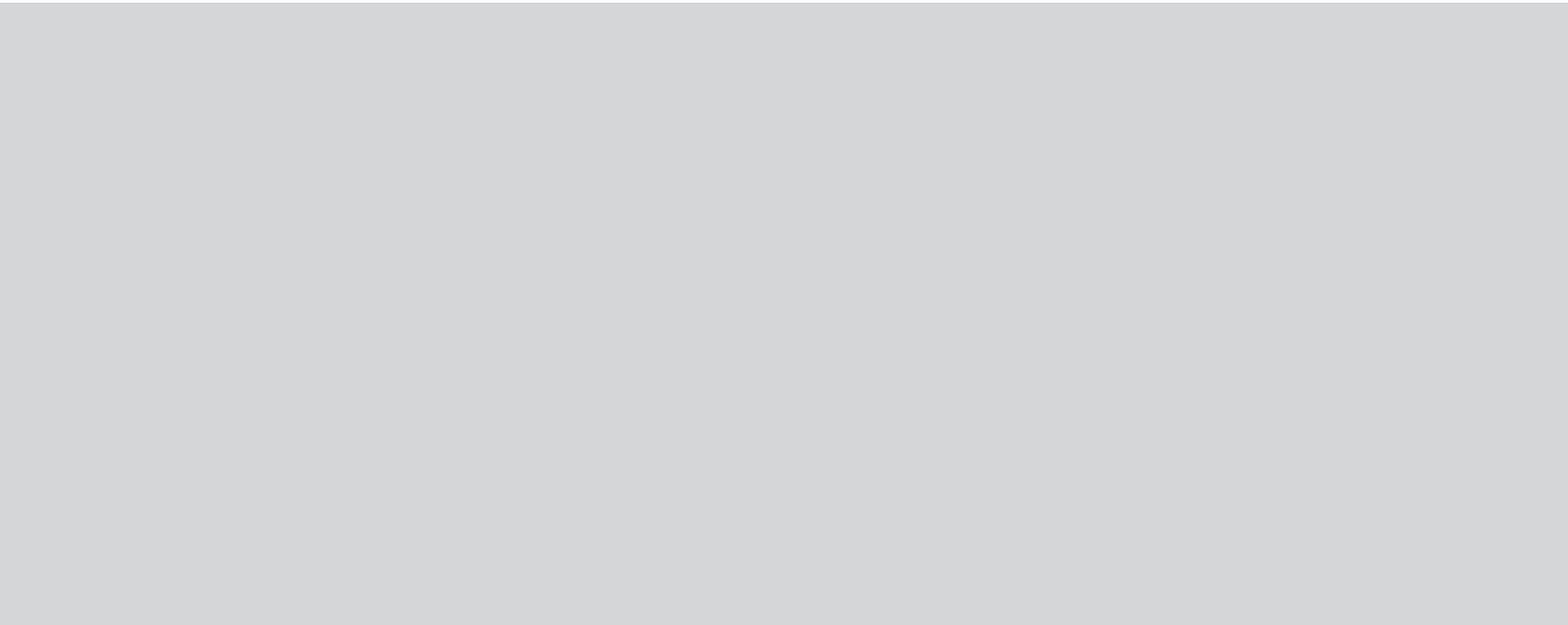
Even while acknowledging these differences, there also important commonalities—or at least areas of relatively less difference—across the two hemispheres that reveal the reality of “shared” convictions among Mennonite World Conference conferences and members:

- While Southern and Northern Anabaptists differ in whether they identify primarily as *Anabaptist* or *Mennonite*, an *Evangelical* identity was very important to those in both hemispheres.
- A *Pentecostal/Charismatic* identity is relatively less important to members in both hemispheres, compared with an identity as *Anabaptist*, *Mennonite*, or *Evangelical*.
- MWC members in both South and North are equally committed to the belief that it is important to be saved or born again.
- Members across hemispheres attend weekly church services at the same rate—though Southerners are much more likely to attend more than once a week.
- Members in the Global South and Global North are equally committed to rejecting mandatory military service.
- Members in both hemispheres strongly affirm Jesus’ life and teaching as the most important reason for peacemaking.
- Most respondents in virtually all participating groups say that their local congregation teaches members to reject violence, to share with those in need, requires an instructional class prior to baptism, and expects members to be accountable to the church.

Within these similarities and differences in the global church, social and cultural context clearly plays a critical role in shaping religious practices and theological perspectives. At the same time, forms of cultural resistance and assimilation vary from church to church and within continents, revealing the complexity of carefully discerning what it means to walk faithfully with Jesus.

It is our hope that the results of the Global Anabaptist Profile will become part of that ongoing process of discernment—for individuals, within congregations and conferences, and across the Mennonite World Conference family as a whole.

AFRICA



BIC MPINGO WA ABALE MWA KRISTU (MALAWI)

CONGREGATIONS: 58 | MEMBERS: 4,589

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

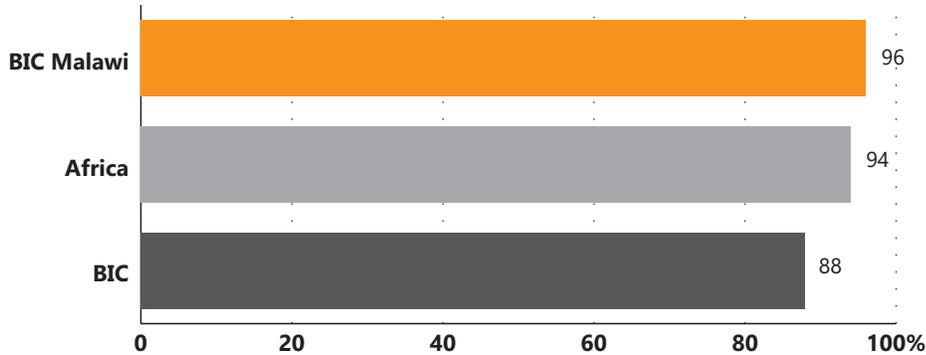
1. Highest member response rate in the GAP, with 61 percent of members in the sample participating in the questionnaire.
2. Nearly equal distribution of men (48%) and women (52%) in the final sample, which along with the South African church (Grace Community) is the most even gender distribution among participating African countries.
3. Ninety-six percent of respondents reside in rural communities, making the Malawi BIC one of the most rural churches in the GAP.
4. The average age of Malawi BIC members is 36 years, making this the youngest church in our sample, and 84 percent of members are within the age of childbearing—18 to 45 years.
5. Forty-nine percent of Malawi BIC members are engaged in agriculture—the highest percentage in Africa and equaled only by the Convención Evangélica Hermanos Menonitas Enlhet in Paraguay.
6. Only two percent of Malawi BIC members reported having graduated from high school, the lowest percentage in the GAP.
7. Fifty-two percent of respondents grew up in a home where one or both parents were a member of Mpingo Wa Abale Mwa Kristu.
8. Forty-five percent of respondents were baptized in a denomination or church other than Mpingo Wa Abale Mwa Kristu.

“The Global Anabaptist Profile helped us to come up with a real picture of our church and learn what is happening in churches around the world. It has helped us to establish new relationships.”

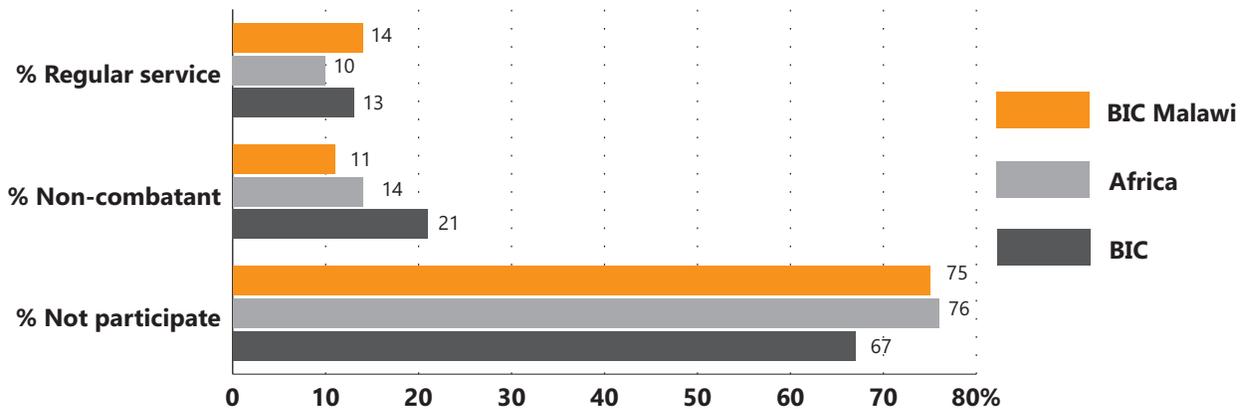
-Research Associate Francis Kamoto



I believe the following statement: “Jesus is the only way to God and those without faith in Jesus will not be saved.”



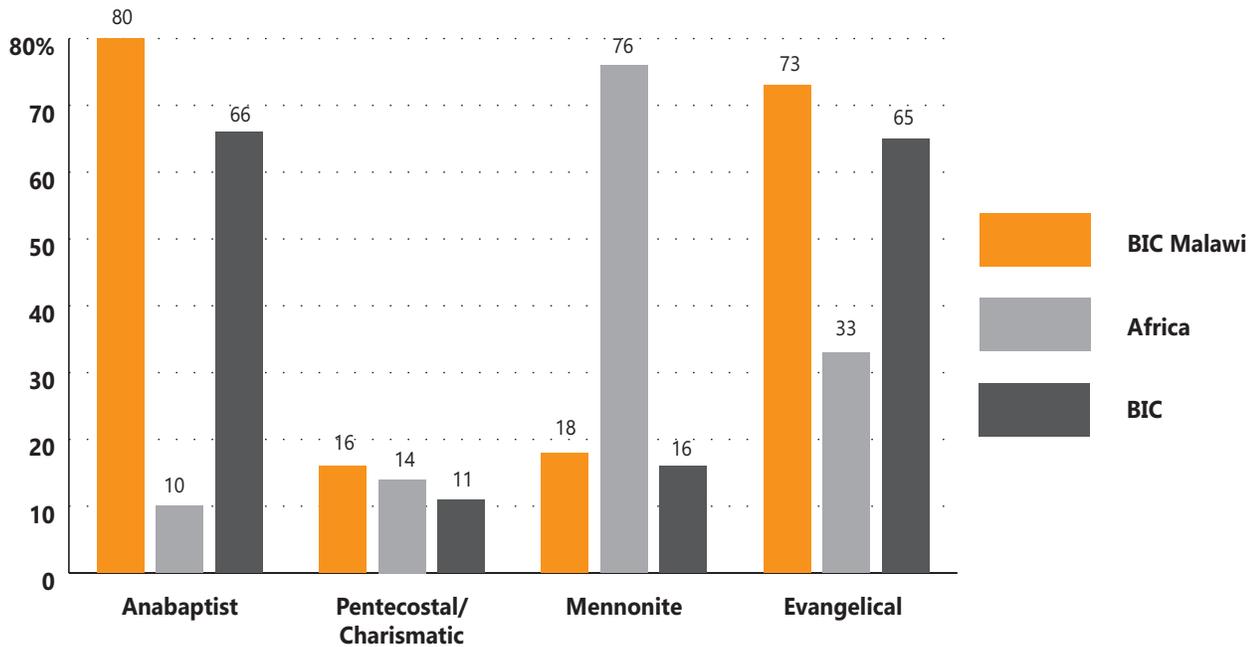
If the government required military service, what would you do?



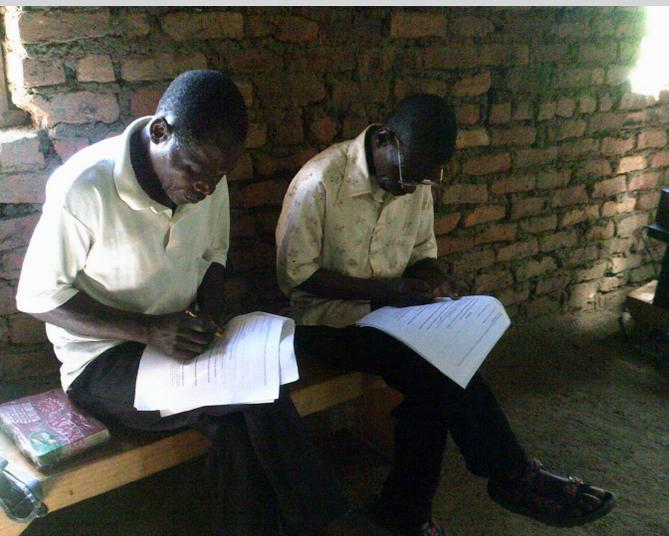
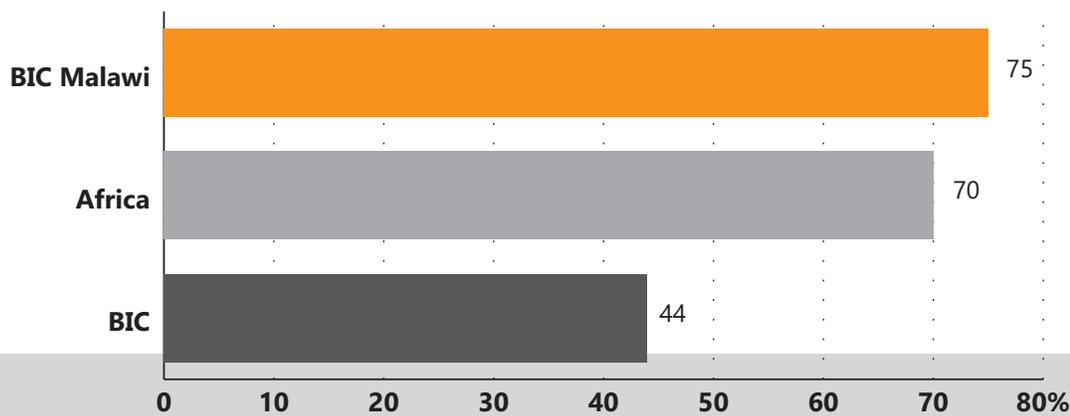
HISTORY

In 1983, a group led by Pastor Sani Selemani Chibwana held regular prayer meetings in Ndirande Township, Blantyre. Selemani Chibwana obtained the address of the BIC church in Zimbabwe (Ibandla Labazalwane kuKristu eZimbabwe) and wrote to them, inviting Zimbabwean church leaders to “come over and help us.” The next year the church in Zimbabwe sent Reverends Philemon M. Khumalo and Bhekithemba Dube and their spouses to visit the community in Malawi for the first time. By 1986 the church was registered with the state and counted nearly 500 members. The church in Zimbabwe continued to send teams to Malawi for short visits to teach doctrine and church policies and to perform baptisms. The first Malawian ordained for ministry was Ephraim Disi, who also became the denomination’s first president. By the late 1990s, the church had organized itself into eight regions and begun missionary outreach to Mozambique. Members are active in evangelism efforts, and the church has developed ministries responding to the challenges of poverty and HIV/AIDS.

Which of the following words describe your own religious beliefs?



I believe that the Bible promises that followers of Christ will be more blessed and have better health than non-Christians.

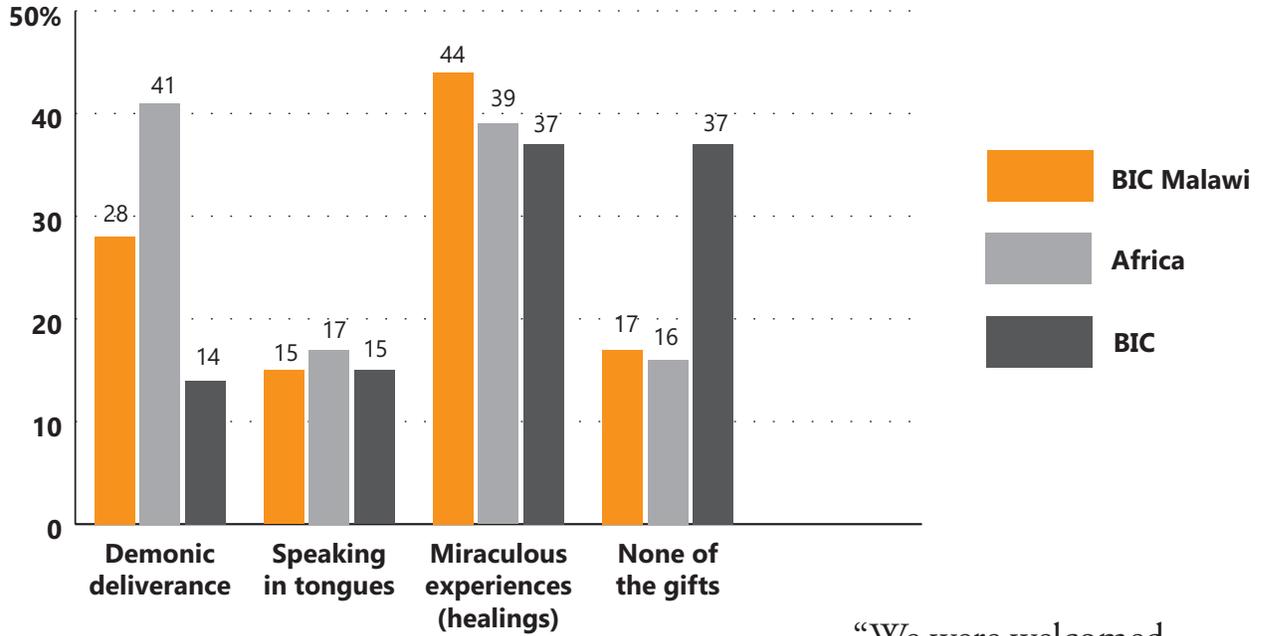


CHALLENGES

Illiteracy posed a significant challenge, as it was difficult for the Research Associate to verbally administer the survey and collect responses from each illiterate church member.

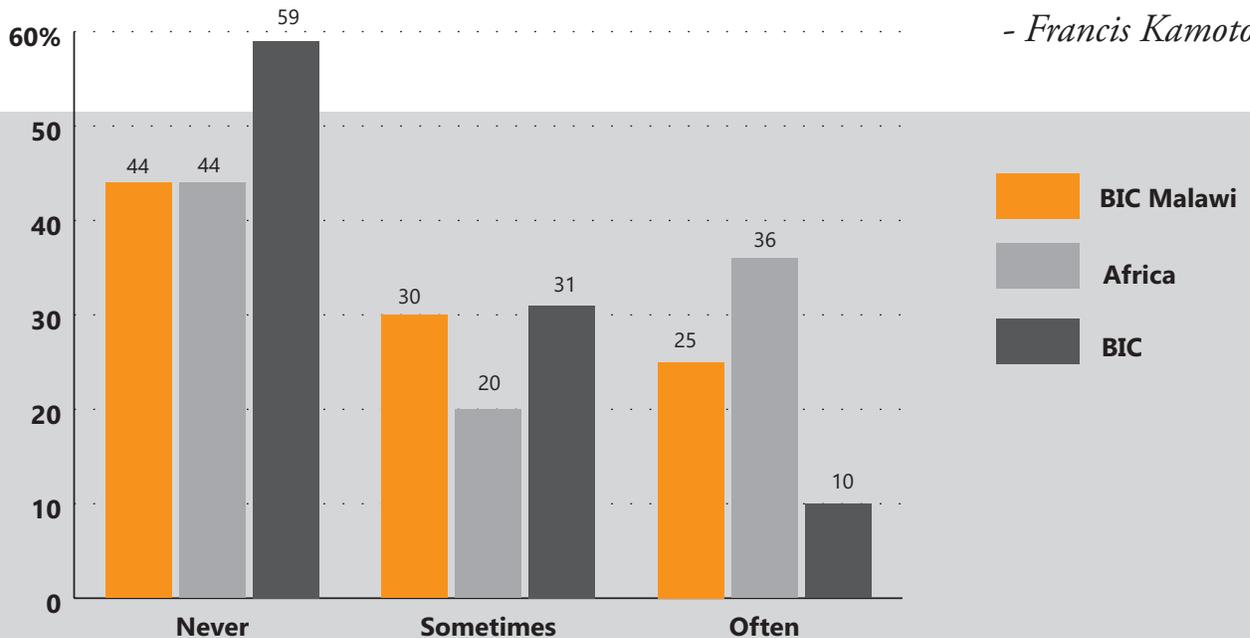
Church members fill out the survey questionnaire.

Have you ever personally experienced the following manifestations of the Holy Spirit?



“We were welcomed warm-heartedly in each and every home that hosted us in all the churches we visited for the GAP survey.”

Member experience of persecution



- Francis Kamoto

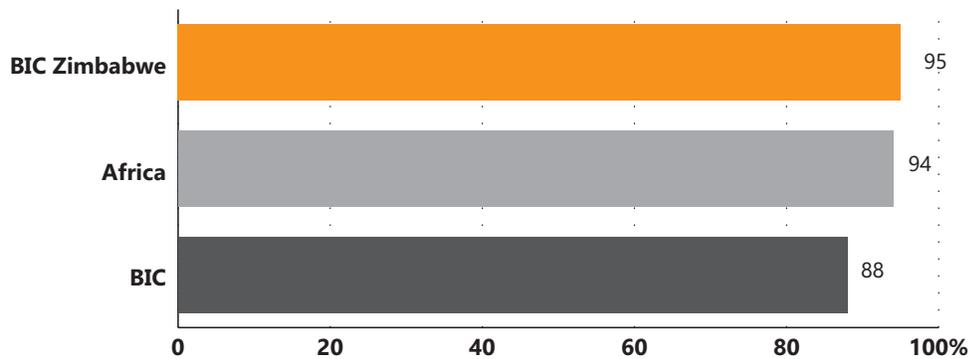
BIC IBANDLA LABAZALWANE kuKRISTU eZIMBABWE

CONGREGATIONS: 324 | MEMBERS: 27,929

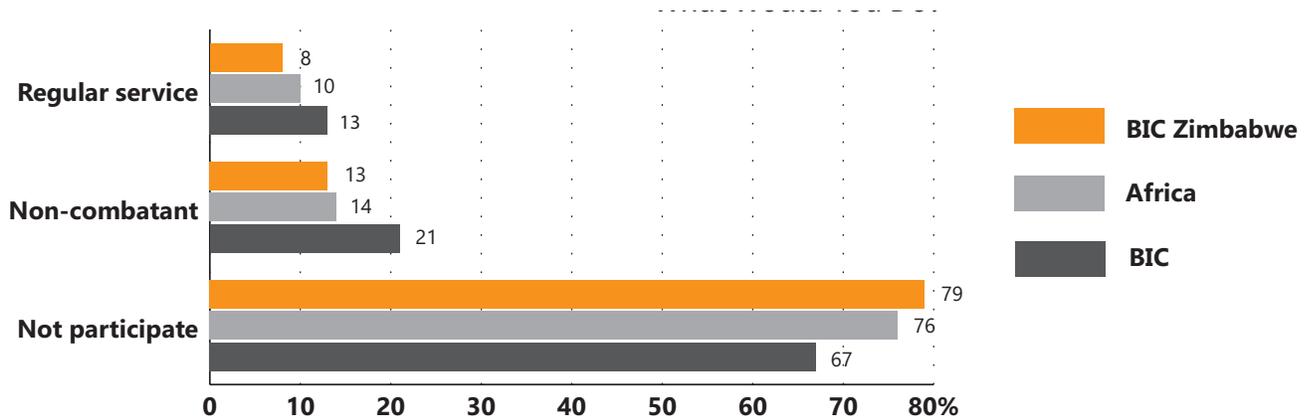
DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

1. Twenty-four percent of members and 94 percent of congregations in the sample participated in the GAP.
2. The average membership size of congregations is 86 members.
3. Many more women than men participated in the GAP, with 74 percent of women completing the profile as compared to 26 percent of men.
4. The sample was evenly divided by residence, with 54 percent of members in rural areas and 46 percent in urban areas. This is the most even distribution of any GAP church in Africa.
5. The average age of respondents is 47 years—the highest among the GAP churches in Africa.
6. Forty-five percent of respondents are within childbearing age—18 to 45 years of age. This is the lowest percentage of any GAP church in Africa.
7. Eighteen percent of respondents are widowed—the highest percentage of any church in the Global Anabaptist Profile and much higher than any other participating church in Africa.
8. Twenty-nine percent of members are homemakers, reflecting the high proportion of women in the sample, and 33 percent are engaged in agriculture.
9. Sixty-one percent of respondents have at least a high school degree—the highest in any African conference except for Meserete Kristos Church.
10. Forty-two percent of respondents grew up in a home where one or both parents were a member of BIC Ibandla Labazalwane kuKristu eZimbabwe.
11. Nine percent of respondents were baptized in a denomination or church other than BIC Ibandla Labazalwane kuKristu eZimbabwe.

I believe the following statement: “Jesus is the only way to God and those without faith in Jesus will not be saved.”



If the government required military service, what would you do?

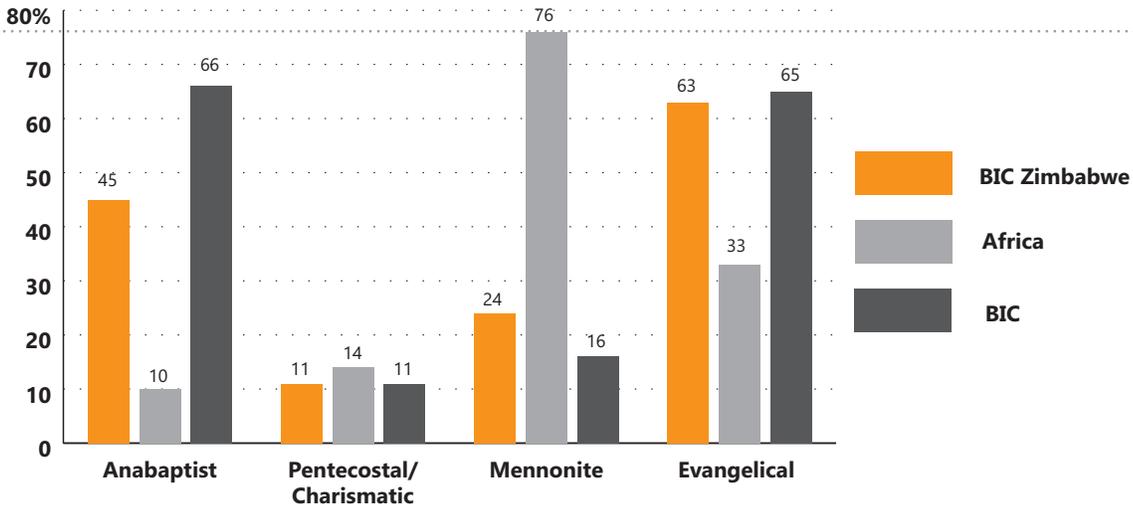


HISTORY

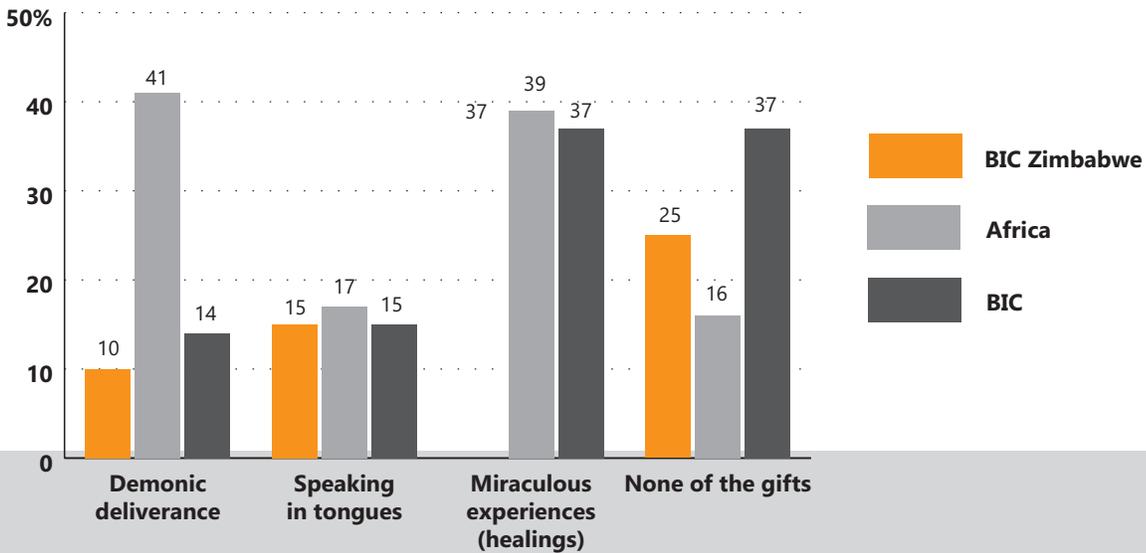
The first Brethren in Christ missionaries arrived in southern Africa in 1898 and were granted a large portion of AmaNdebele land by Cecil Rhodes, a relationship that often associated the missionaries and their methods with colonialism. Mission stations in Matopo, Mtshabezi, and Wanezi functioned as educational and medical centers, as well as bases for Ndebele evangelists to travel out into surrounding regions. In addition to an extensive primary and secondary school system that served children, a Bible school was established in 1948 to train church leaders. The Bible school continues today as Ekuphileni Bible Institute.

The denomination became independent from the mission in 1964, and national church leaders assumed positions as overseers, trustees, and bishops. In the period surrounding national independence in 1980, many in the denomination were targeted because of their Ndebele ethnicity and visible church engagement. The stories of church leaders refusing to fight back and persevering in church work continue to influence the church’s peace witness today. Church planting has remained central to the church’s mission, and the denomination has helped establish churches in both London and Malawi. The church in Zimbabwe also maintains strong connections with young people who have left for opportunities in the United Kingdom and South Africa.

Which of the following words describe your own religious beliefs?



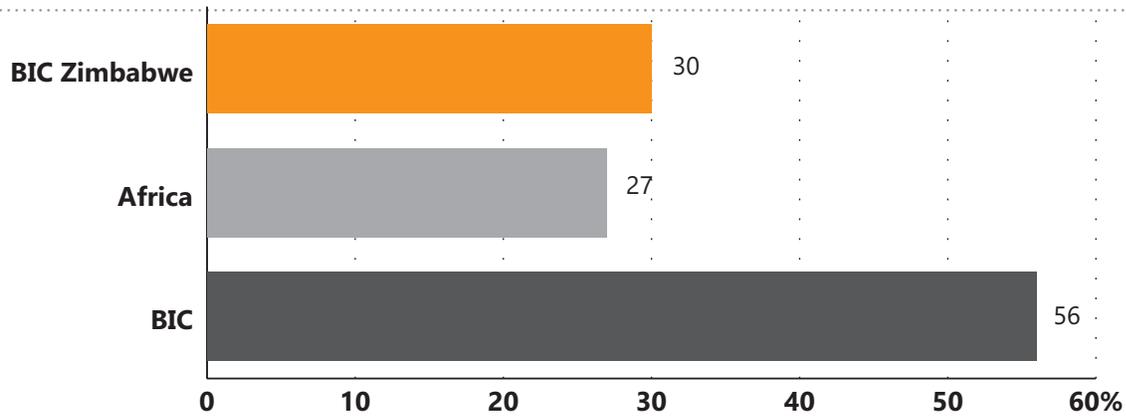
Have you ever personally experienced the following manifestations of the Holy Spirit?



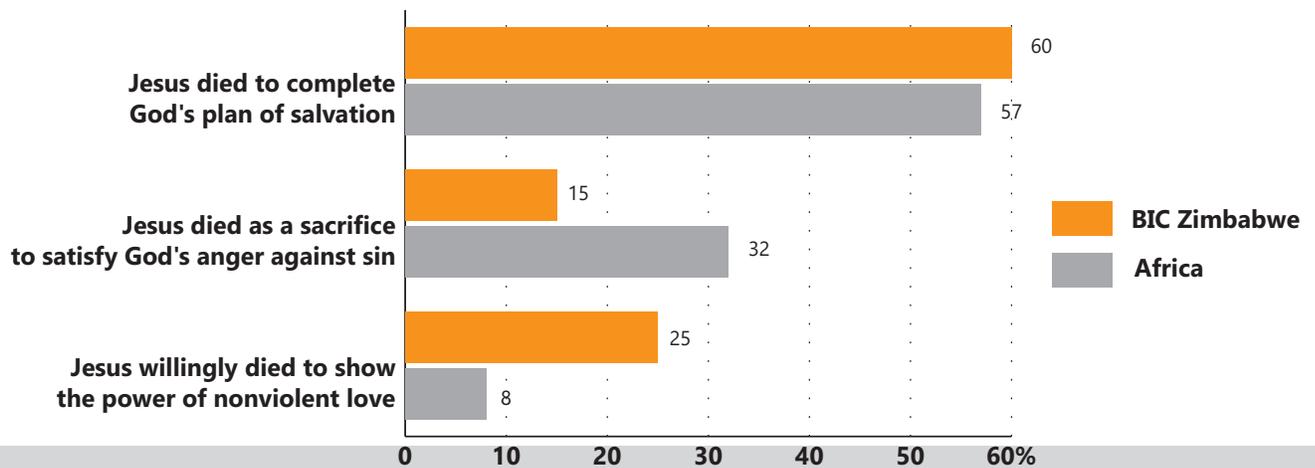
CHALLENGES

The survey was implemented during the rainy season, and flooding sometimes disrupted travels plans for Research Associate Jethro Dube and Doris Dube.

I believe that Christians should participate in politics.



Beliefs about why Jesus died:



“This process encourages members to look deep into their own faith and what they believe.”

-Research Associate Jethro Dube



COMMUNAUTÉ MENNONITE AU CONGO

DISTRICTS: 157 | MEMBERS: 109,000

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

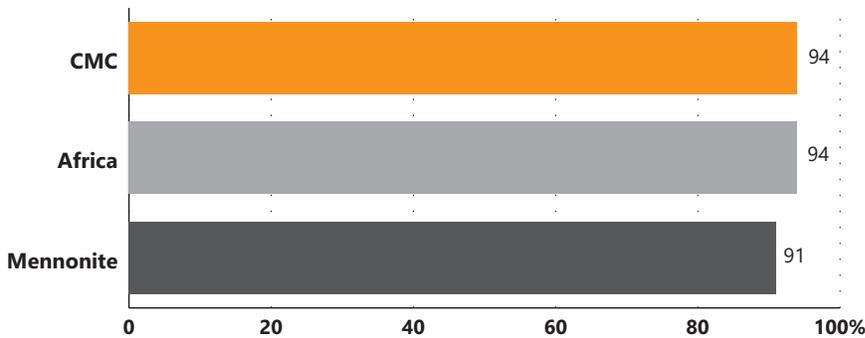
1. Thirty-one percent of members in the sample participated in the GAP—this percentage was impacted by the high level of illiteracy among women in the CMC church.
2. The final sample consisted of 30 percent women and 70 percent men—a distribution impacted by the illiteracy of Congolese women.
3. Sixty-seven percent of respondents live in rural communities as compared to 33 percent in more urban contexts.
4. The average age of respondents is 45 years, with 50 percent being between the childbearing ages of 18-45 years.
5. Five percent identified their marital status as polygamist.
6. Eleven percent identified themselves as homemakers (likely a reflection of the gender imbalance), while 34 percent are engaged in agriculture and 39 percent are professionals. Twelve percent indicated that they are involved in church-related work, one of the higher percentages of churches in the GAP.
7. Fifty-seven percent are high school graduates and fourteen percent graduated from college.
8. For 67 percent of respondents, one or both parents were members of Communauté Mennonite au Congo when the respondent was a child.
9. Sixteen percent of respondents were baptized in a denomination or church other than Communauté Mennonite au Congo.

“We were struck by the hospitality of the church members who received us. They welcomed us into their homes and shared their meals. We spent no money on food and lodging.”

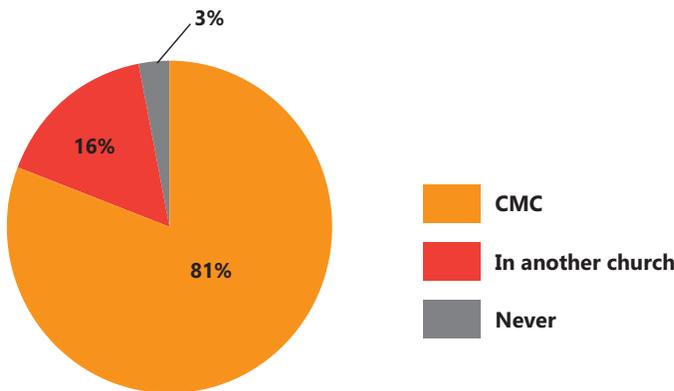
-Research Associate Joly Birakara Ilowa



I believe the following statement: “Jesus is the only way to God and those without faith in Jesus will not be saved.”



Church of baptistm



“During our time consulting at Elizabethtown College we found that Mennonites worldwide have almost the same belief and practice despite some differences.”

*Research Associate
Joly Birakara Ilowa*

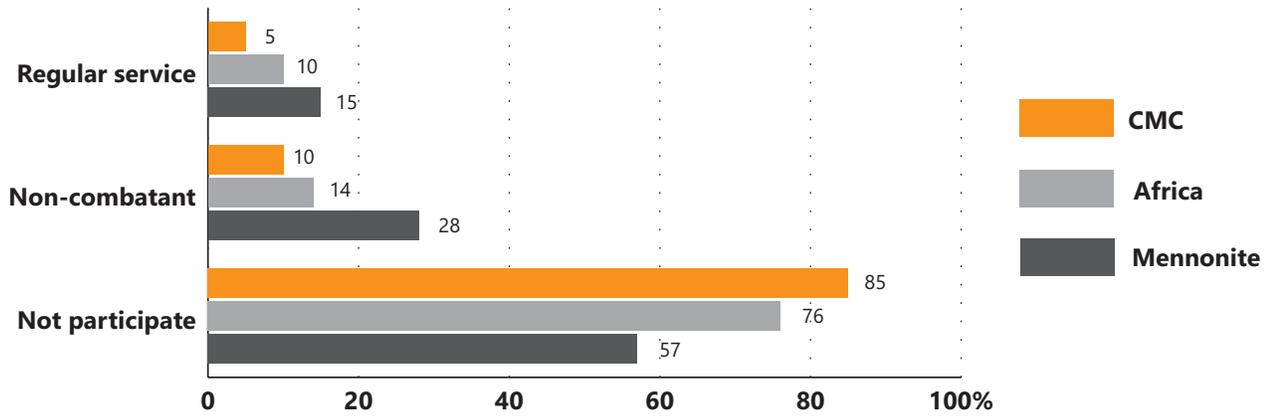
HISTORY

The Communauté Mennonite au Congo traces its origins to 1911, when the first North American missionaries associated with the Congo Inland Mission arrived in Congo, during the period of Belgian rule. Missionaries oversaw eight mission stations, which were centers for education and health ministries, while Congolese catechists and translators were primarily responsible for evangelism and church planting beyond the confines of the mission stations.

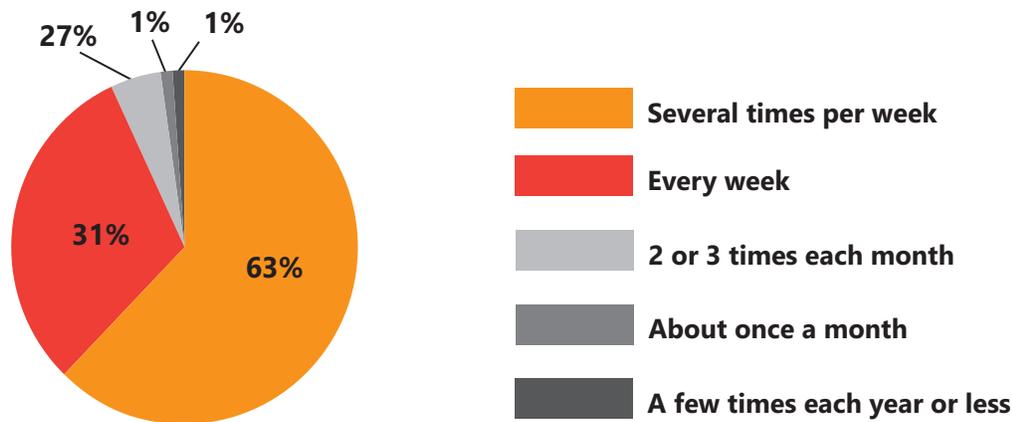
Rising frustration with the colonial system led to revolution and national independence in 1960. Under pressure from authorities and fearing for their safety, Mennonite missionaries left Congo within a span of two weeks following independence on June 30. Although many in the church felt abandoned, it proved to be a formative period in developing Congolese leadership, as church members assumed new responsibilities. Even after the missionaries returned, Congolese leaders continued to make decisions collaboratively with North American colleagues. The Communauté Mennonite au Congo became fully independent in 1971.

Church expansion from the rural areas into the cities followed independence, leading to greater contact with Pentecostal and traditional renewal movements. Throughout these changes church planting and evangelism have remained central.

If the government required military service, what would you do?



Worship service attendance

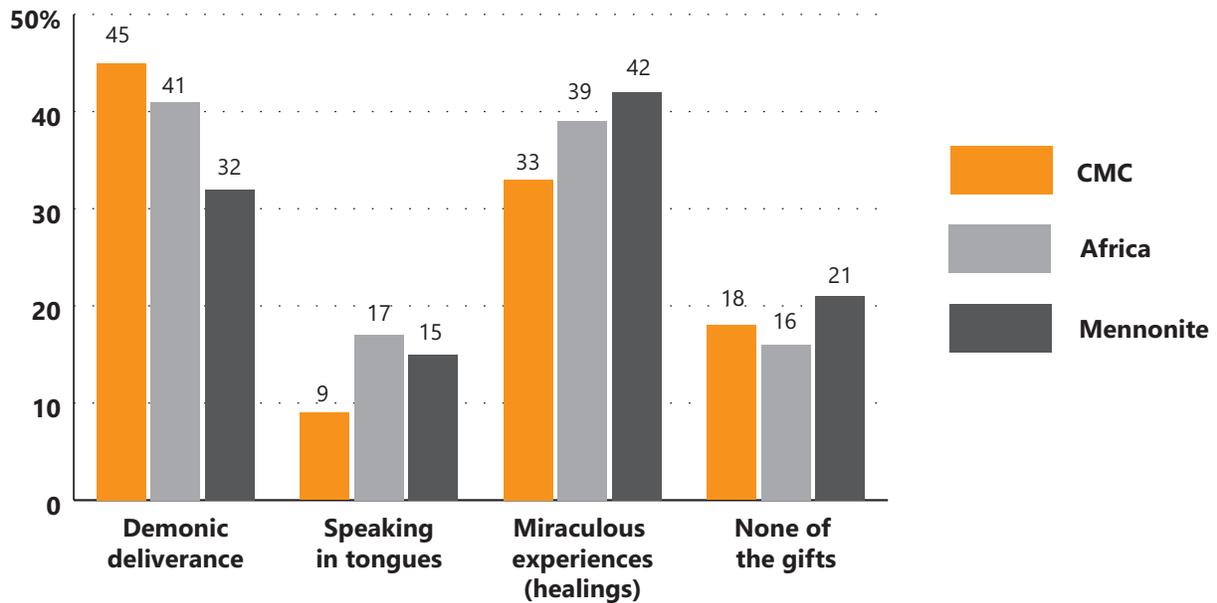


CHALLENGES

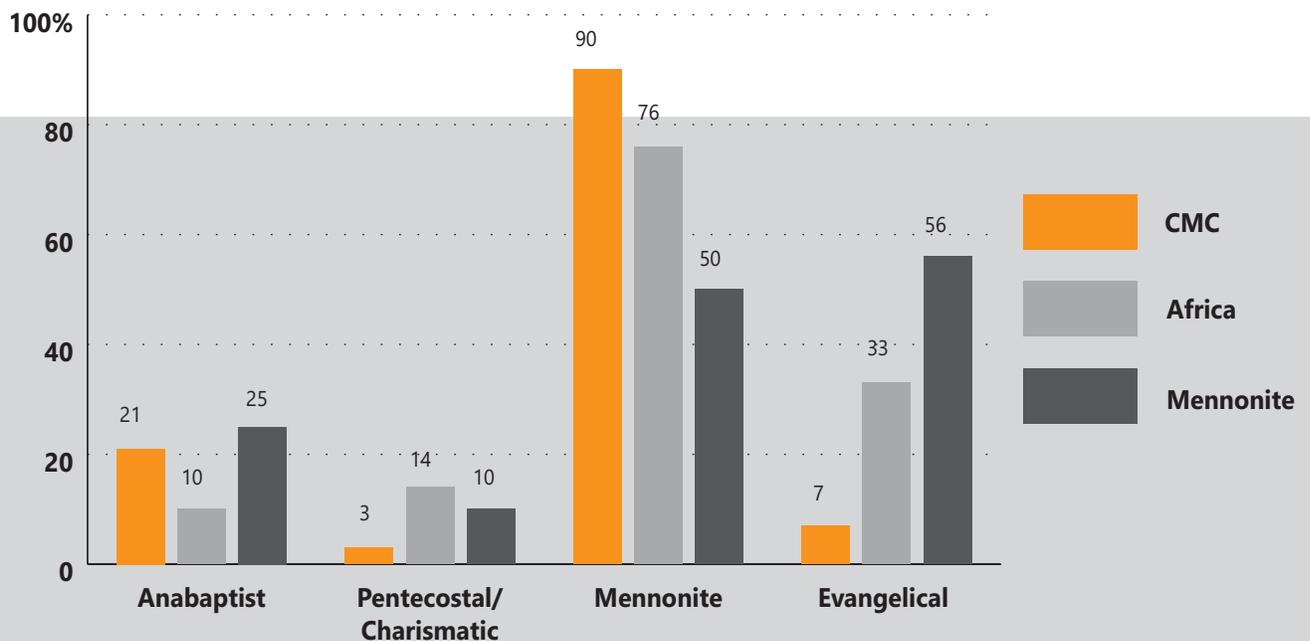
Even though the majority of members in Communauté Mennonite au Congo are women, they were underrepresented in the survey, due to illiteracy challenges.

Most of CMC's congregations are rural, including 40 that are quite remote. Reaching these congregations to implement the survey was difficult, even when traveling by motorbike.

Have you ever personally experienced the following manifestations of the Holy Spirit?



Which of the following words describe your own religious beliefs?



GRACE COMMUNITY CHURCH (SOUTH AFRICA)

CONGREGATIONS: 6 | MEMBERS: 330

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

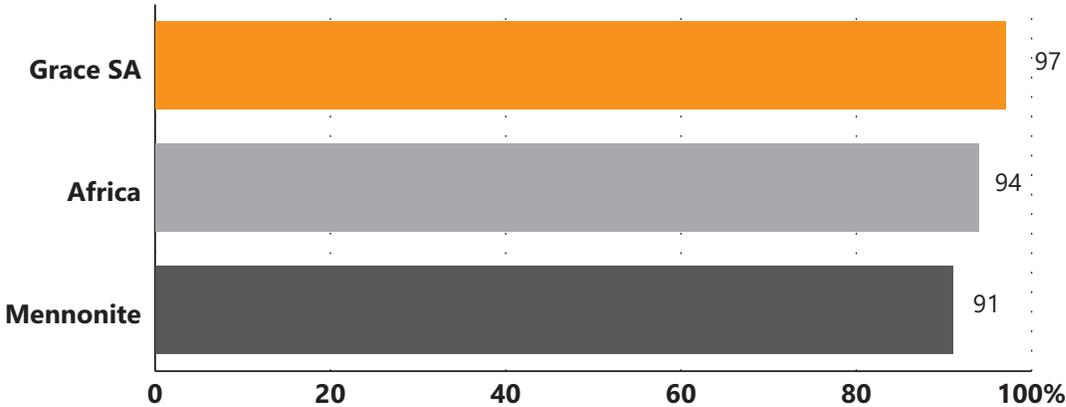
1. Twenty-one percent of members and 100 percent of congregations in Grace Community Church participated in the GAP.
2. The average membership size of its congregations is 106 members.
3. Fifty-two percent of respondents were women and 48 percent were men.
4. All of the members live in rural areas.
5. The average age of respondents is 40 years and 66 percent of members are between the ages of 18-45 years—the youngest church in Africa next to Malawi.
6. Only 49 percent are currently married—the lowest percentage among GAP African churches. Five percent are widowed, eight percent divorced or separated, and five percent living with someone to whom they are unmarried.
7. One third identified as manual laborers, 16 percent as employed in government or politics or civic service, 16 percent in education, and only 6 percent identified as homemakers.
8. Thirty-five percent are high school graduates—the lowest in Africa next to Malawi.
9. Thirty-two percent of respondents grew up in a home where one or both parents were a member of Grace Community Church.
10. Forty-six percent of respondents were baptized in a denomination or church other than Grace Community Church.

“I think this is a good project for the church, to help us take stock of our direction and for obeying God’s call.”

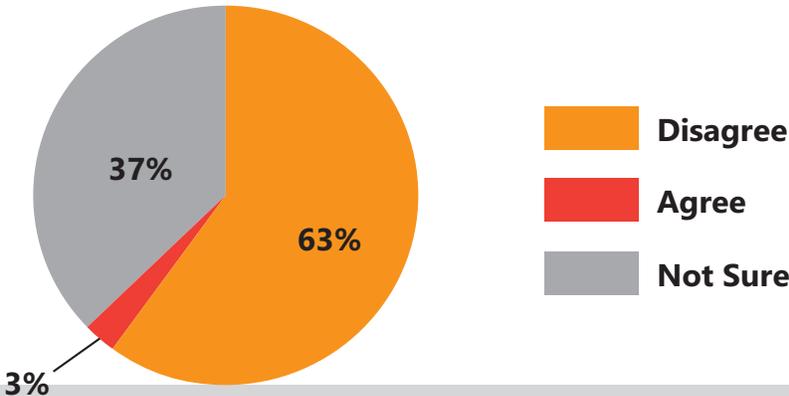
Research Associate Lawrence Coetzee



I believe the following statement: "Jesus is the only way to God and those without faith in Jesus will not be saved."



It is okay for Christians to run for political office.

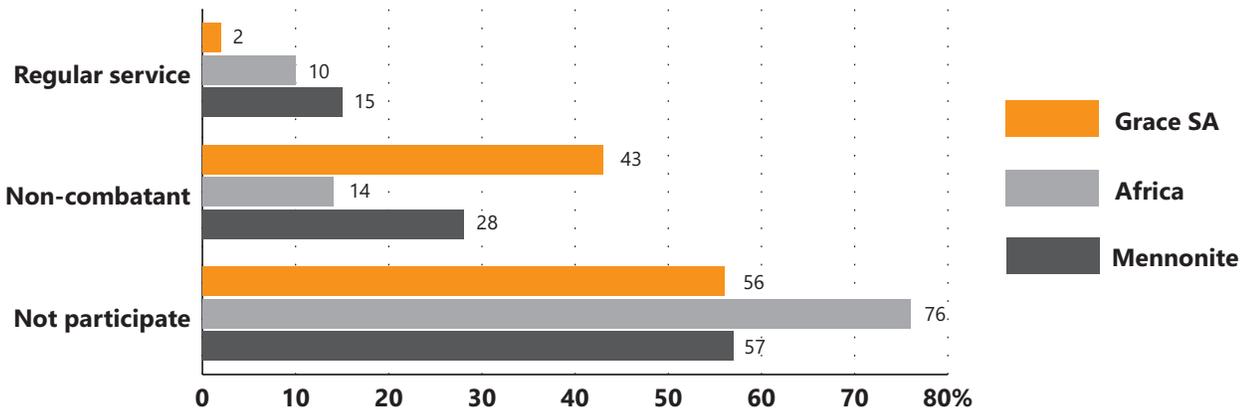


HISTORY

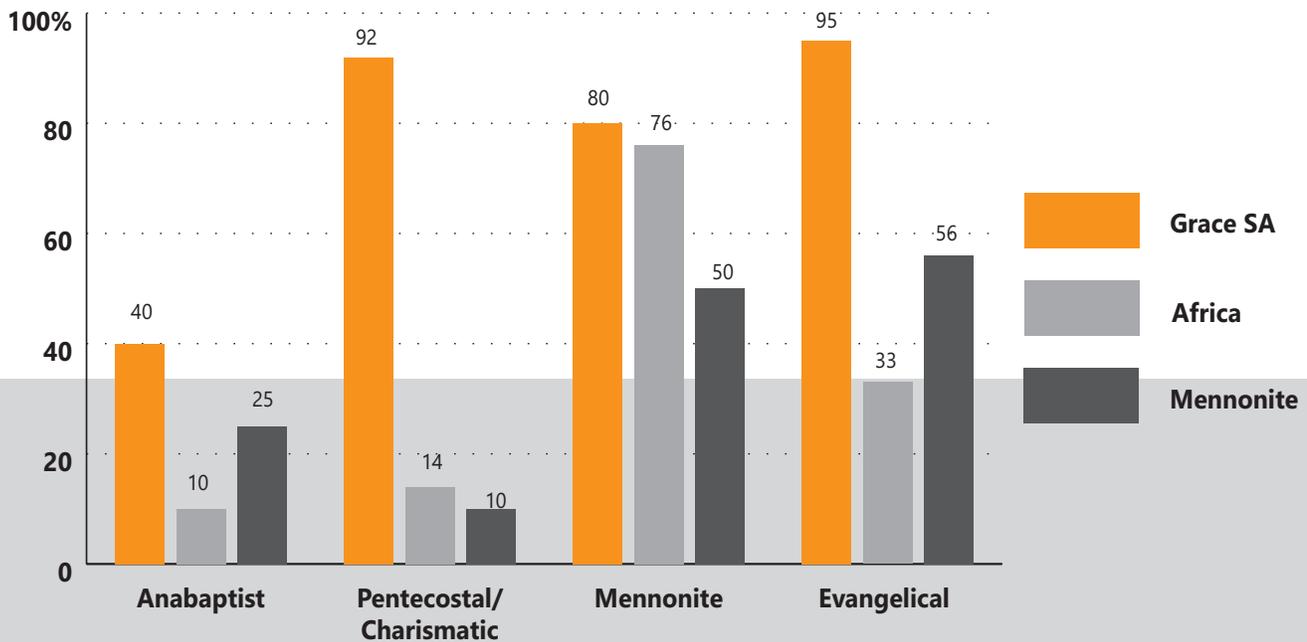
Grace Community Church in South Africa was founded in 1987 by David and Nellie Makaleni, Fani Norgawana, and a number of others who left the Apostolic Faith Mission. The church was located in Philipstown, an economically depressed area that is heavily dependent on sheep ranching. Whites own the majority of the ranches, while the workers are primarily black Africans. The church's early ministry focused on reaching workers on the sheep farms, and many of the early evangelists were farm workers.

Sixteen months after its founding, Graham Cyster, a Mennonite from Cape Town, ordained the Makalenis for official ministry. Grace Community Church has since expanded beyond Philipstown to neighboring towns such as De Aar, Colesburg, and Hanover.

If the government required military service, what would you do?



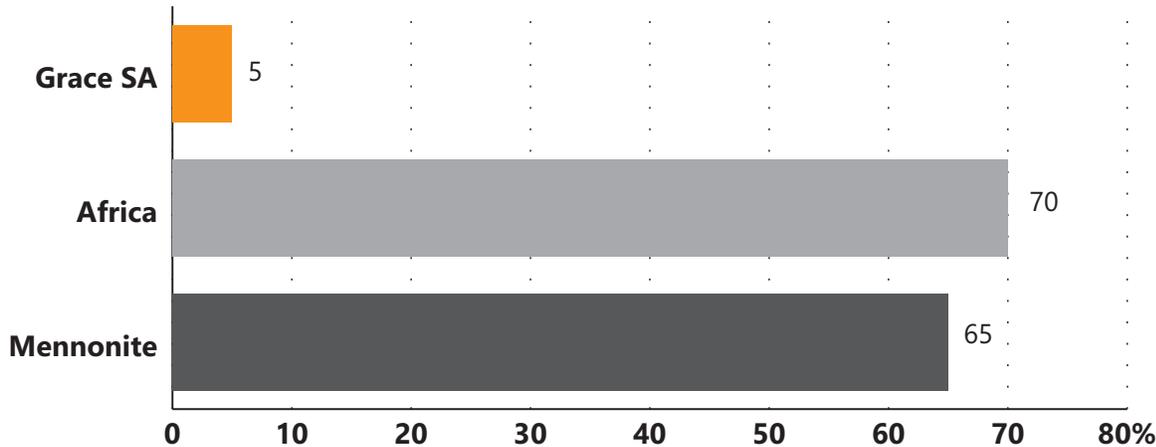
Which of the following words describe your own religious beliefs?



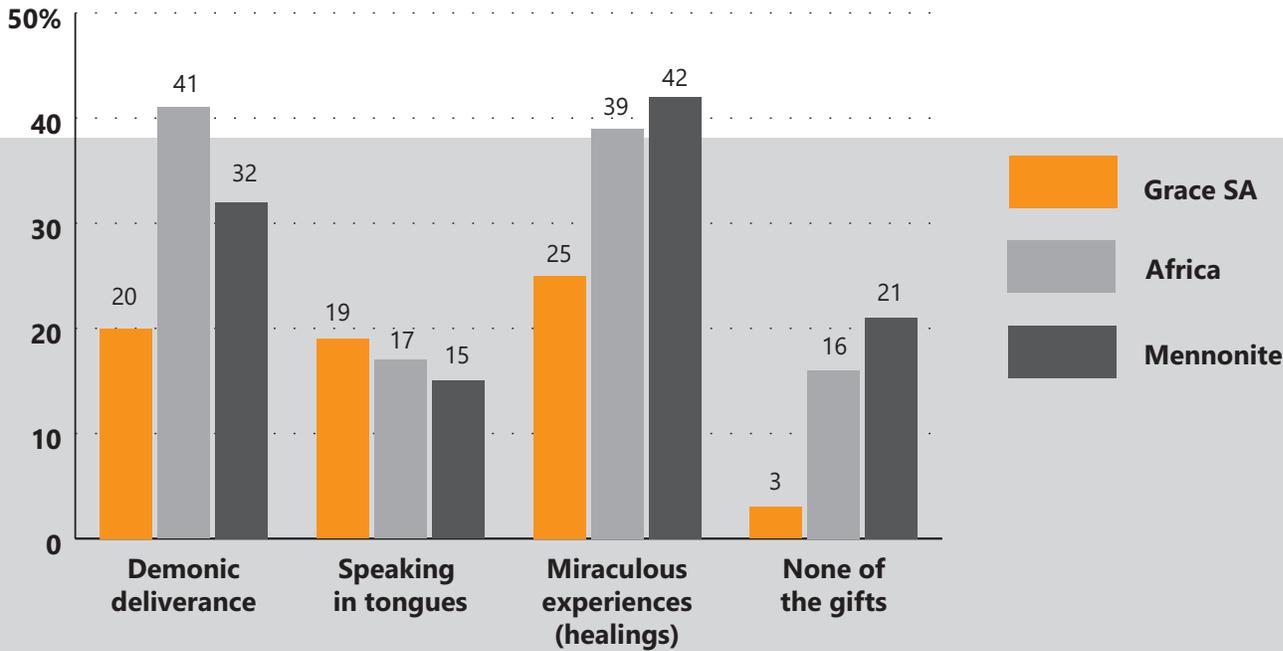
CHALLENGES:

Farm workers were not readily available on weekends, when the survey was implemented.

I believe that the Bible promises that followers of Christ will be more blessed and have better health than non-Christians.



Have you ever personally experienced the following manifestations of the Holy Spirit?



MESERETE KRISTOS CHURCH (ETHIOPIA)

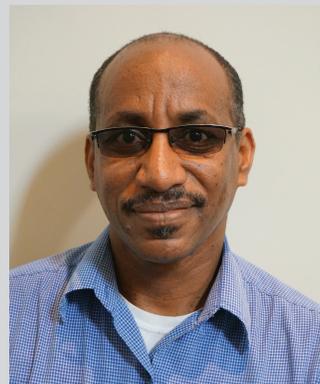
CONGREGATIONS: 740 | MEMBERS: 208,726

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

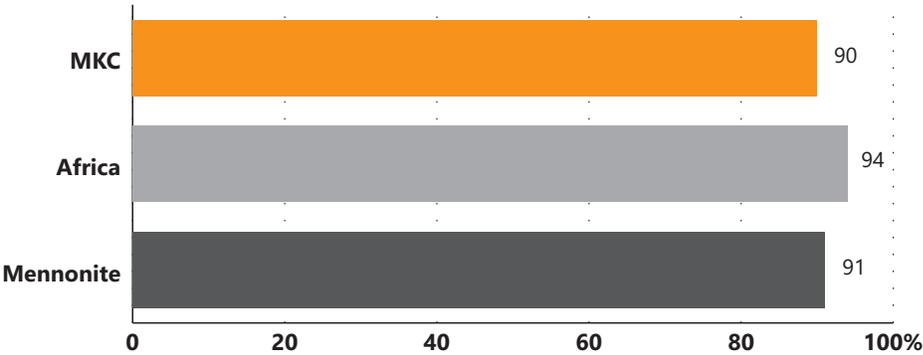
1. Four percent of members and 24 percent of congregations in Meserete Kristos Church participated in the GAP.
2. The average size of congregations in the MKC sample is 282 members.
3. Forty-three percent of respondents were women and 57 percent were men.
4. The sample was overwhelmingly urban—81 percent, which makes this sample by far the most urban of any in Africa.
5. The average age is 45 years, with 50 percent of members between 18-45 years of age.
6. Thirty-two percent of this sample are single members while 56 percent are married, the highest percentage in Africa next to Grace Community Church of South Africa (34%).
7. Nearly one-fifth (19%) of respondents are engaged in education, and overall, 46 percent are professionals—the highest among the African churches.
8. Thirty-eight percent are college graduates and 11 percent have advanced degrees—MKC is the most highly educated of any African church.
9. Forty-one percent of respondents grew up in a home where one or both parents were a member of Meserete Kristos Church.
10. Twelve percent of respondents were baptized in a denomination or church other than Meserete Kristos Church.

“We are not sure how many of our church members know what we believe. [The GAP results] can help leaders design programs, so that our members know what Christianity really means.”

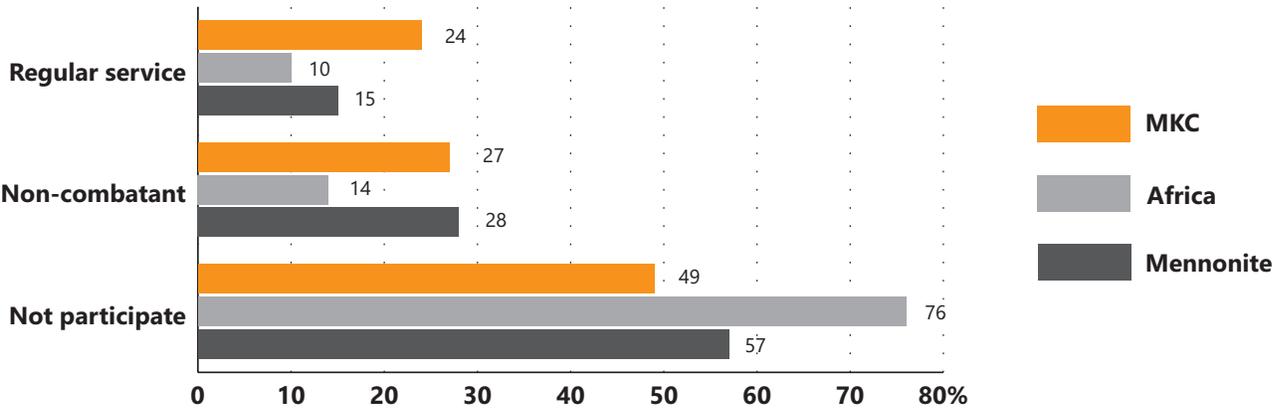
Tewodros Beyene, general secretary of MKC



I believe the following statement: "Jesus is the only way to God and those without faith in Jesus will not be saved."



If the government required military service, what would you do?

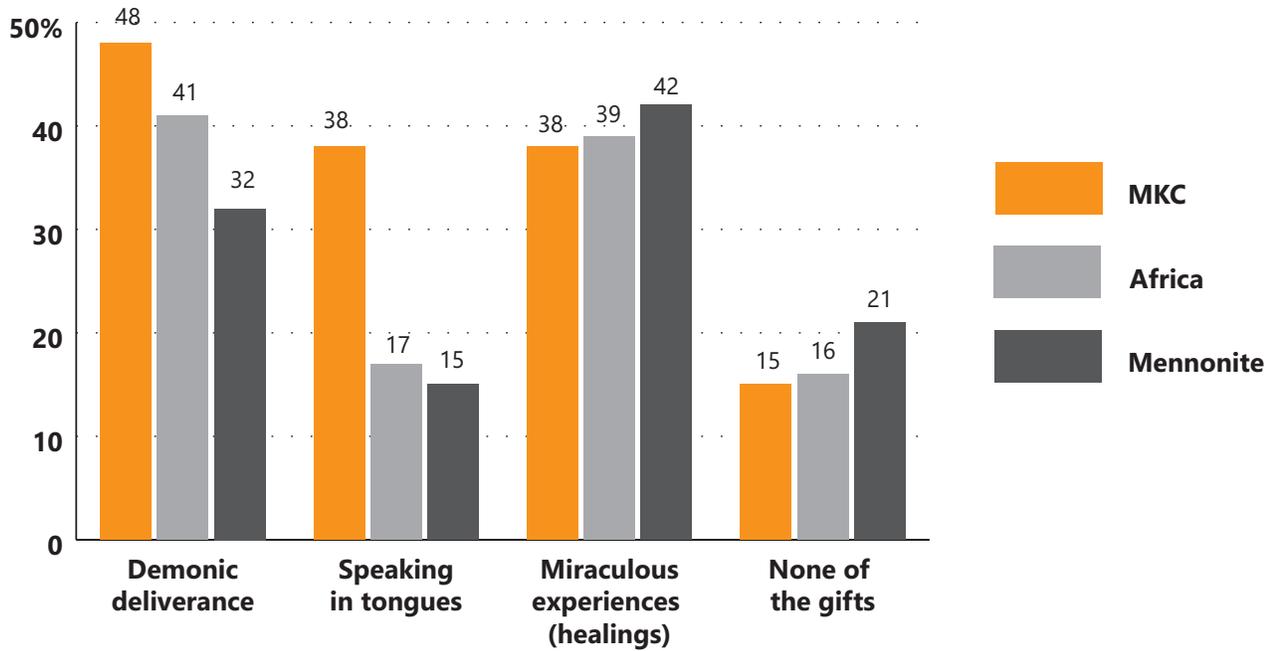


HISTORY

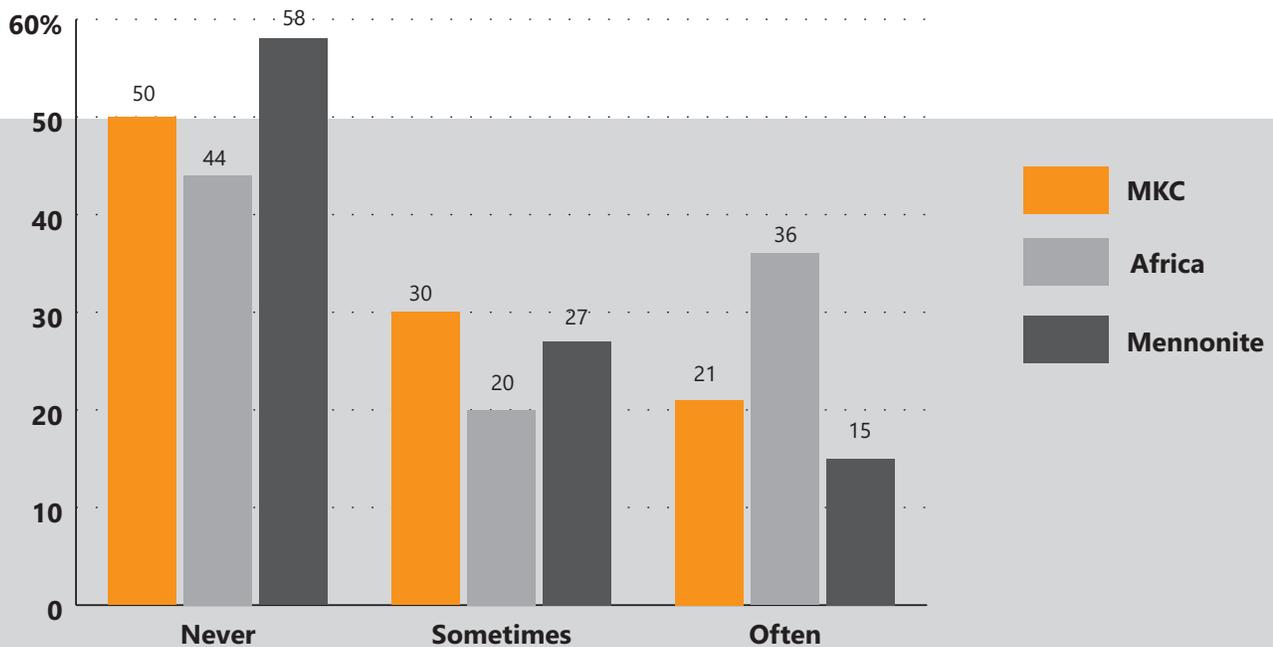
The Meserete Kristos Church traces its roots to the work of North American Mennonite missionaries, who first arrived in Ethiopia in 1945 to establish hospitals, schools, and churches. Growth in the early years was rather slow, until 1974, when the Communist regime known as the Derg took power. As religious restrictions in the country increased, the church went into hiding. In 1982, the government seized the church's administrative offices, property, and bank accounts. That same year, MKC's 5,000 members started meeting in small groups for worship and study, often at night. These home-based groups, initially limited to no more than five people, began to grow and divide.

In 1994, after the fall of the Socialist regime, Meserete Kristos members gathered in a stadium to publicly congregate for the first time in twenty years, bringing in a total of 50,000 people. That same year Meserete Kristos College was founded to help train ministers and church leaders for the denomination. The church's focus on leadership training, evangelism, and church planting has led to sustained growth over the last twenty years.

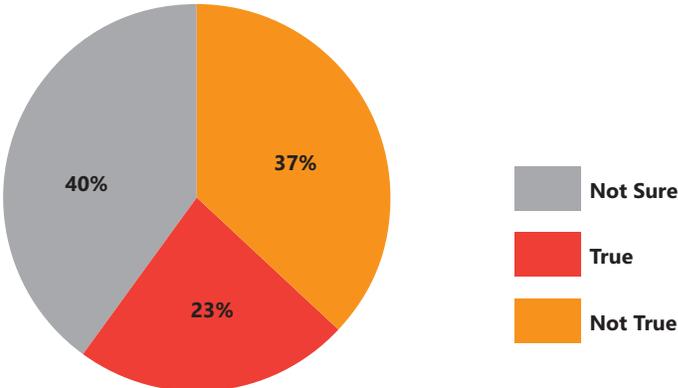
Have you ever personally experienced the following manifestations of the Holy Spirit?



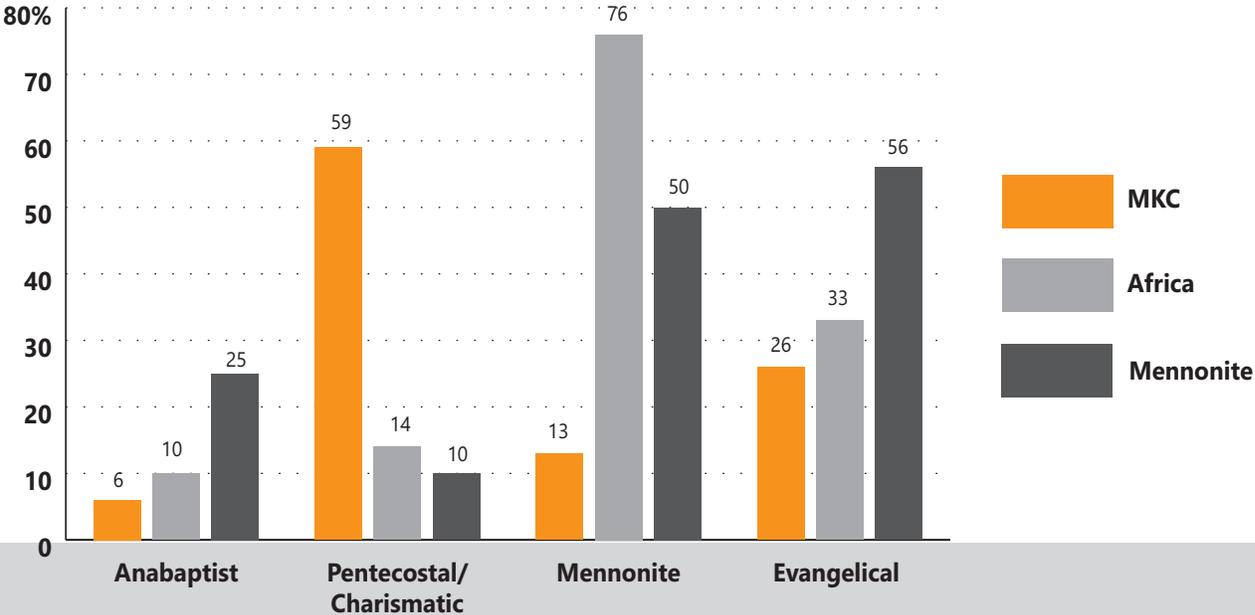
Member experience of persecution:



My congregation teaches members about the history of Anabaptism.



Which of the following words describe your own religious beliefs?



CHALLENGES

A general presidential election and a major leadership transition within the MKC slowed down implementation of the survey and made reaching rural congregations even more difficult. Data entry also required more volunteers than the denomination had originally anticipated.

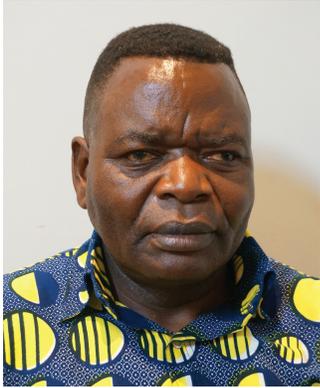
Research Associate Tigist Gelagle

COMMUNAUTÉ DES ÉGLISES DES FRÈRES MENNONITES AU CONGO

CONGREGATIONS: 67 | MEMBERS: 101,279

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

1. One hundred percent of congregations and 17 percent of members in the original sample participated in the GAP.
2. We do not have information about the average size of congregations in the Communauté des Églises des Frères Mennonites au Congo.
3. Of those who participated in the GAP, 37 percent were women and 63 percent were men.
4. Seventy-three percent of members reported living in rural communities and 28 percent in urban areas.
5. The average age of respondents is 44 years and 53 percent of women are within childbearing age (18-45 years).
6. Sixty-seven percent are married, 16 percent are single, five percent are widowed, 3 percent are separated or divorced, 5 percent are living with someone to whom they are not legally married, and 2 percent are in polygamist marriages.
7. Forty-three percent are engaged in agriculture, 32 percent are professionals, 11 percent work in manual labor occupations, and 11 percent are in church-related careers. Just 3 percent are homemakers.
8. Fifty-one percent have not completed a high school education. For 39 percent a high school diploma is their highest level of education, and 10 percent are college graduates.
9. Sixty-one percent grew up in a home where one or both parents was a member of a congregation in the Communauté des Églises des Frères Mennonites au Congo.
10. Eighty-three percent of respondents were baptized in a congregation of the Communauté des Églises des Frères Mennonites au Congo.

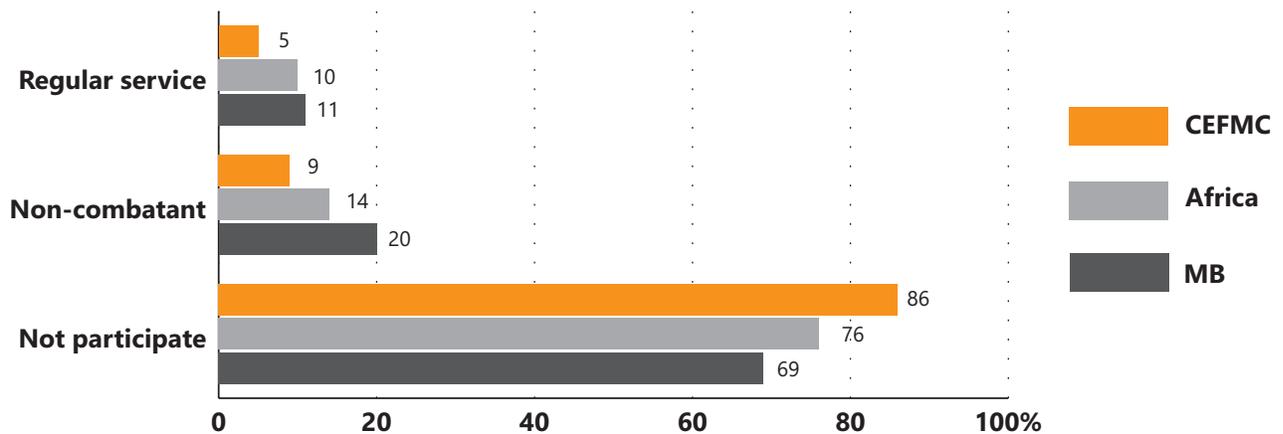


“This work was both an evangelism campaign and a missionary work. The time of worship [before the survey] prepared hearts for the survey.

Nobody hurried up to go back home. God was at work. After the message of scripture in some places people converted and came to Jesus Christ.”

-Research Associate Damien Pelende Tshinyam

If the Government Required Military Service What Would You Do?

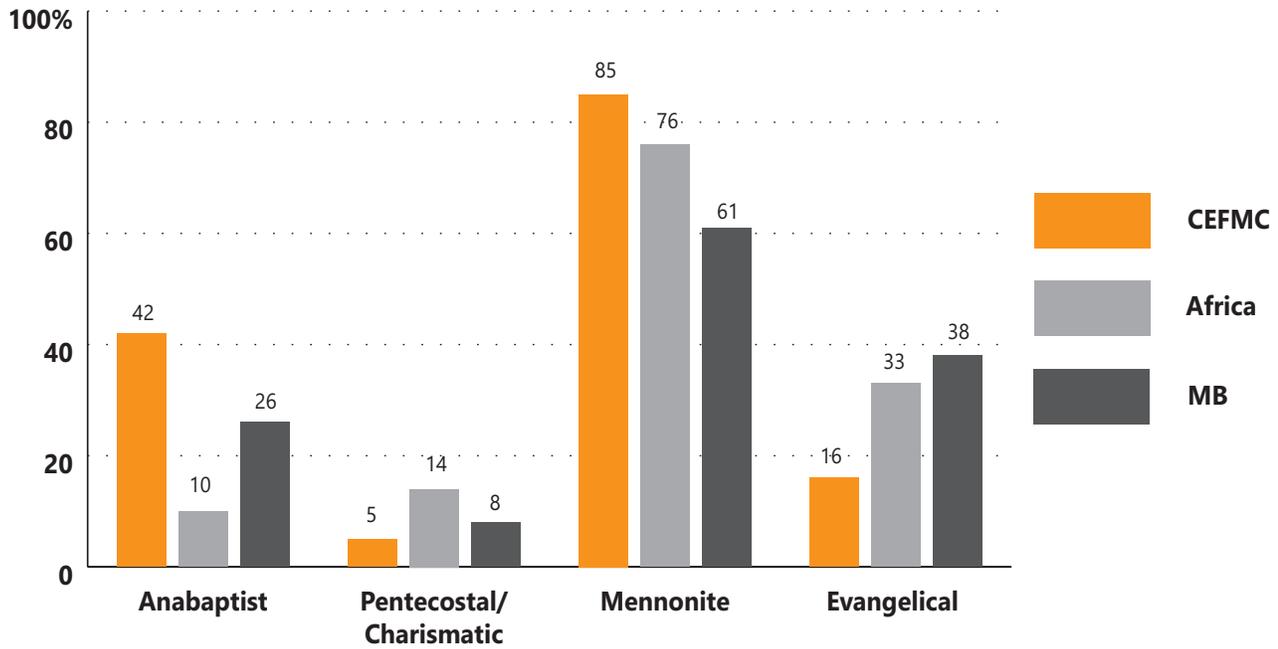


HISTORY

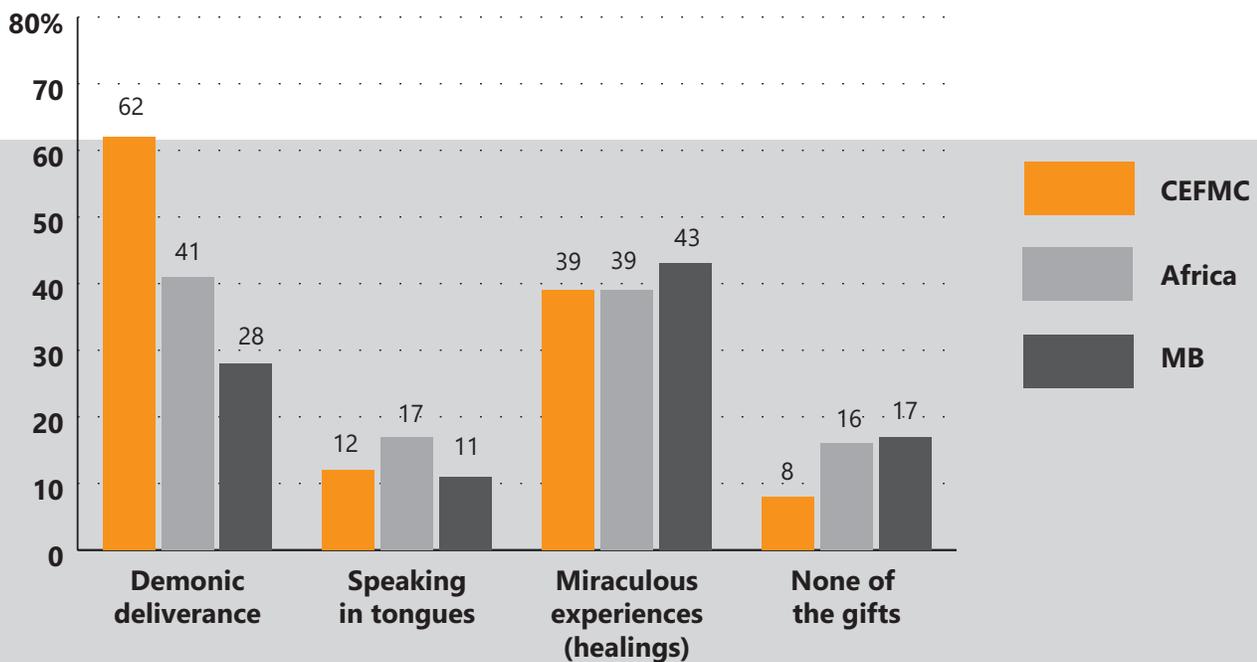
In 1920 Aaron and Ernestina Janzen resigned from their work with Congo Inland Mission to start an independent Mennonite Brethren mission in what is now Bandundu province. In 1924 they moved south to Kafumba, which became the main center of the Mennonite Brethren mission until 1964. Early missionary work included agricultural, health, and educational activities—wholistic emphases that have continued in the church to the present day. Congolese catechists, evangelists, and pastors simultaneously carried out the early evangelism and translation work.

When Zaire became independent in 1960, the resulting rebellion led to the evacuation of North American missionaries and significant trials for Congolese church leaders, who faced threats and harassment from the revolutionary forces. The denomination became independent from the North American mission in 1971. Today the CEFMC counts churches in Kinshasa and in the Kivu, Lower Kongo, Equator, and Kasai provinces, among others. Evangelism remains a central focus not just for the denomination as a whole, but also for individual congregations and members. Church-planting has even led the denomination across the border into Angola. CEFMC also runs a Department of Health and Development that supports development projects in an effort to minister to the whole person.

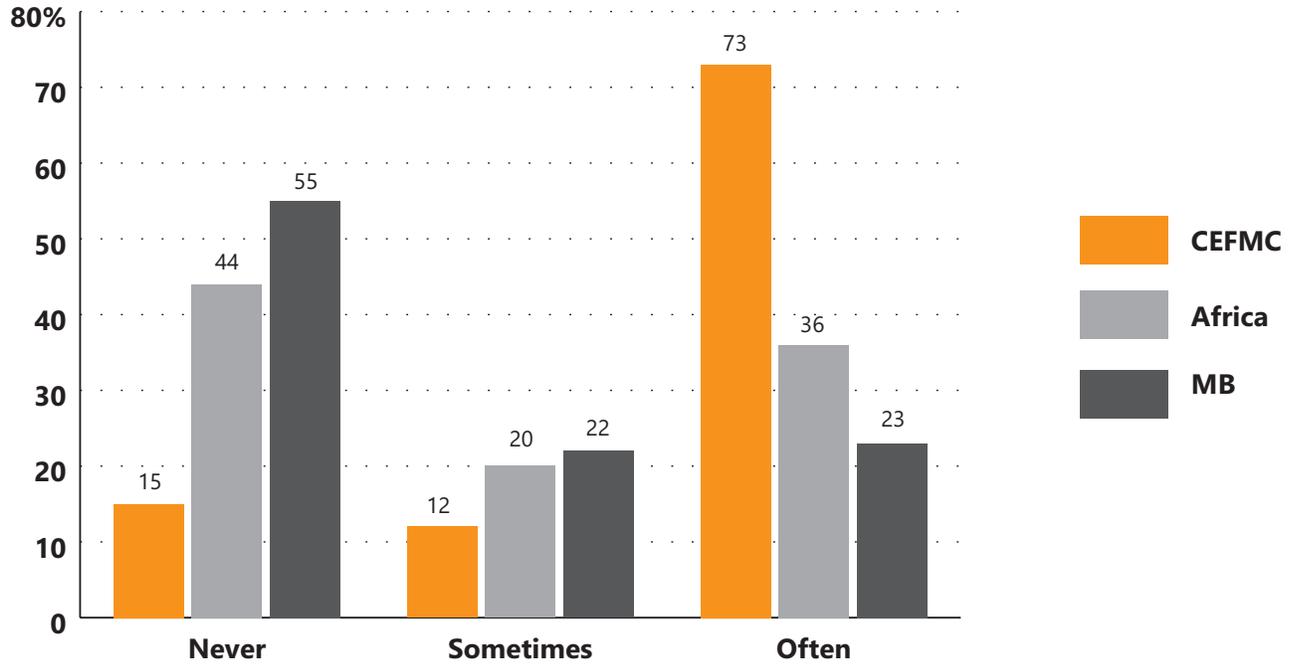
Which of the following words describe your own religious beliefs?



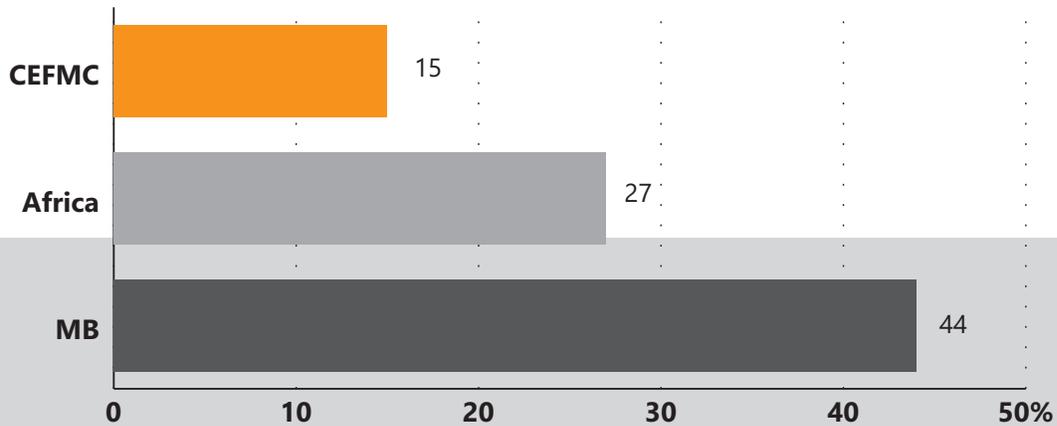
Have you ever personally experienced the following manifestations of the Holy Spirit?



Member experience of persecution:



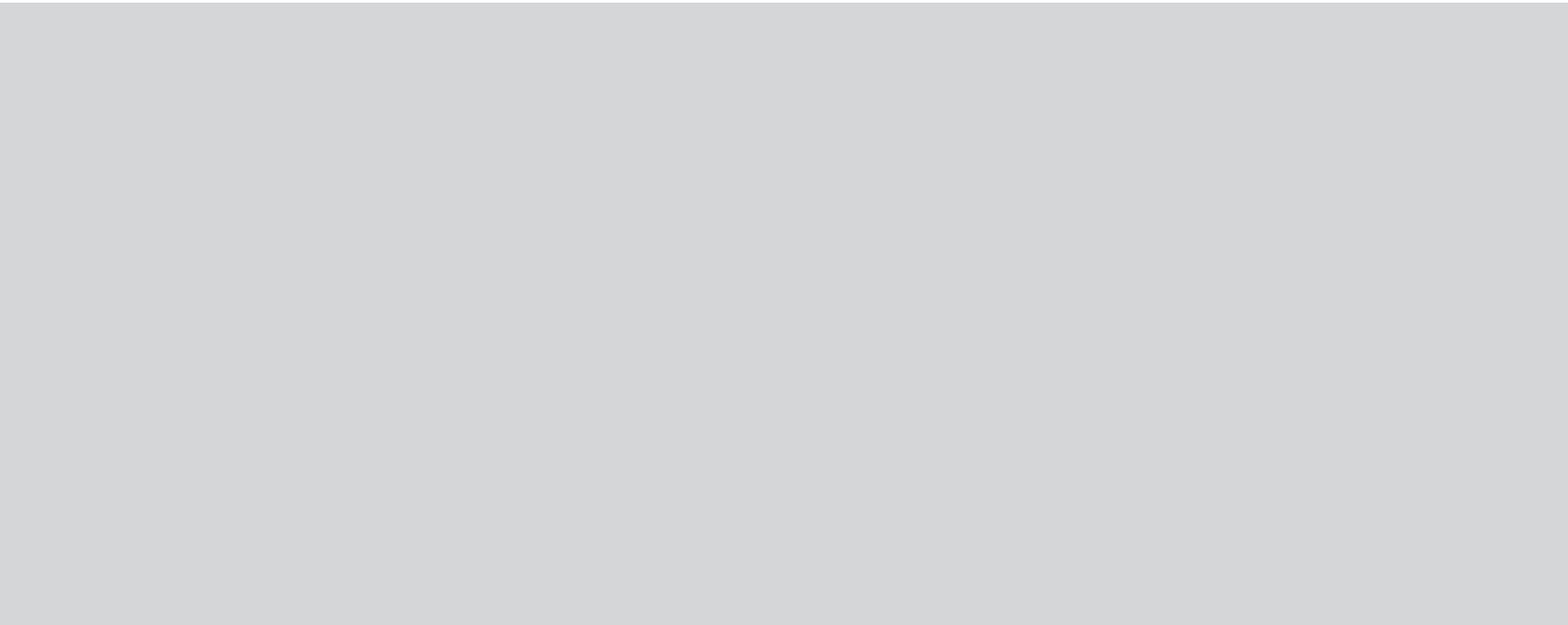
I believe that Christians should participate in politics.



CHALLENGES

Some people were fearful that their answers in the interviews might not please church leaders. After they were shown letters of support signed by the leaders, however, they felt free to speak their mind.

ASIA



BIHAR MENNONITE MANDLI (INDIA)

CONGREGATIONS: 23 | MEMBERS: 1,921

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

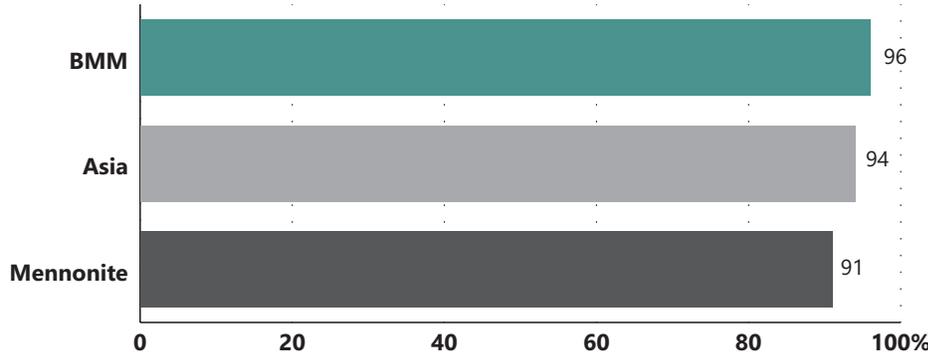
1. One hundred percent of congregations and 36 percent of members in the original sample participated in the GAP.
2. The average size of congregations in the Bihar Mennonite Mandli is 84 members.
3. Fifty-seven percent of respondents were women and 43 percent were men.
4. Ninety-one percent of members live in rural areas—all of the Asian churches in the GAP were more rural than urban.
5. The average age of respondents is 37 years, making Bihar Mennonite Mandli by far the youngest conference in Asia. Sixty-nine percent are within childbearing age (18-45 years), the highest percentage among Asian churches in the GAP.
6. Thirty-five percent of respondents are single—a reflection of the youthfulness of this church.
7. Twenty-three percent are homemakers. Thirty-eight percent are engaged in agriculture and 16 percent in manual labor.
8. Seventy-one percent have graduated from high school, and 16 percent from college—educational levels that are relatively high for such a young church and one that is more rural than urban.
9. Forty-seven percent grew up in a home where neither parent was a member of Bihar Mennonite Mandli.
10. Thirty-four percent of respondents reported being baptized in a church other than the Bihar Mennonite Mandli.

“Church leaders and participants found the questions beneficial for understanding their Anabaptist-Mennonite faith and practice in a clearer way.”

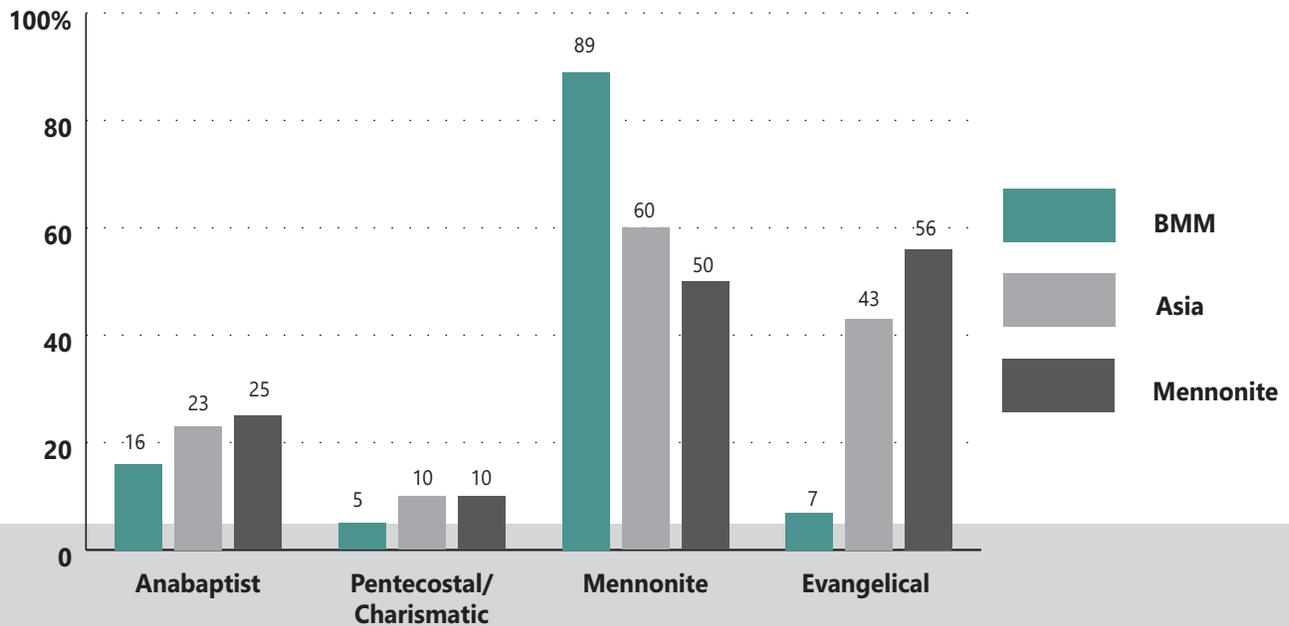
Research Associate Emmanuel Minj



I believe the following statement: "Jesus is the only way to God and those without faith in Jesus will not be saved."



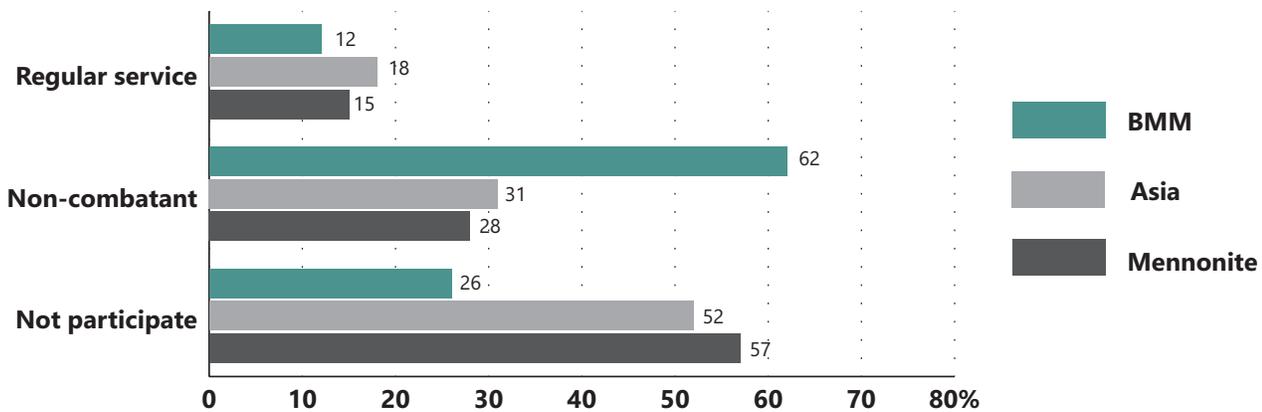
Which of the following words describe your own religious beliefs?



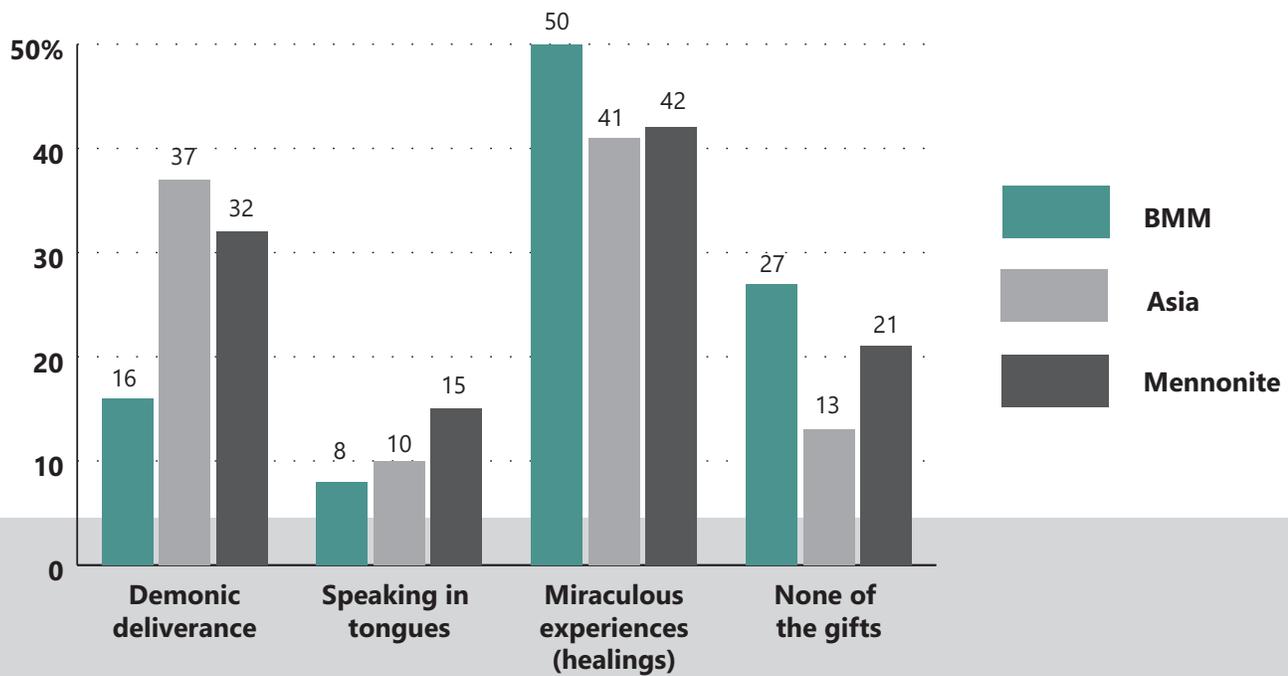
HISTORY

In 1947 missionaries from the Mennonite Board of Missions moved from Dhamtari in Central India to Chandwa in Bihar Province (now Jharkhand) to found Bihar Mennonite Mission. The mission established several churches in the region, but growth was moderate until a devastating famine in the late 1960s. Bihar Mennonite Mission responded by serving free meals, and membership correspondingly grew from 450 in 1962 to around 700 in 1967. The church became independent in 1972 and changed its name to Bihar Mennonite Mandli (BMM). The denomination faced an aging leadership throughout the 1980s, but an influx of new leaders in the 1990s and efforts to develop leadership training for pastors has brought new life to the church. Today the majority of BMM churches are located in rural areas and smaller villages in the Jharkhand province. Evangelism continues as a central focus of BMM.

If the government required military service, what would you do?



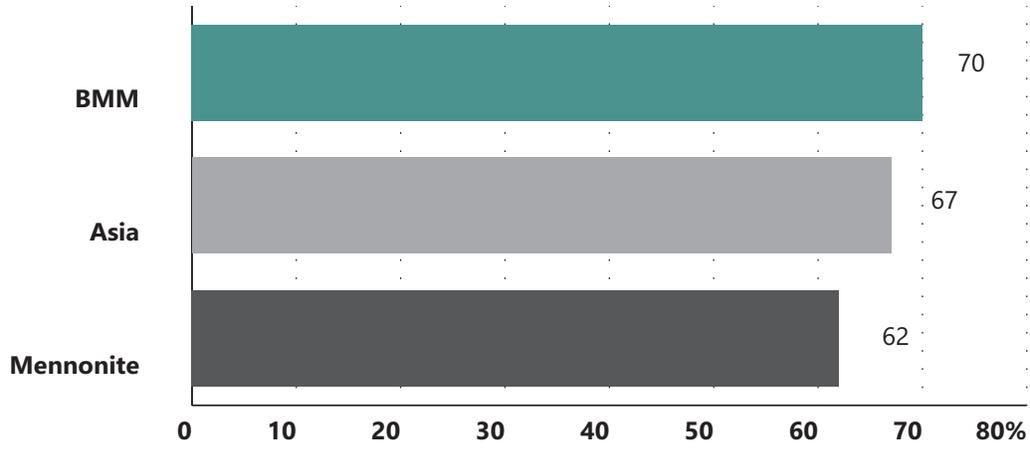
Have you ever personally experienced the following manifestations of the Holy Spirit?



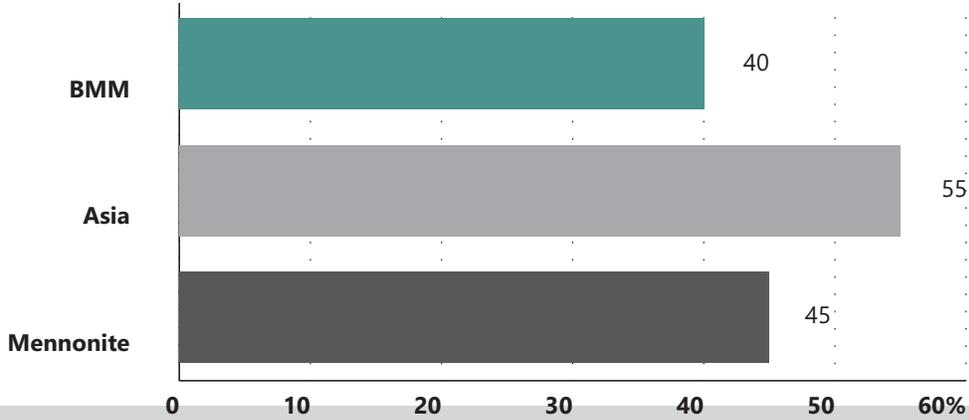
CHALLENGES

Many church members did not understand Hindi well enough to easily follow the survey. The theological questions were particularly difficult for those with a basic education level to follow.

Christians and people of other religions do NOT worship the same God.



Christians should participate in politics.



Members of the Etkey congregation fill out the survey.

GEREJA INJILI DI TANAH JAWA (INDONESIA)

CONGREGATIONS: 108 | MEMBERS: 26,856

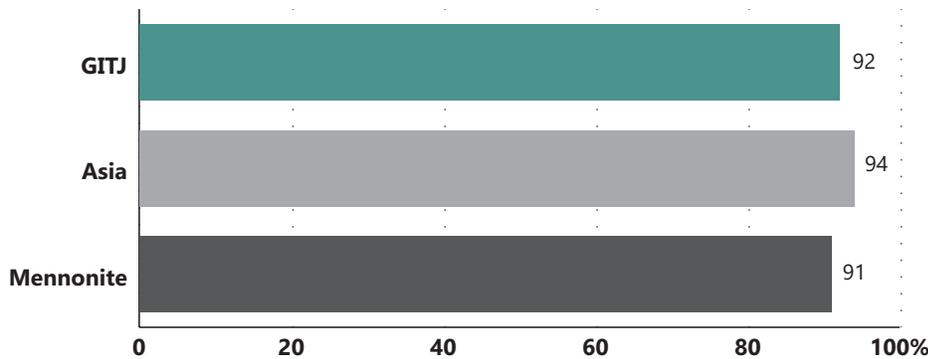
DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

1. One hundred percent of congregations and 41 percent of members in the original sample participated in the GAP.
2. The average size of congregations in the Gereja Injili di Tanah Jawa is 249 members.
3. Fifty-eight percent of respondents were women and 42 percent were men.
4. Ninety-one percent of members live in rural areas and 9 percent in urban areas.
5. The average age of respondents is 44 years. This is a relatively young conference, with 57 percent within childbearing age (18-45 years).
6. Seventy-five percent of respondents are married—the highest percentage among the Asian churches except for the Conference of the Mennonite Brethren Churches in India.
7. Thirty-three percent are homemakers, 45 percent are engaged in agriculture, and 16 percent are professionals.
8. Forty-five percent have graduated from high school, and 9 percent from college—these educational levels are the lowest among any of the Asian churches in the GAP.
9. Eighty-two percent grew up in a home where one or both parents were members of the Gereja Injili di Tanah Jawa—one of the highest percentages in the GAP.
10. Only ten percent of members were baptized in a church other than Gereja Injili di Tanah Jawa.

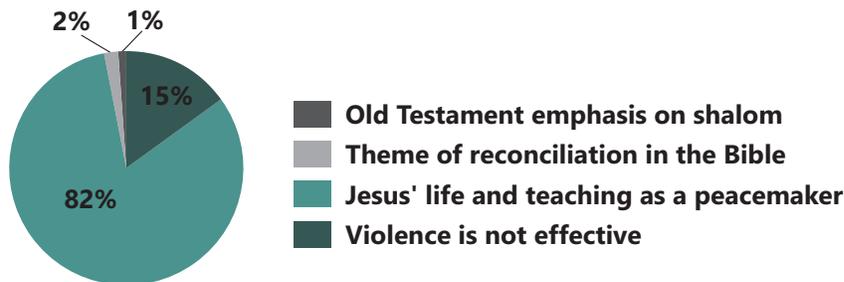


Research Associate Muhamad Zubaedi Ichsanudin

I believe the following statement: “Jesus is the only way to God and those without faith in Jesus will not be saved.”



The most important reason for peacemaking is...

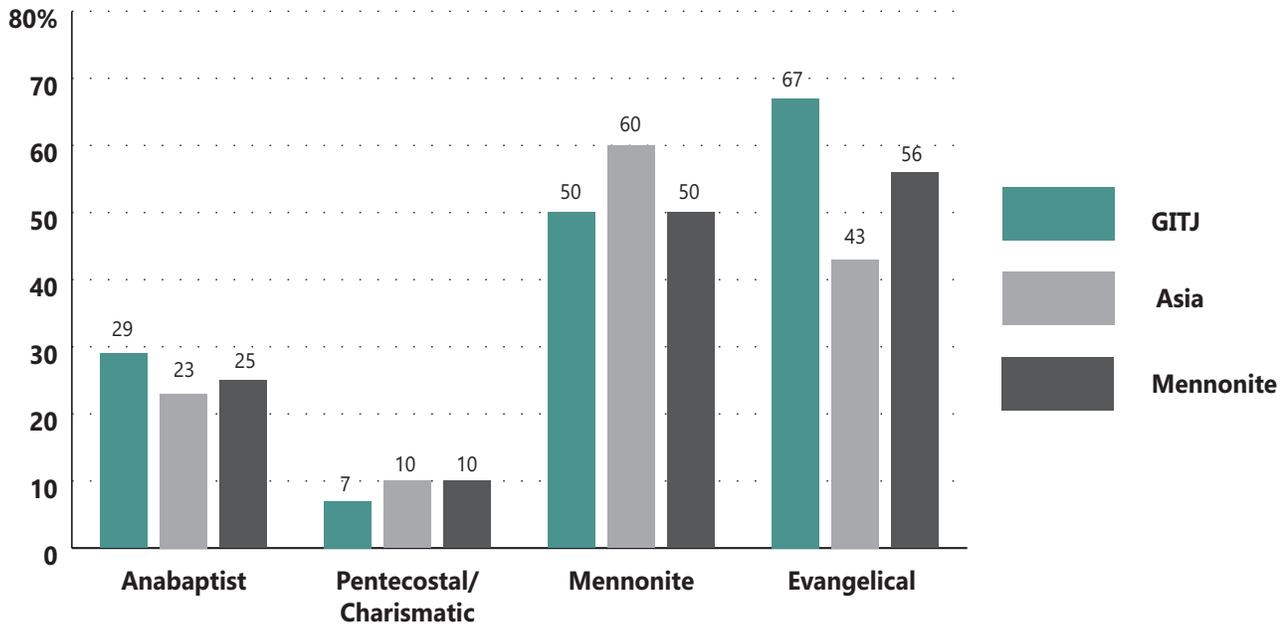


HISTORY

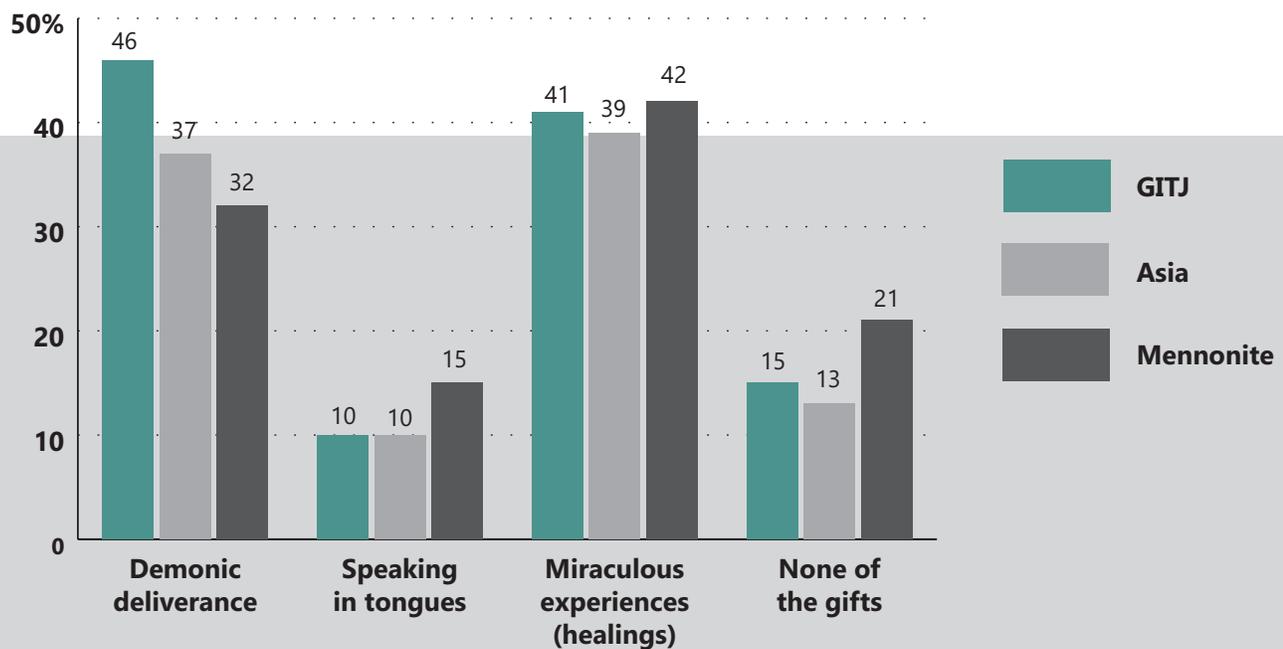
The origins of the Gereja Injili di Tanah Jawa can be found in both indigenous and Dutch mission movements. Pieter Jansz and wife Wilhelmina Frederica Schmilau arrived in Java in 1851, as mission workers from the Netherlands. A few years later indigenous mystic and evangelist Tunggul Wulung converted to Christianity. While he occasionally partnered with the Dutch Mennonite mission, he remained independent of the mission itself and was openly critical of its approach. Tunggul Wulung developed a large following and founded a number of Christian villages, where believers could live removed from threats of persecution and colonial oversight. Following his death in 1885, many of his 2,000 followers joined the Dutch Mennonite mission churches, increasing their numbers significantly.

The church became independent in 1940 and faced many challenges as Indonesia transitioned from a Dutch colony to an independent nation, including rising levels of violence. At the same time strong church leadership in the post-independence years helped to rebuild relationships and strengthen international networks, and the GITJ saw significant growth in the 1960s and 1970s. Yet dependency resulting from nearly eighty years as a mission church undermined many denominational efforts, leading to a church split in 1996. Following major reconciliation efforts, the two synods were reunited in 1998. Today one of the challenges the church faces is decreasing tolerance from their majority Muslim neighbors.

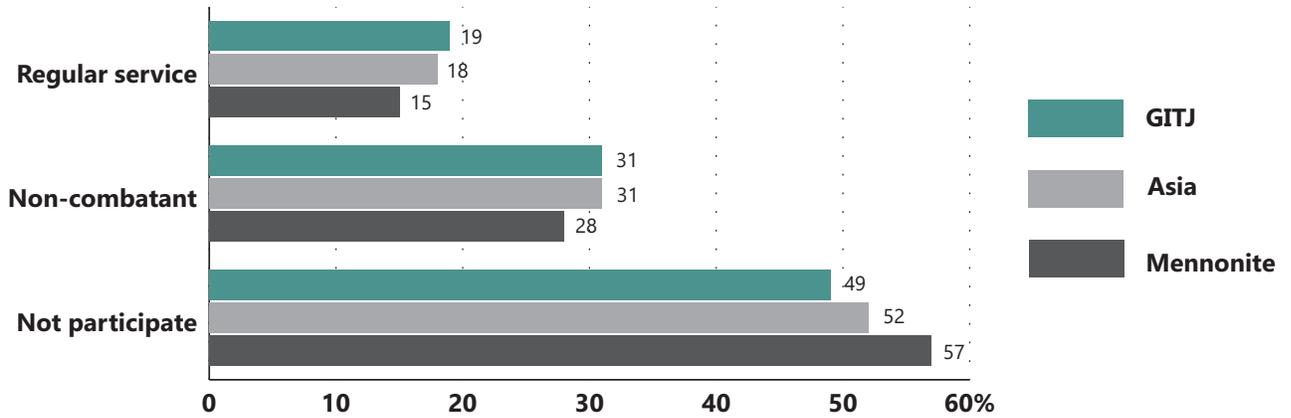
Which of the following words describe your own religious beliefs?



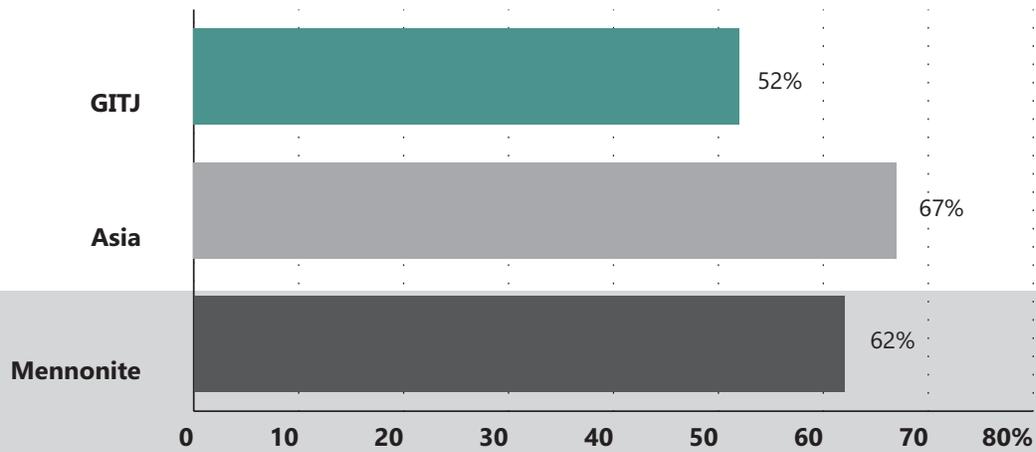
Have you ever personally experienced the following manifestations of the Holy Spirit?



If the government required military service, what would you do?



Christians and people of other religions do NOT worship the same God.



CHALLENGES

The congregations of GITJ are very scattered geographically and separated by large distances. To help deal with these challenges, the Research Associate requested assistance from local pastors and limited the sample size to 28 congregations.

INTEGRATED MENNONITE CHURCHES (PHILIPPINES)

CONGREGATIONS: 21 | MEMBERS: 701

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

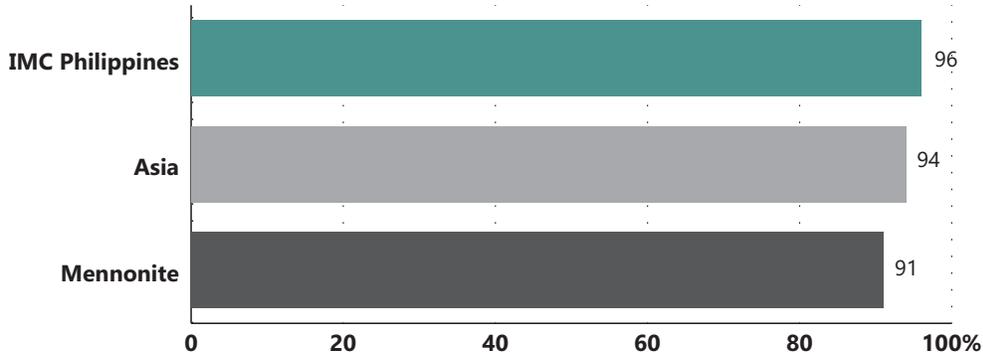
1. Ninety percent of congregations and 47 percent of members in the original sample participated in the GAP.
2. The average size of congregations in the Integrated Mennonite Churches is 34 members, making these congregations the smallest of the churches in Asia.
3. Sixty-eight percent of respondents were women and 32 percent were men.
4. Sixty-seven percent of members live in rural areas and 33 percent in urban areas—making this church the least rural of those in Asia.
5. The average age of respondents is 43 years. This is a relatively young conference, with 59 percent within childbearing age (18-45 years).
6. Fifty-seven percent of respondents are married.
7. Twenty-seven percent are homemakers, 44 percent are engaged in agriculture, and 22 percent are professionals.
8. Sixty-two percent have graduated from high school and 16 percent from college.
9. Fifty-one percent grew up in a home where neither parent was a member of the Integrated Mennonite Churches.
10. Seventeen percent of members were baptized in a church other than the Integrated Mennonite Churches.

“Seeing the results of my congregation affirmed my understanding of the church I grew up in, and made me appreciate more the beautiful values we share together. It also made me see the challenges we are facing, and the bigger work ahead of us as we continue to grow as the body of Christ in the Philippines.”

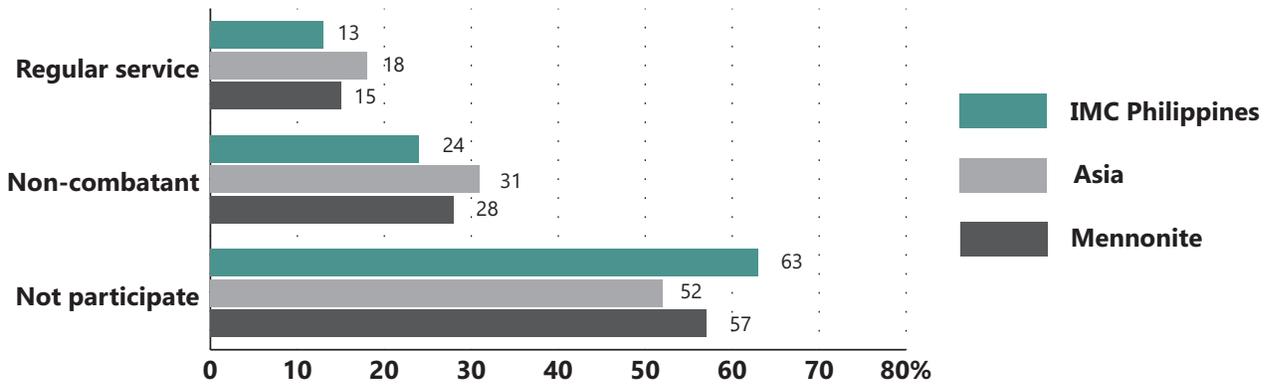
-Research Associate Regina Mondez



I believe the following statement: “Jesus is the only way to God and those without faith in Jesus will not be saved.”



If the government required military service, what would you do?

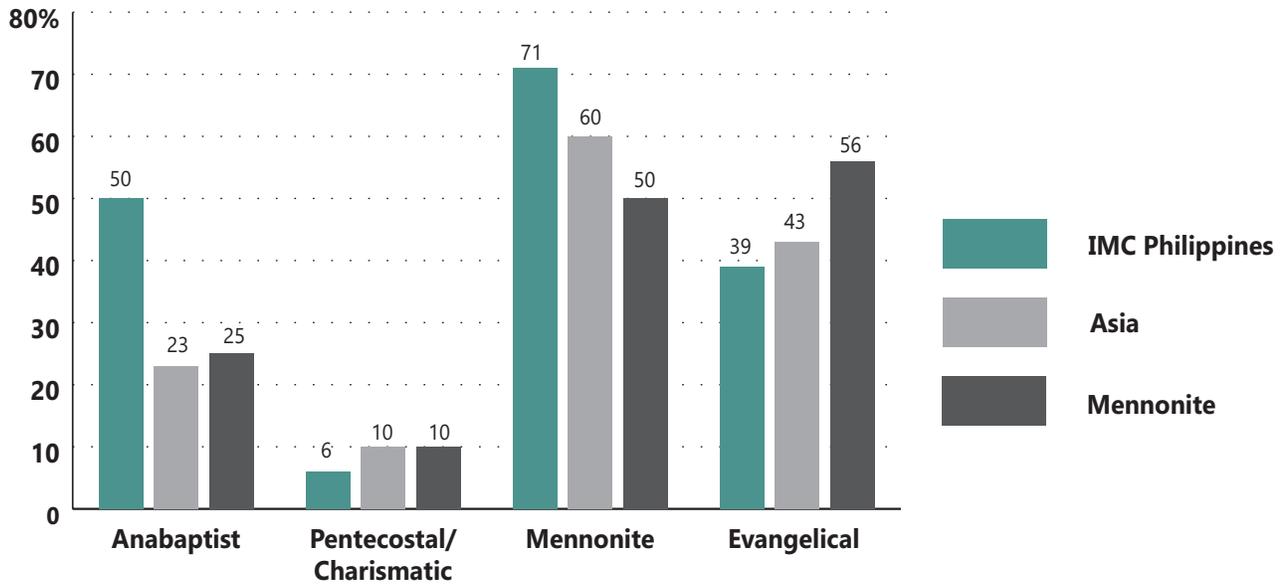


HISTORY

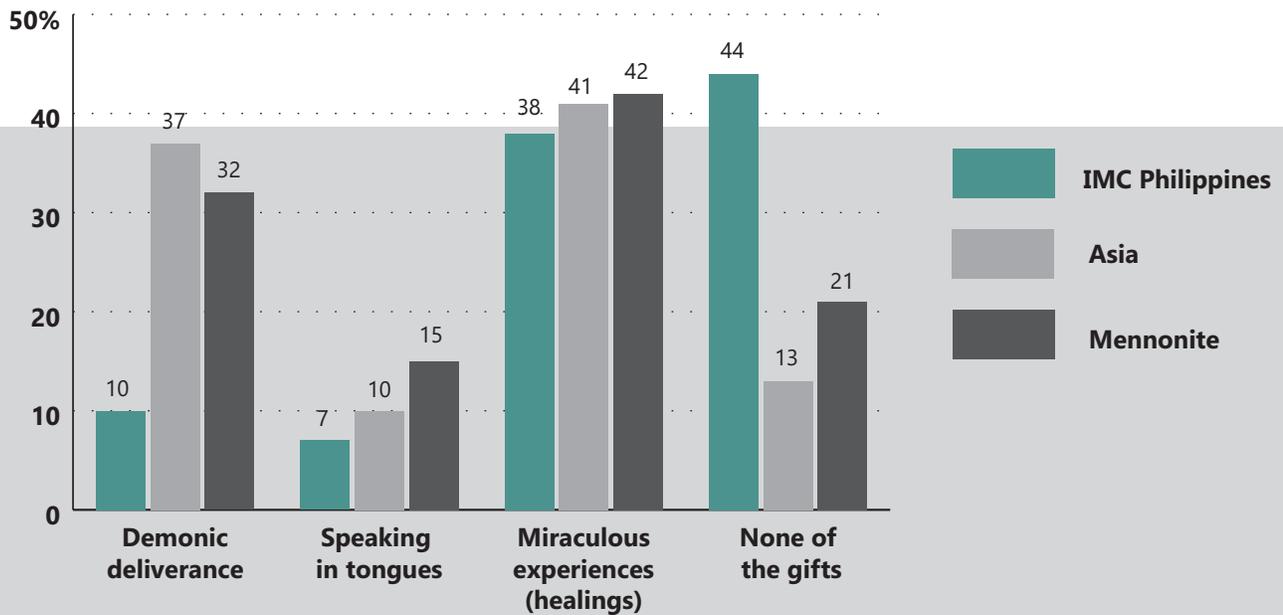
The first Mennonite church in the Philippines grew out of Filipino Baptist missionary Felonito Sacapaño’s interest in Anabaptist-Mennonite teachings. In 1965 Sacapaño founded Missions Now, Inc. (MNI) to serve economically disadvantaged people and plant churches. MNI eventually partnered with various North American Mennonite mission agencies and grew into a Mennonite conference. By 1972, MNI had twenty-two churches and mission points around the country.

In 1987 MNI entered a period of conflict following Sacapaño’s death, leading to a split. The Integrated Mennonite Churches emerged from this split in 1991 with a commitment to Anabaptist teaching. IMC’s membership peaked in the 1990s with 3,000 members, but conflict in the following decade led to significant decline; recent reconciliation efforts have led some former members to rejoin IMC. Today the majority of IMC congregations are located in the northern provinces of Luzon Island.

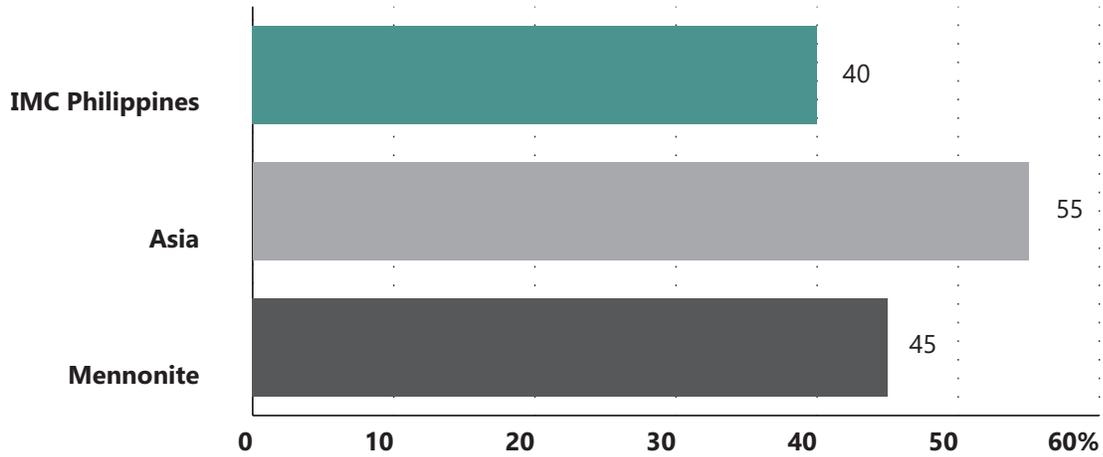
Which of the following words describe your own religious beliefs?



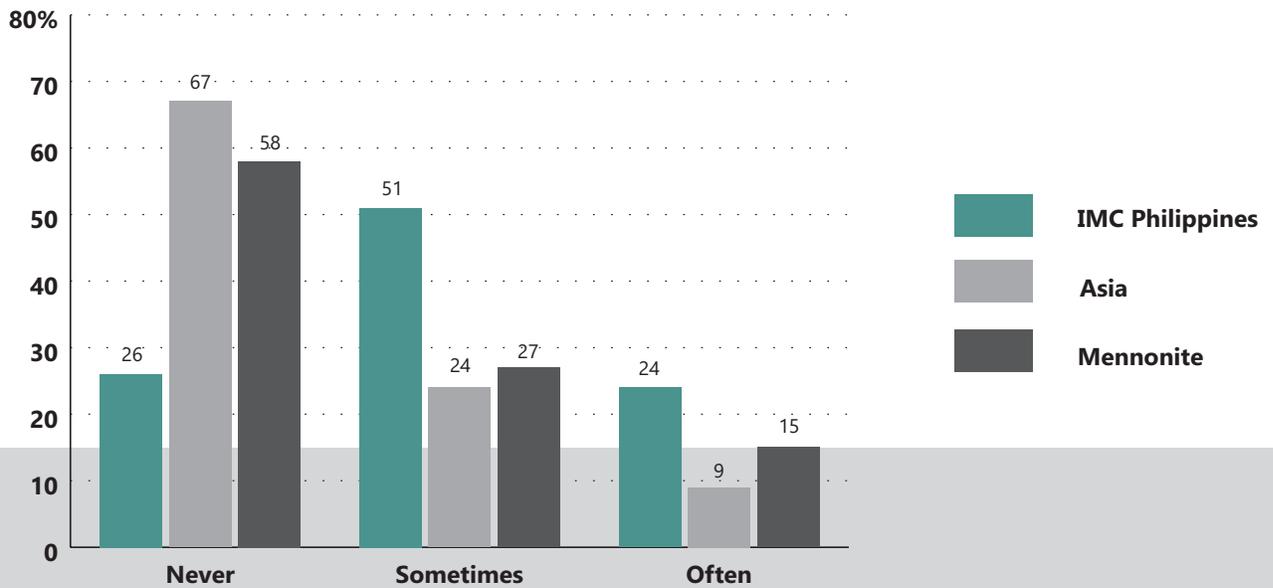
Have you ever personally experienced the following manifestations of the Holy Spirit?



I believe that Christians should participate in politics.



Member experience of persecution:



CHALLENGES

The mountainous terrain of Luzon Island made reaching congregations very difficult. Some congregations were not able to participate in the survey because of inaccessibility during the research period.

Communication was further hampered by lack of cell phone service in the more remote areas.

CONFERENCE OF THE MENNONITE BRETHREN CHURCHES (INDIA)

CONGREGATIONS: 873 | MEMBERS: 103,444

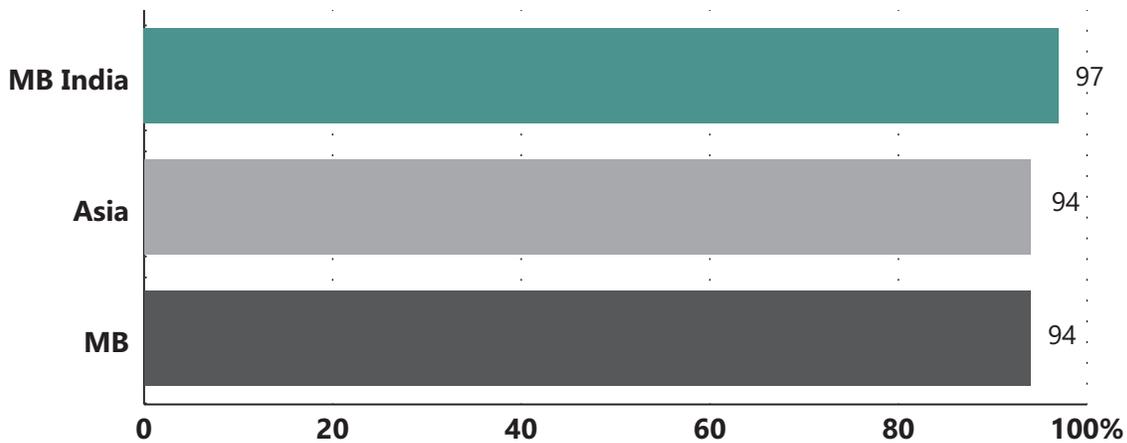
DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

1. We do not have information about response rates since the sample was unknown; nor do we have information about the average congregation size.
2. Sixteen percent of respondents were women and 84 percent were men.
3. Eighty percent of members live in rural areas and 20 percent in urban areas.
4. The average age of respondents is 48 years, making the Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches in India the oldest of GAP churches in Asia. Forty-three percent are within childbearing age (18-45 years)—the smallest percentage of for the churches in Asia.
5. Likely reflecting the older, male sample of this conference, only two percent of respondents are single and 97 percent are married.
6. Forty percent of respondents hold professional occupations, 21 percent are engaged in manual labor, 15 percent are homemakers, and 12 percent are in agricultural professions. Eleven percent are involved in church-related work—the highest percentage of any GAP church in Asia.
7. Eighty-two percent have graduated from high school and 29 percent from college, making this church the most highly educated GAP church in Asia.
8. Ninety-five percent of respondents grew up in a home where both parents were members of the Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches in India—the highest percentage of any church in the GAP.
9. Seventy-seven percent of respondents reported being baptized in a Mennonite Brethren congregation, while 17 percent were baptized in another church.



Research Associate Chintha Joel Satyanandam

I believe the following statement: “Jesus is the only way to God and those without faith in Jesus will not be saved.”



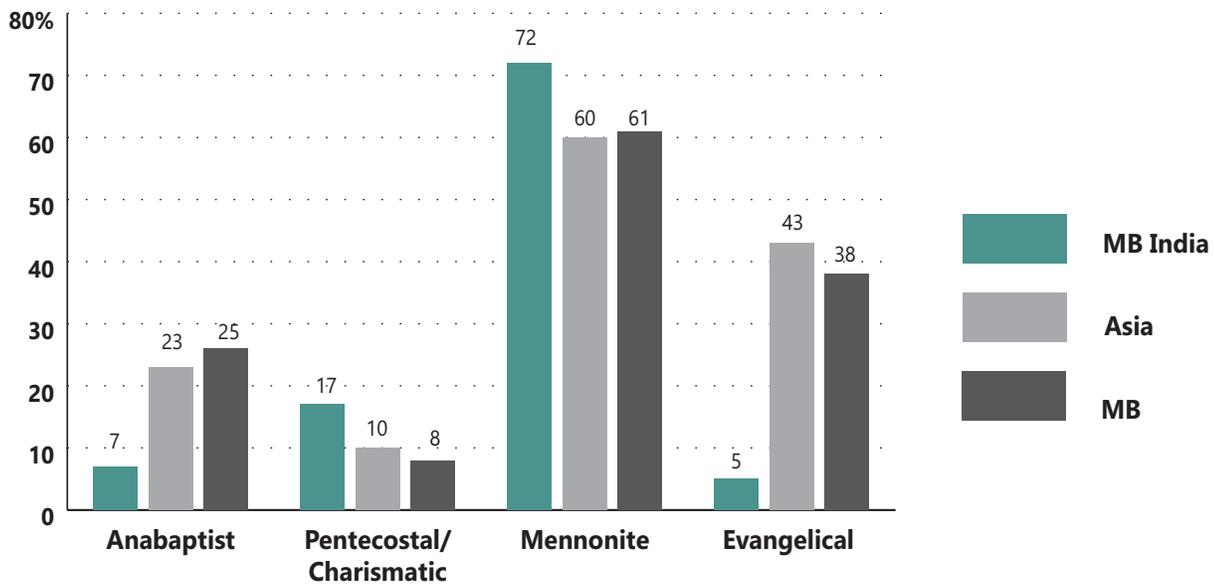
HISTORY

When the first Mennonite Brethren missionaries arrived in Telugu in 1899, they began working among the Dalits or “untouchables.” Foreign missionaries were primarily responsible for operating the extensive mission compounds and their related schools and hospitals, while the majority of evangelism was carried out local Bible women, evangelists, and village pastors. In 1924 Kalwakurthy Home Mission was founded and directed by Indian missionaries, working in 34 villages over the course of the mission’s history. Many of these local preachers were Dalits, just like the communities they visited.

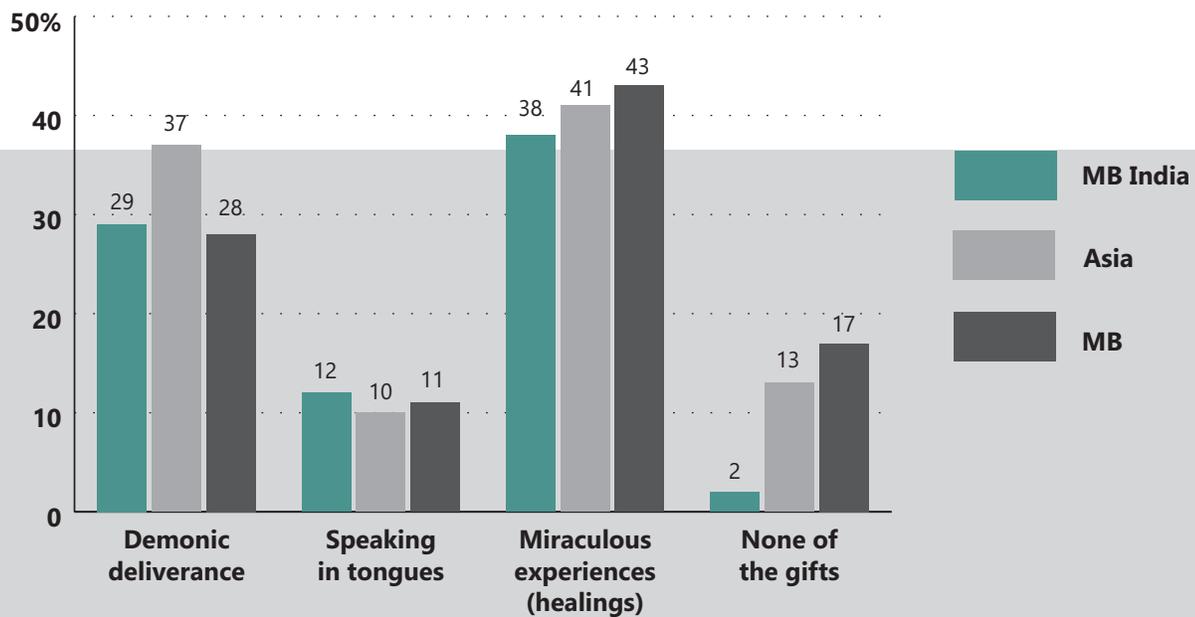
Amidst changing government attitudes towards foreign missionaries in India, the CMBC became independent from the mission in 1958. The denomination maintains evangelism as a priority, but also sustains a development organization, hospital, archives and historical commission, and numerous secondary schools. In addition, the denomination founded its own theological school, the Mennonite Brethren Centenary Bible College in Shamshabad, in 1989. Today the college offers multiple degree programs and sustains the Center for Peace and Conflict Resolution Studies. Students from across India and even neighboring countries are attracted to the center for studies in reconciliation and forgiveness.

Since their role as Bible women in the early years, women have continued as active leaders in the denomination. The Women’s Conference has been a significant force for evangelism within the denomination since 1958. The church constitution was adapted to allow for women’s leadership in 2007, and the first twenty-five women were ordained for ministry.

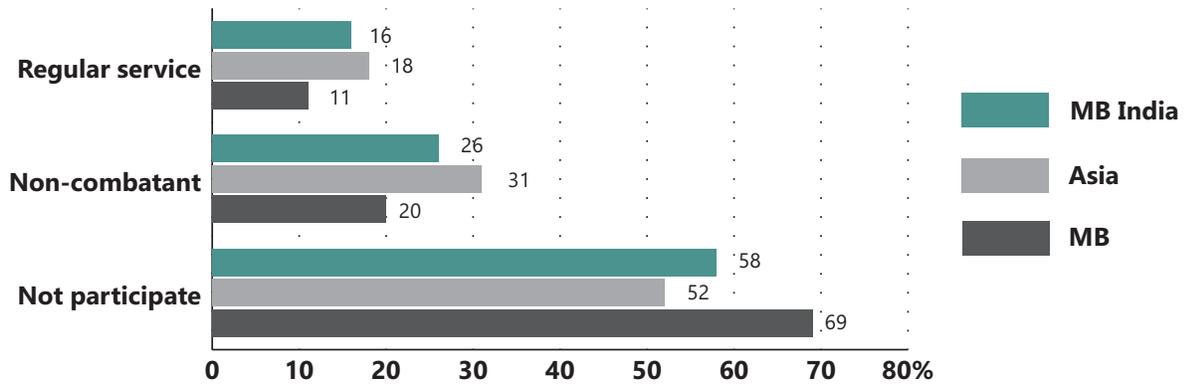
Which of the following words describe your own religious beliefs?



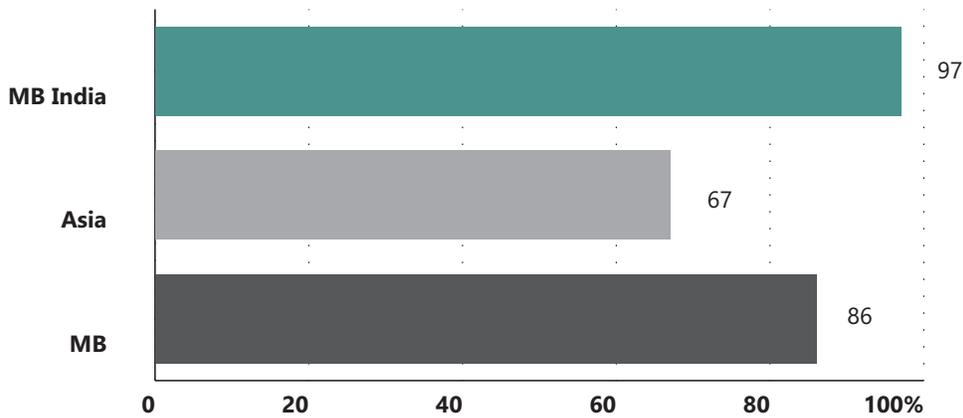
Have you ever personally experienced the following manifestations of the Holy Spirit?



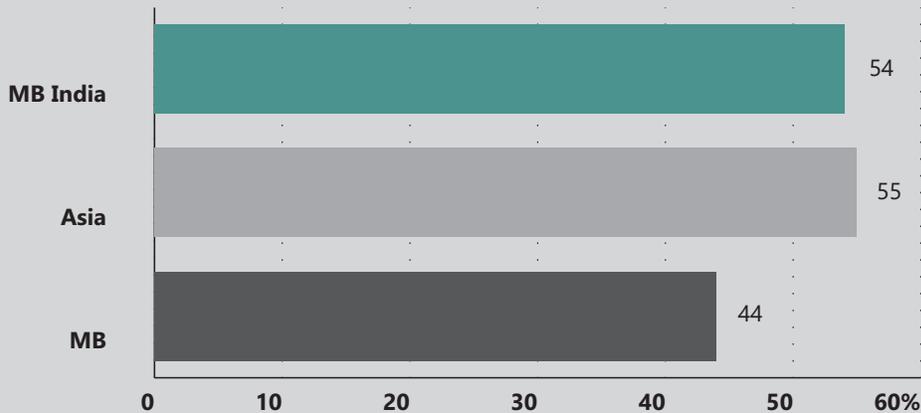
If the government required military service, what would you do?



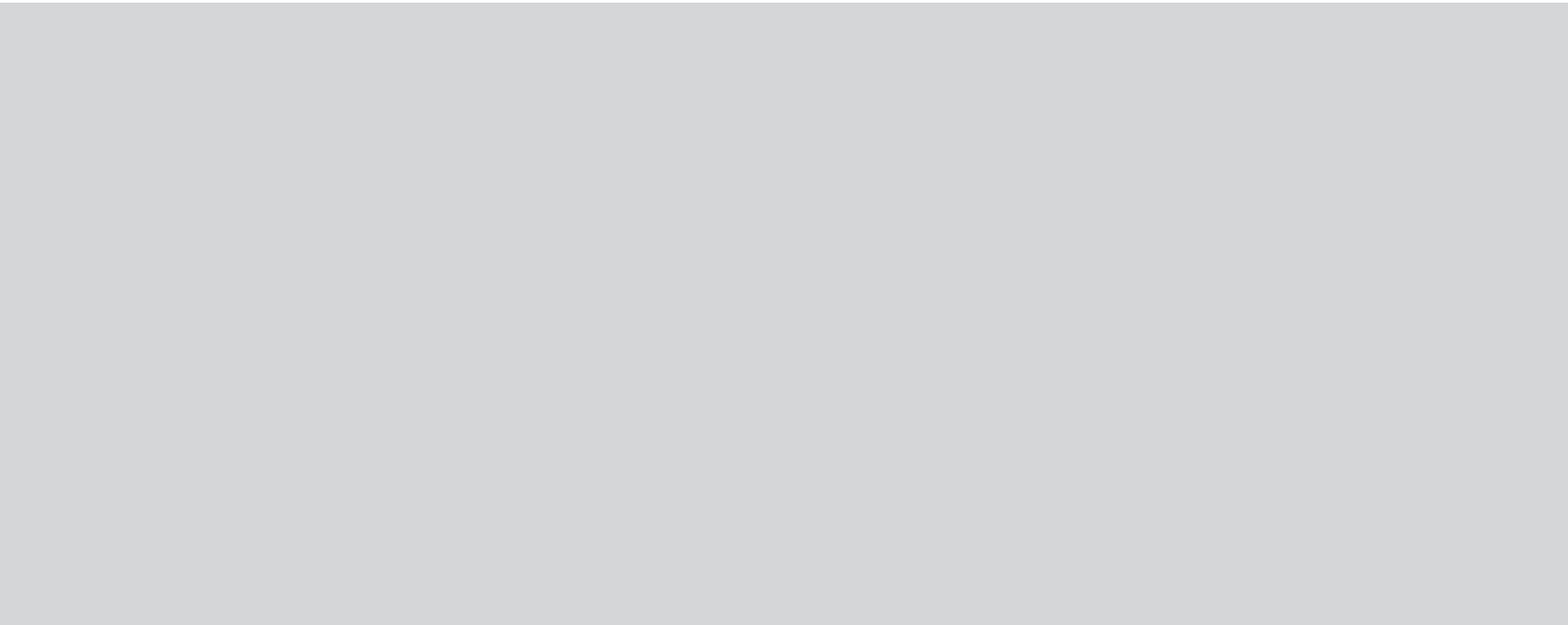
Christians and people of other religions do NOT worship the same God.



I believe that Christians should participate in politics.



EUROPE



ARBEITSGEMEINSCHAFT MENNONITISCHER BRÜDERGEMEINDEN (GERMANY)

CONGREGATIONS: 13 | MEMBERS: 1,600

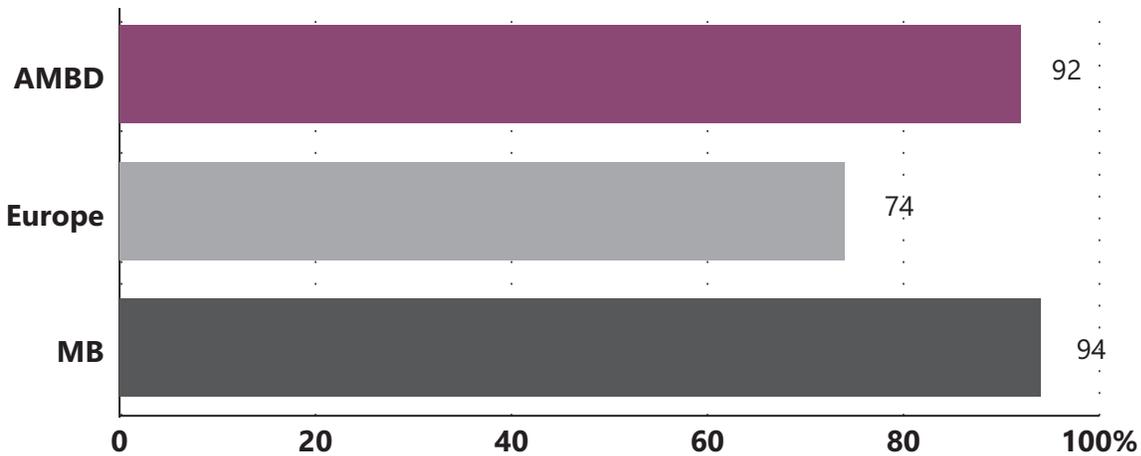
DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

1. Sixty-nine percent of congregations and 23 percent of members in the original sample participated in the GAP.
2. The average size of congregations in the Arbeitsgemeinschaft Mennonitischer Brüdergemeinden is 123 members.
3. Of those who participated in the GAP, fifty-seven percent were women and 43 percent were men.
4. Twenty-nine percent of members live in rural communities and 70 percent in urban areas.
5. The average age of respondents is 45 years and 43 percent of women are within childbearing age (18-45 years).
6. Sixty-seven percent were baptized in a congregation of the Arbeitsgemeinschaft Mennonitischer Brüdergemeinden.
7. Thirty-nine percent are professionals, 31 percent are manual laborers, 16 percent are homemakers, and 12 percent are in agricultural occupations.
8. Seventy-seven percent have completed high school and 30 percent are college graduates.
9. Sixty-one percent grew up in a home where neither parent was a member of the Arbeitsgemeinschaft Mennonitischer Brüdergemeinden.



Alexander Neufeld, AMBD leader

I believe the following statement: “Jesus is the only way to God and those without faith in Jesus will not be saved.”



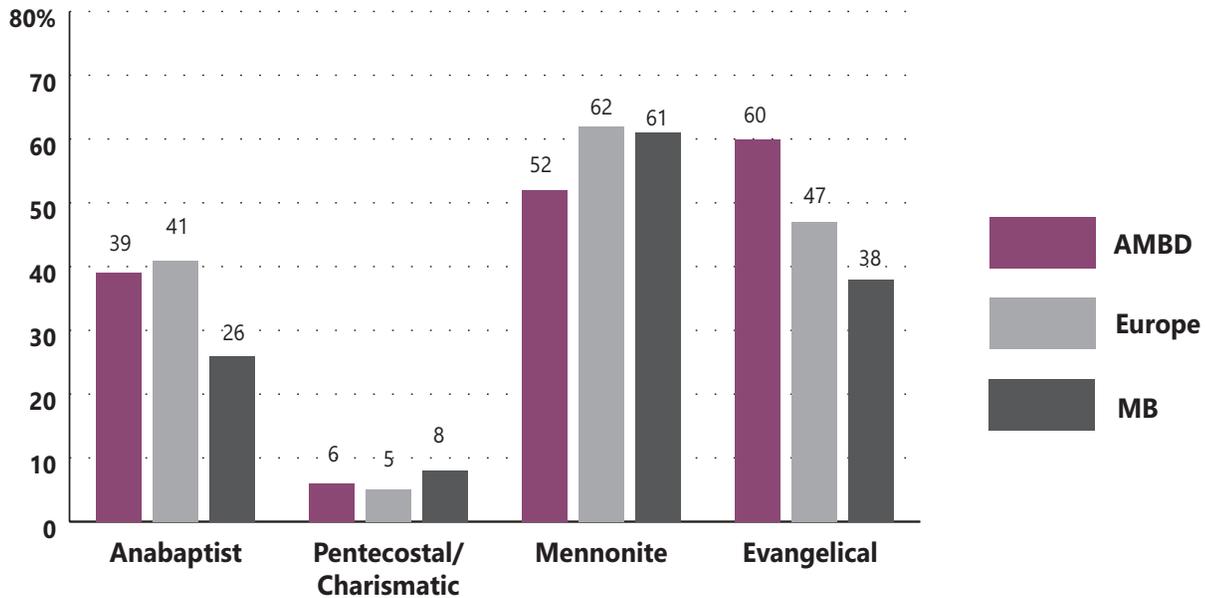
Research Associate Jonas Beyer

HISTORY

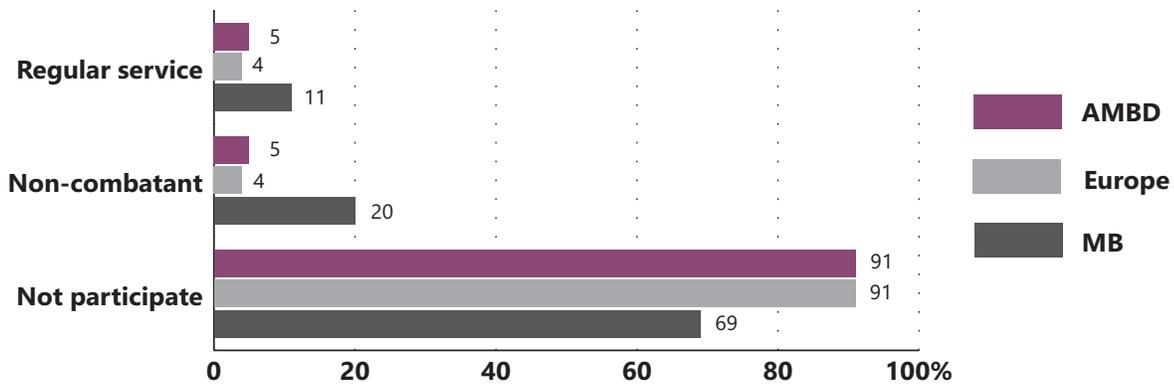
Emerging out of Mennonite Central Committee’s relief efforts in Europe following World War II, the first Mennonite Brethren church was established in Neuwied in 1950. The early members were Russian and Polish Mennonites living in West Germany. Over the next sixteen years, two more congregations were formed—one of German believers and one of Mennonite Brethren returning to Germany from South America. Beginning in the 1960s North American missionaries accompanied the church in evangelism and church-planting. From the mid-1970s through the 1990s, Mennonite Brethren immigration to Germany from the Soviet Union significantly increased the church’s membership.

The Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches in the Federal Republic of Germany (predecessor to AMBD) was a way for these churches to connect and partner with one another. From 1960 to 1980 members and delegates from these German and Austrian congregations met for an annual Pentecost-Faith Conference. After 1982, the conference continued as a biennial gathering. Although they have also sent missionaries abroad in the past, the AMBD currently focuses on church planting in Germany and on strengthening mutual support among the churches of the conference.

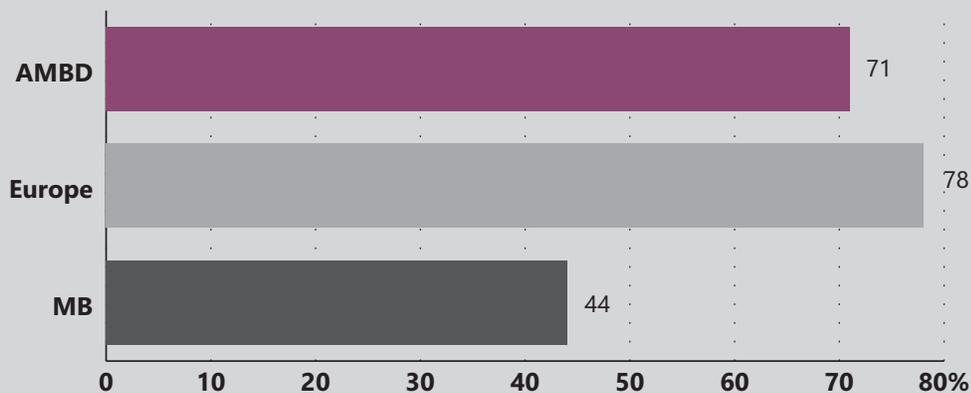
Which of the following words describe your own religious beliefs?



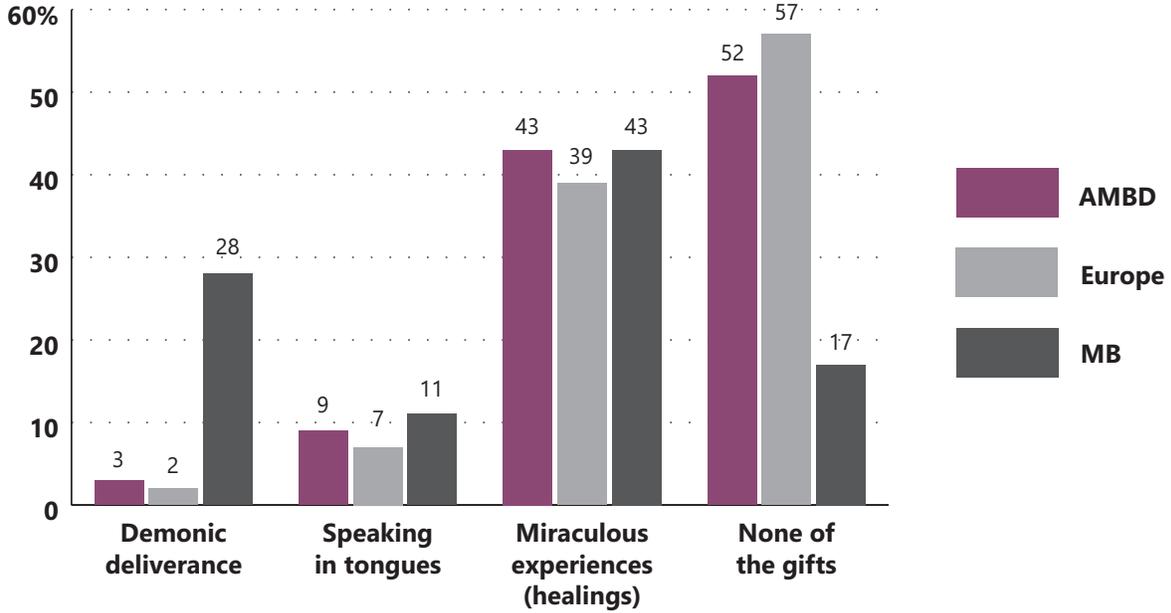
If the government required military service, what would you do?



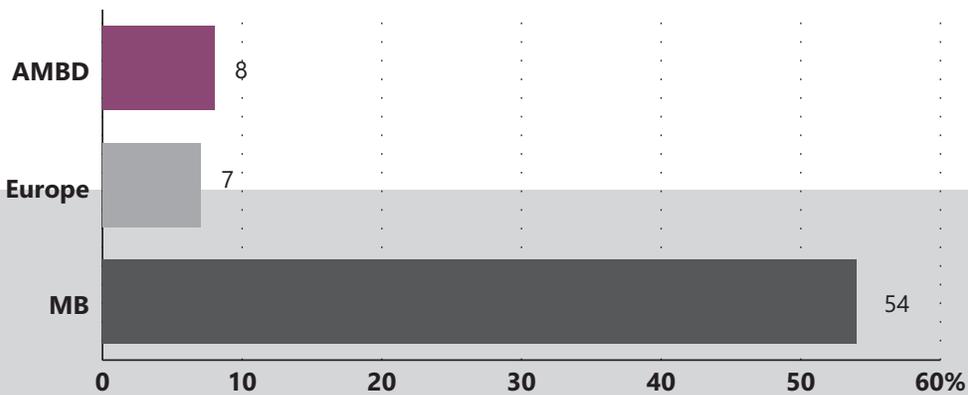
I believe that Christians should participate in politics.



Have you ever personally experienced the following manifestations of the Holy Spirit?



I believe that the Bible promises that followers of Christ will be more blessed and have better health than non-Christians.



CHALLENGES

The AMBD had less participation from local congregations than they had expected, due to lack of interest in the survey. It also took longer to obtain responses than anticipated.

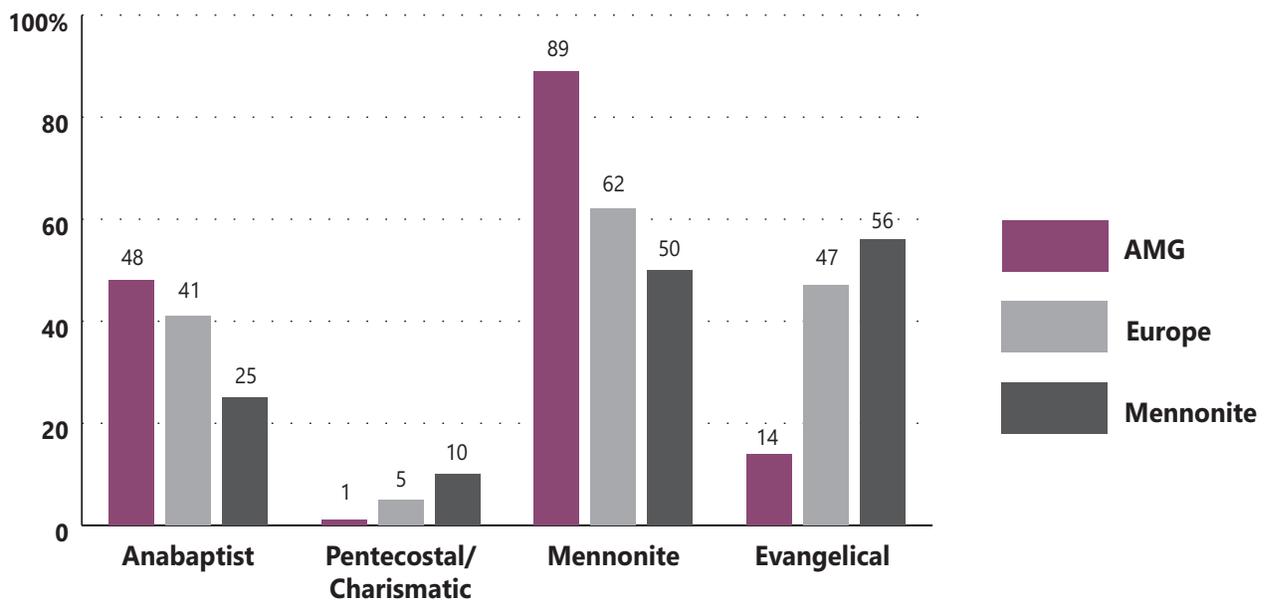
ARBEITSGEMEINSCHAFT MENNONITISCHER GEMEINDEN IN DEUTSCHLAND (GERMANY)

CONGREGATIONS: 52 | MEMBERS: 5,166

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

1. Fifty-six percent of congregations and 5 percent of members in the original sample participated in the GAP.
2. The average size of congregations in the Arbeitsgemeinschaft Mennonitischer Gemeinden in Deutschland is 99 members.
3. Of those who participated in the GAP, fifty-three percent were women and 48 percent were men.
4. Forty-four percent of members reported living in rural communities and 56 percent in urban areas.
5. The average age of respondents is 63 years; fifteen percent of women are within childbearing age (18-45 years).
6. Sixty-eight percent of respondents are married, 9 percent are widowed, 6 percent are separated or divorced, and 4 percent are single.
7. Forty-two percent of respondents are professionals, 13 percent are engaged in agriculture, 21 percent in manual labor, and 20 percent are homemakers.
8. Seventeen percent have not completed a high school education, 30 percent have achieved a high school diploma, and 54 percent are college graduates.
9. Sixty-one percent grew up in a home where one or both parents was a member of a congregation in the Arbeitsgemeinschaft Mennonitischer Gemeinden in Deutschland.
10. Sixty-five percent of respondents were baptized in a Arbeitsgemeinschaft Mennonitischer Gemeinden in Deutschland congregation and 36 percent in another church.

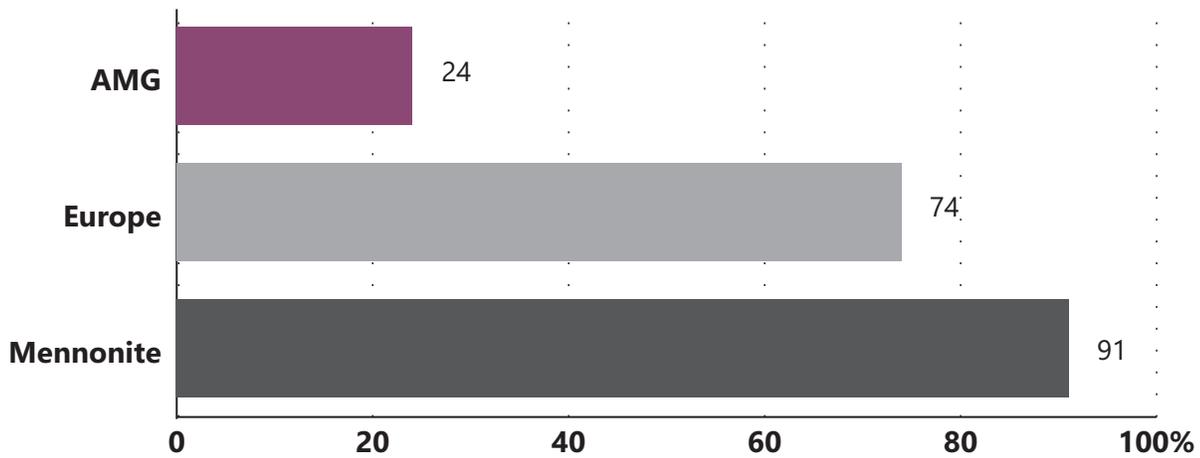
Which of the following words describe your own religious beliefs?



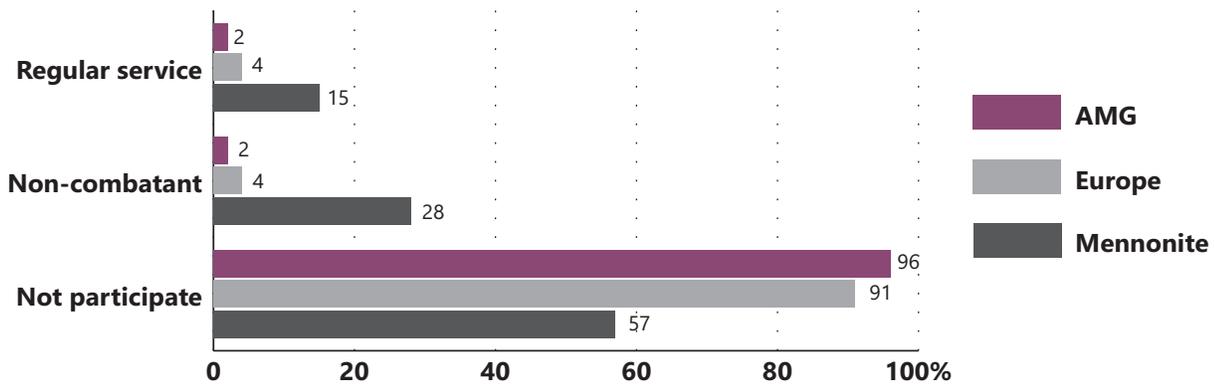
HISTORY

The Arbeitsgemeinschaft Mennonitischer Gemeinden in Deutschland (AMG) was founded in 1990, a successor to the earlier joint task force of the Verband and Vereinigung Mennonites. Three regional associations representing 52 congregations came together as the founding members of the AMG: the Association of German Mennonite Churches (VDM) in the North, the Association of Southwest Mennonite Churches (ASM) in the Southwest, and the Association of German Mennonite Communities (VdM) in the South. The AMG unites the churches in cooperation and common initiatives, while respecting the individual autonomy of the member congregations and associations within AMG's structure. Committed to ecumenical efforts and relationships, the AMG is a member of the World Council of Churches and other regional ecumenical groups. The AMG supports many institutions and projects, including a voluntary service program for youth, the Mennonite Peace Center in Berlin, and a volunteer cooperative providing services and care to the elderly.

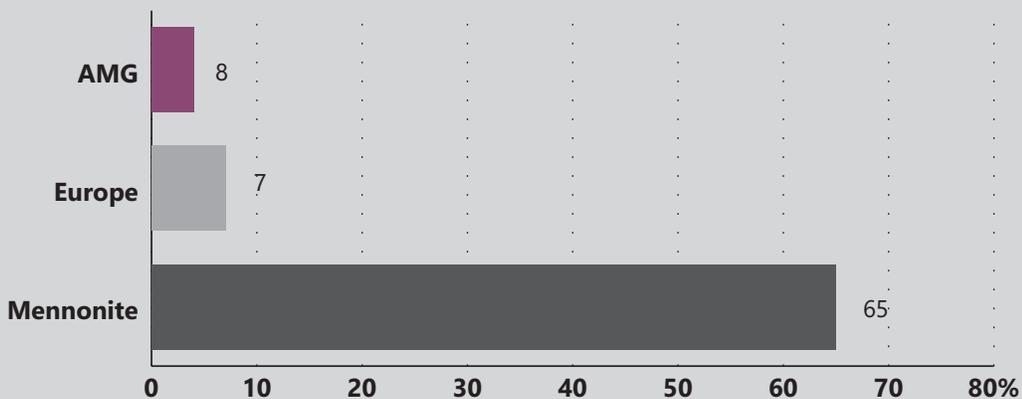
I believe the following statement: "Jesus is the only way to God and those without faith in Jesus will not be saved."



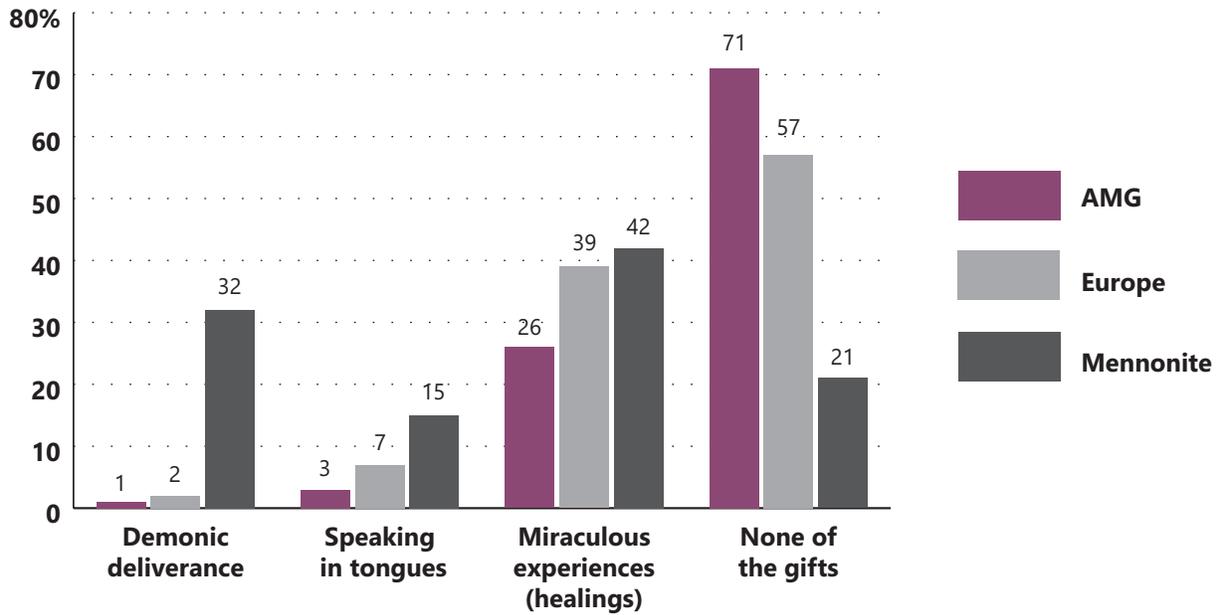
If the government required military service, what would you do?



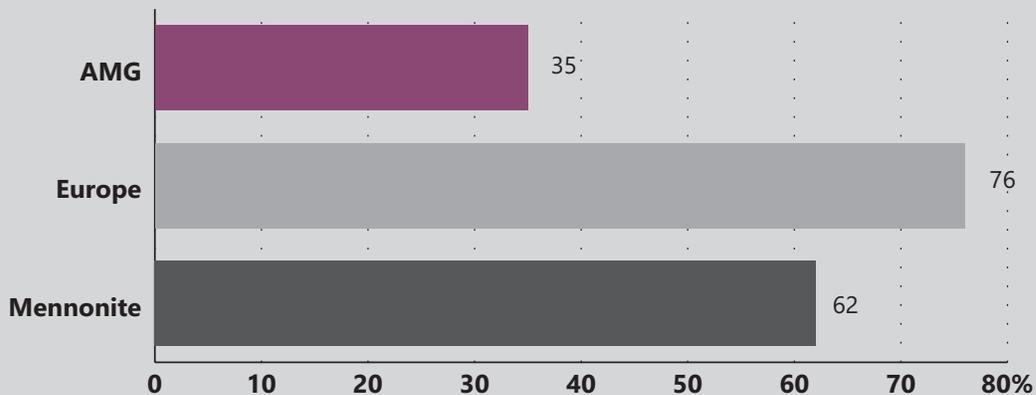
I believe that the Bible promises that followers of Christ will be more blessed and have better health than non-Christians.



Have you ever personally experienced the following manifestations of the Holy Spirit?



Christians and people of other religions do NOT worship the same God.



LATIN AMERICA



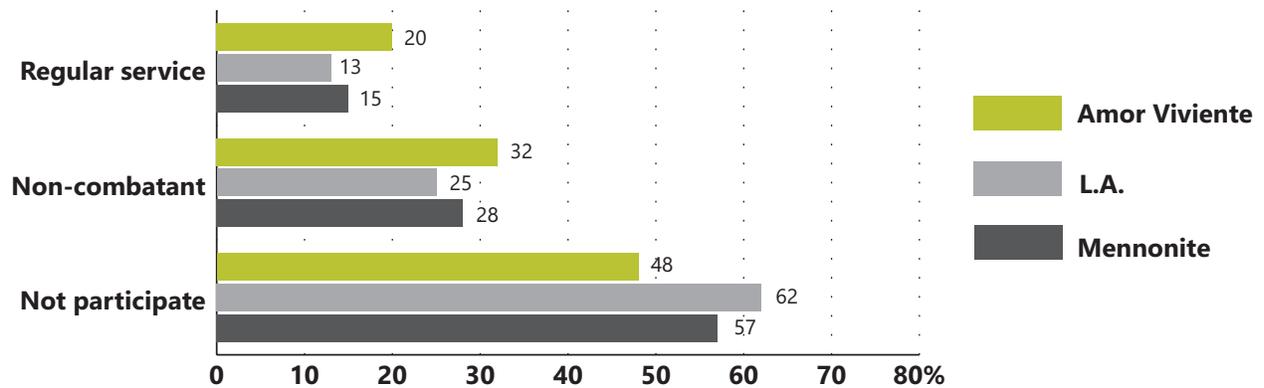
ORGANIZACIÓN CRISTIANA AMOR VIVIENTE (HONDURAS)

CONGREGATIONS: 35 | MEMBERS: 10,337

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

1. One hundred percent of congregations and 29 percent of members in the original sample participated in the GAP.
2. The average size of congregations in the Organización Cristiana Amor Viviente is 295 members.
3. Sixty-eight percent of respondents were women and 32 percent were men.
4. Eighty-eight percent of members live in urban areas—only 12 percent in rural areas.
5. The average age of respondents is 40 years, making Organización Cristiana Amor Viviente the youngest church in Latin America. Sixty-four percent are within childbearing age (18-45 years).
6. Thirty-eight percent of respondents are single—a reflection of the youthfulness of this church. Nine percent are living with someone to whom they are not legally married.
7. Sixty-one percent are engaged in professional occupations, the highest of any church in North or South America. Twenty-three percent are homemakers, seven percent are engaged in manual labor, and only 5 percent in agriculture.
8. Seventy-four percent have graduated from high school, and 25 percent from college—the highest educational levels of any church in Latin America.
9. Seventy-nine percent grew up in a home with parents who were not members of Organización Cristiana Amor Viviente, thus reflecting a church that is largely first generation members.
10. Thirty-six percent of respondents reported being baptized in a church other than the Organización Cristiana Amor Viviente.

If the government required military service, what would you do?



“In Honduras we have not had a civil war, and people don’t have a bad opinion of military. We associate the military with projects of peace ... so we have people from the military in our churches, which opens up the possibility for participating.”

-Research Associate Reynaldo Vallecillo

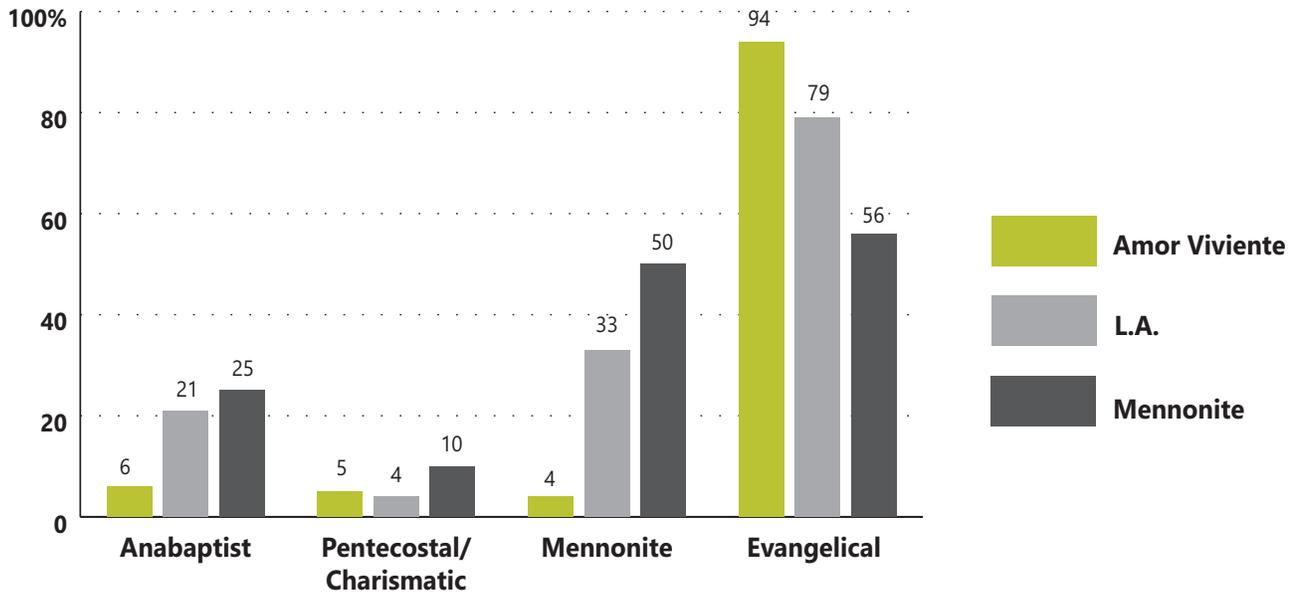


HISTORY

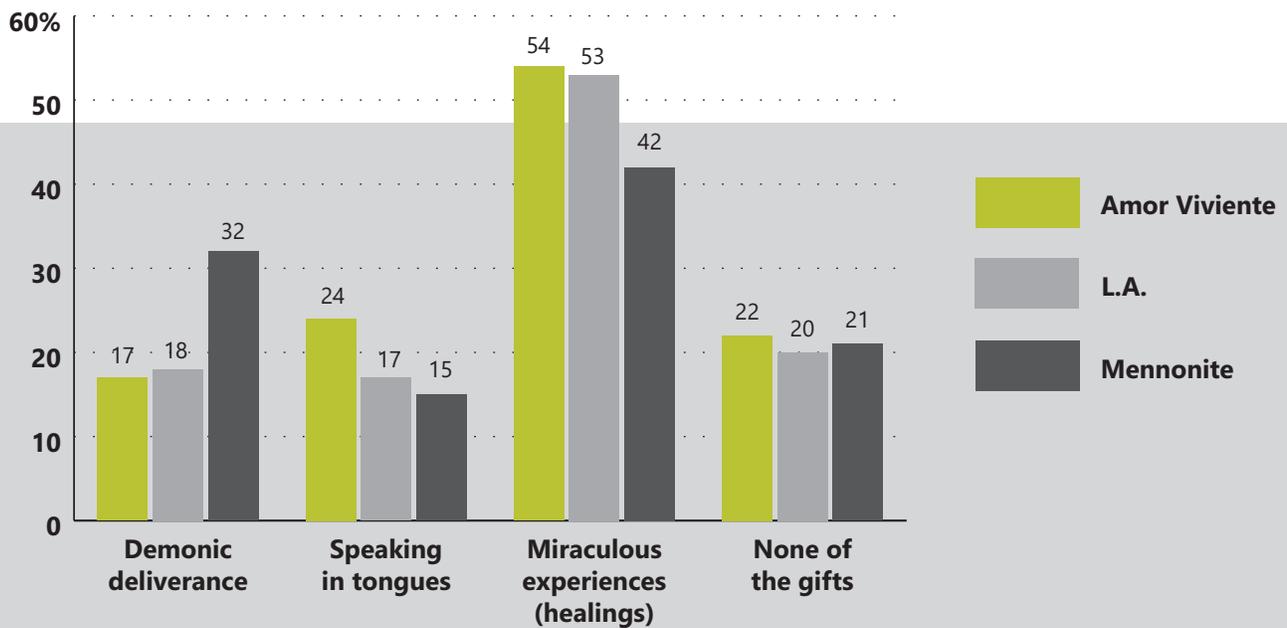
Amor Viviente began in 1974 as a coffee house outreach in Tegucigalpa to at-risk youth in the home of workers with Eastern Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities. Youth who attended the gatherings reported healings, liberation, and restored relationships. Family members and others soon joined the group.

Church planting has continued to be central for Amor Viviente, with smaller discipleship groups at the heart of the movement’s organization. In 1985 Amor Viviente sent a couple to New Orleans (United States) to help start a church among the Honduran community there, and they have since planted churches in Spain, Peru, Costa Rica, and Italy. Leadership conflicts led to a church split in 1998 and membership decline, but Amor Viviente has since surpassed the membership of that period.

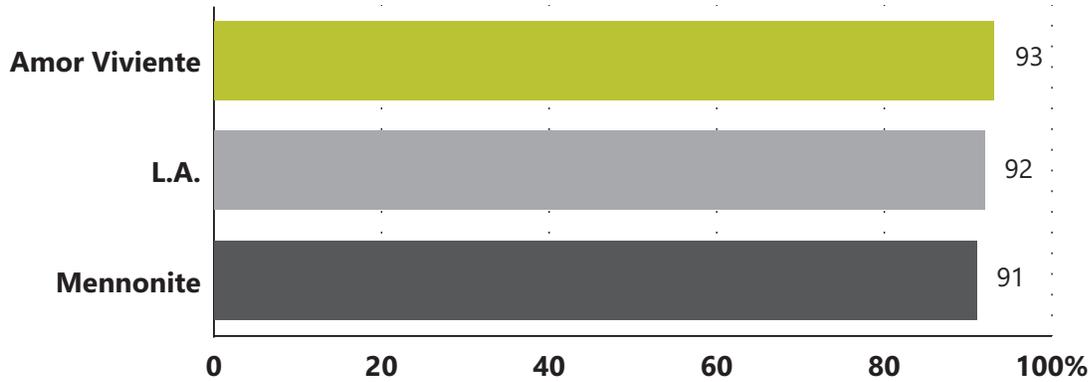
Which of the following words describe your own religious beliefs?



Have you ever personally experienced the following manifestations of the Holy Spirit?



I believe the following statement: “Jesus is the only way to God and those without faith in Jesus will not be saved.”

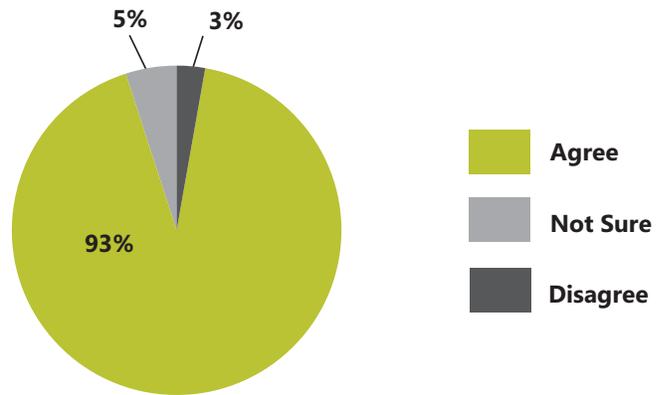


“Almost all of our local churches have members who are inspired to write their own songs.”

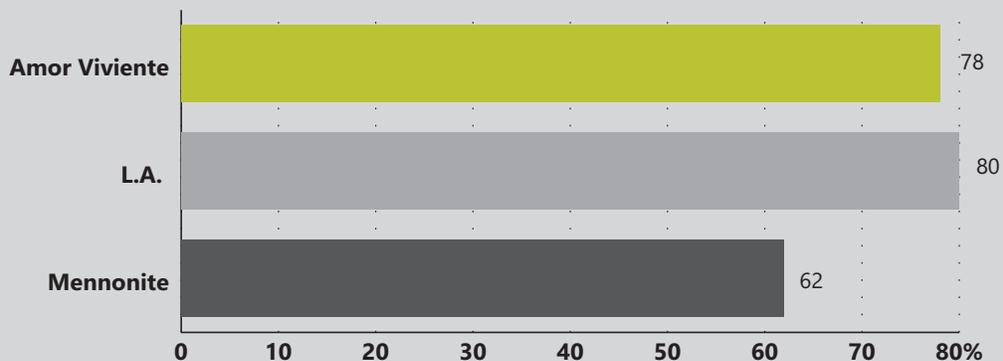
Reynaldo Vallecillo

*Forty-five percent of Amor Viviente respondents reported singing songs in worship that were composed by members of their congregation.

My congregation has a clear sense of vision and mission.



Christians and people of other religions do NOT worship the same God.

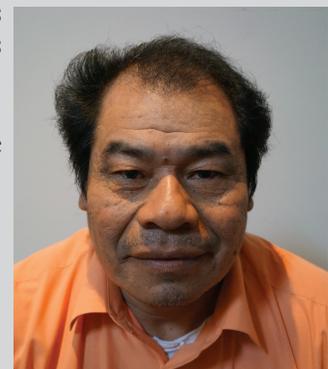


CONVENCIÓN EVANGÉLICA HERMANOS MENONITAS ENLHET (PARAGUAY)

CONGREGATIONS: 7 | MEMBERS: 2,549

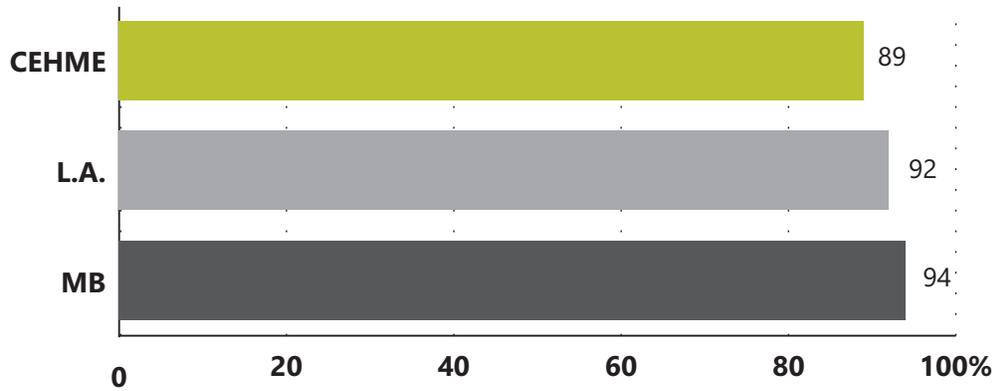
DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

1. One hundred percent of congregations and 36 percent of members in the original sample participated in the GAP.
2. The average size of congregations in the Convención Evangélica Hermanos Menonitas Enlhet is 364 members.
3. Of those who participated in the GAP, 50 percent were women and 50 percent were men.
4. Eighty-three percent of members reported living in rural communities and 17 percent in urban areas.
5. The average age of respondents is 43 years and 63 percent of women are within childbearing age (18-45 years).
6. Sixty-six percent are married, 19 percent are single, one percent are separated or divorced (the lowest percentage in Latin America but a percentage shared with their sister GAP church from Paraguay), and 6 percent are living with someone to whom they are not legally married.
7. Forty-nine percent are engaged in agriculture, 26 percent in manual labor, and 17 percent are homemakers.
8. Eighty-five percent have not completed a high school education and 7 percent have a college degree—this is the lowest level of education among GAP churches in Latin America.
9. Eighty-nine percent grew up in a home where one or both parents was a member of a congregation in the Convención Evangélica Hermanos Menonitas Enlhet.
10. Ninety-six percent of respondents were baptized in a congregation of the Convención Evangélica Hermanos Menonitas Enlhet.

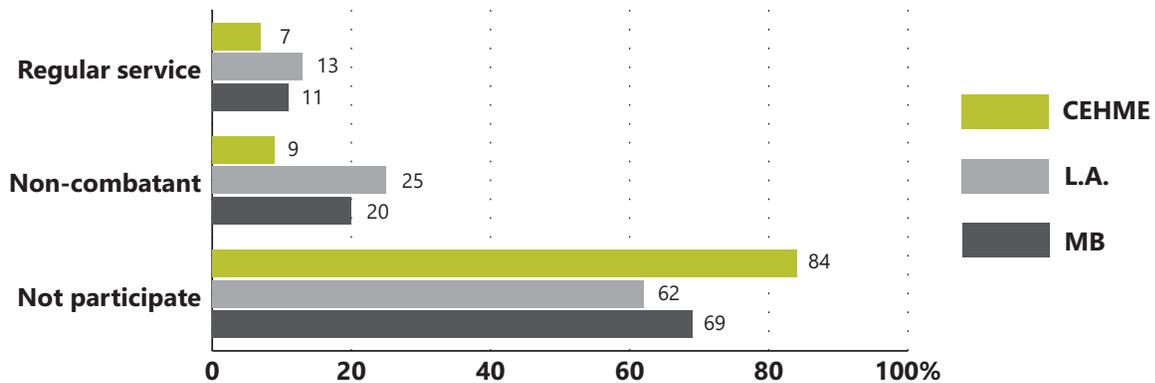


Research Associate Alfonso Cabaña

I believe the following statement: “Jesus is the only way to God and those without faith in Jesus will not be saved.”



If the government required military service, what would you do?

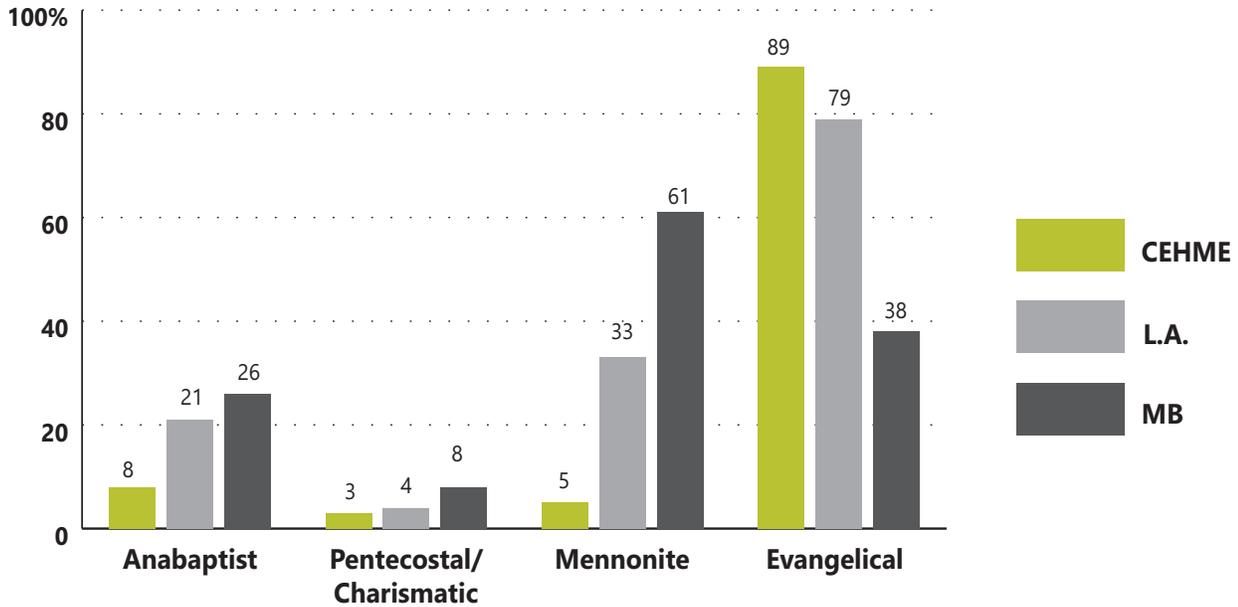


HISTORY

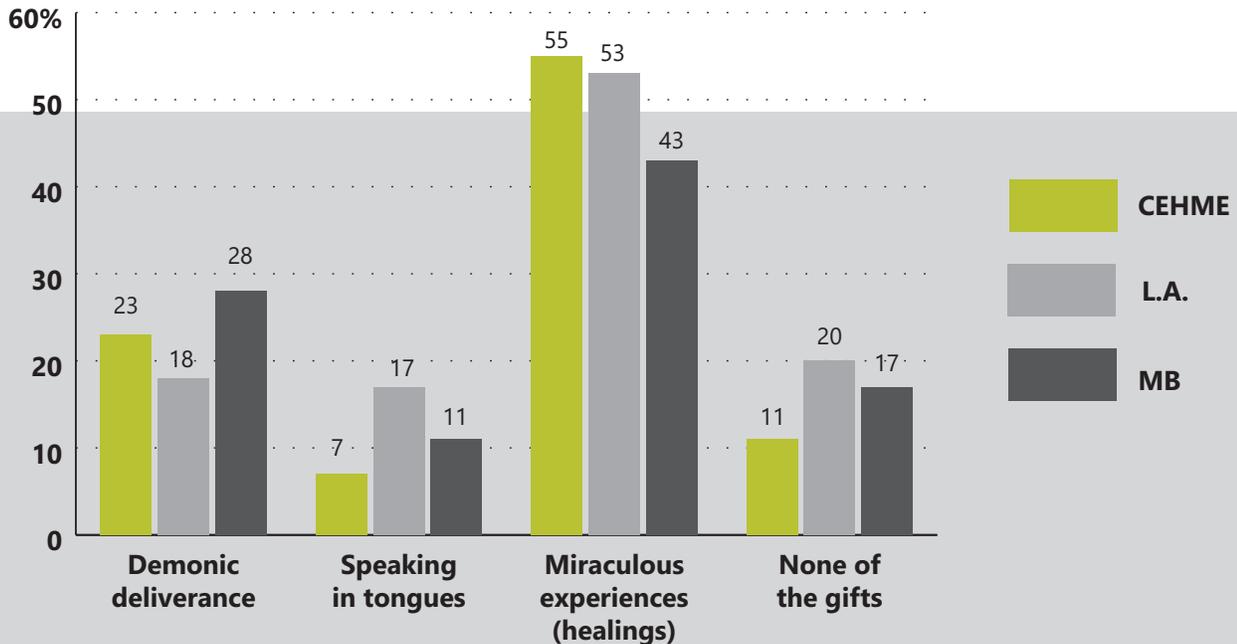
The first contact between indigenous Enlhet people and white Mennonite Brethren colonists took place in 1932, and colonists began mission work among the Enlhet in 1935. The Enlhet recognize the first baptisms of seven Enlhet men in 1946 as a turning point in their culture. In 1948 two of these men traveled in ox carts from Yalve Sanga to Km 145 to preach the gospel, a journey of many days.

The New Testament was first translated into Enlhet Norte in 1970 by missionary Dietrich Lepp and Enlhet informant Nito Acevedo. The New Testament—*Tasic Amyaa Enlhet Appayvam*—was widely used in worship services, private homes, courses for pastors, conferences, in the Bible school, the agricultural school, and in the home economics school. That same year the Convención Evangélica Hermanos Menonitas Enlhet was organized. Today all of the churches have ordained pastors, evangelists, and deacons, as well as established singing groups and choirs.

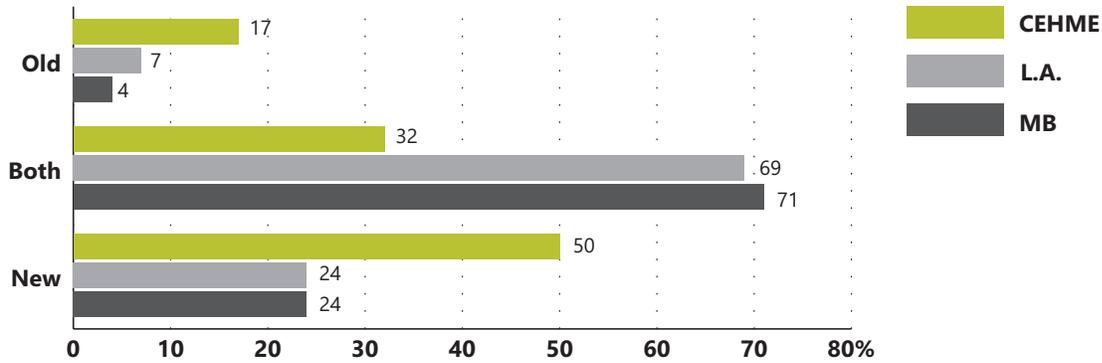
Which of the following words describe your own religious beliefs?



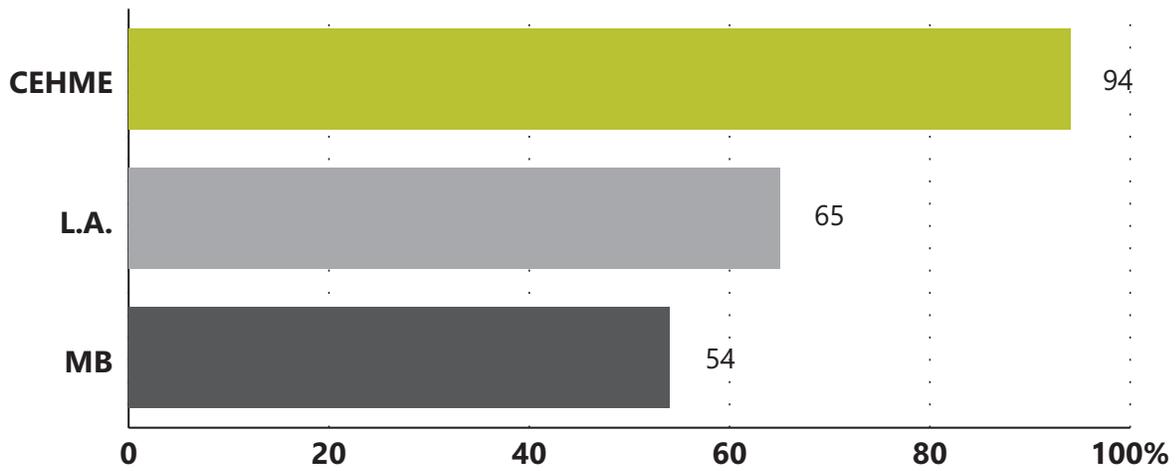
Have you ever personally experienced the following manifestations of the Holy Spirit?



Which testament is most relevant?



I believe that the Bible promises that followers of Christ will be more blessed and have better health than non-Christians.



Research Associate Alfonso Cabaña explains the Global Anabaptist Profile to a CEHME congregation.



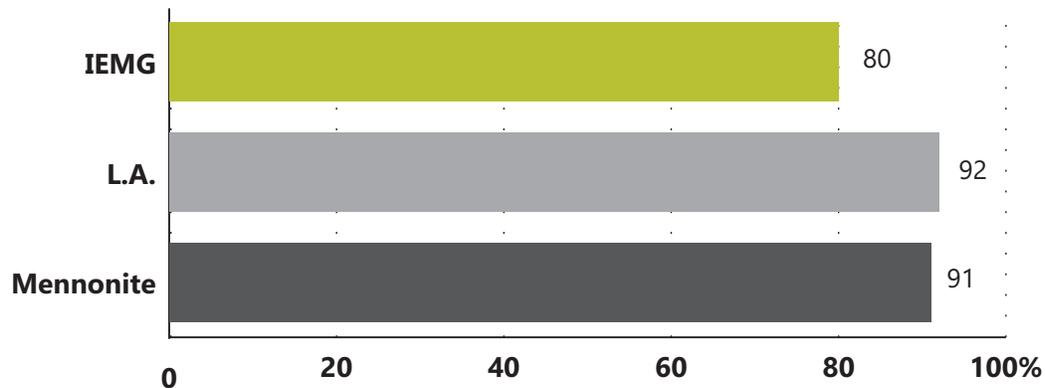
IGLESIA EVANGÉLICA MENONITA DE GUATEMALA

CONGREGATIONS: 8 | MEMBERS: 594

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

1. Seventy-five percent of congregations and 31 percent of members in the original sample participated in the GAP.
2. The average size of congregations in the Iglesia Evangélica Menonita de Guatemala is 74 members.
3. Sixty-seven percent of respondents were women and 33 percent were men.
4. Twenty-one percent of members reported living in rural communities and 80 percent in urban areas.
5. The average age of respondents is 44 years and 54 percent of women are within childbearing age (18-45 years).
6. Fifty-two percent are married, 22 percent are single, 8 percent are separated or divorced (the highest percentage in Latin America), and 9 percent are living with someone to whom they are not legally married.
7. Thirty-seven percent are homemakers, 9 percent are engaged in agriculture, 6 percent in manual labor, and 43 percent are professionals.
8. Forty-eight percent graduated from high school and 11 percent from college.
9. One-third grew up in a home where one or both parents was a member of a congregation in the Iglesia Evangélica Menonita de Guatemala.
10. Fifty-seven percent of respondents were baptized in a congregation of the Iglesia Evangélica Menonita de Guatemala, and 39 percent reported being baptized in a different church.

I believe the following statement: “Jesus is the only way to God and those without faith in Jesus will not be saved.”



“[The GAP] has invited us to come into dialogue, not only among our local churches, but also with other Anabaptist groups, wherein we discover new paths for our life in faith.”

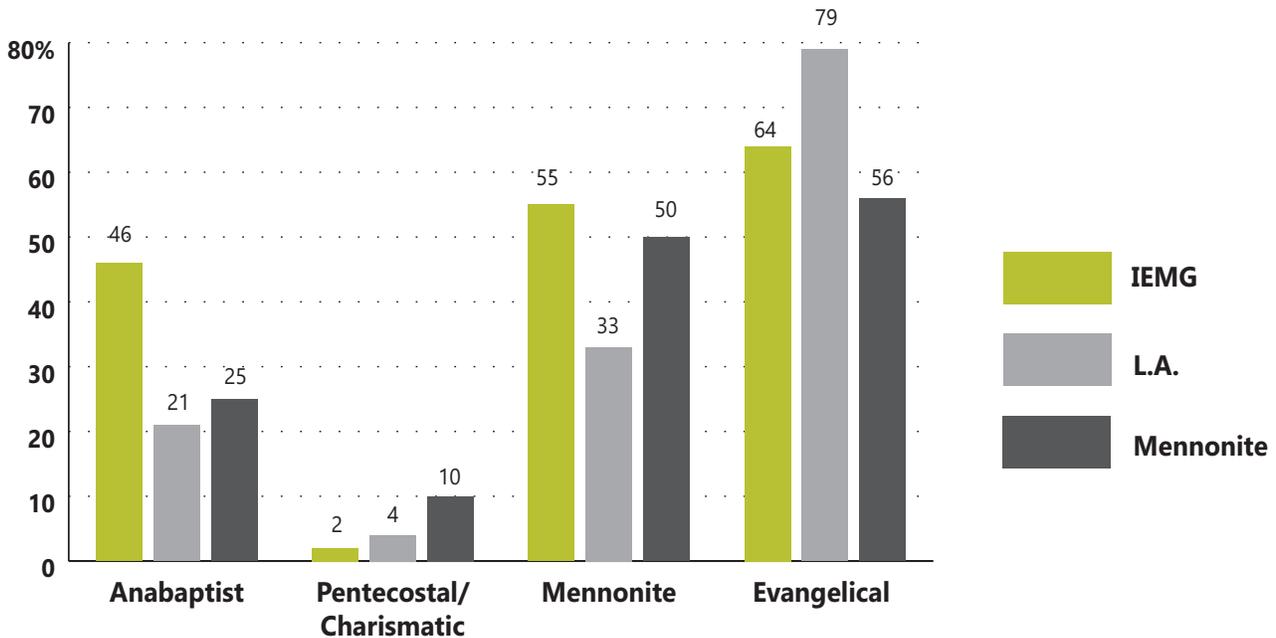
Research Associate César Montenegro



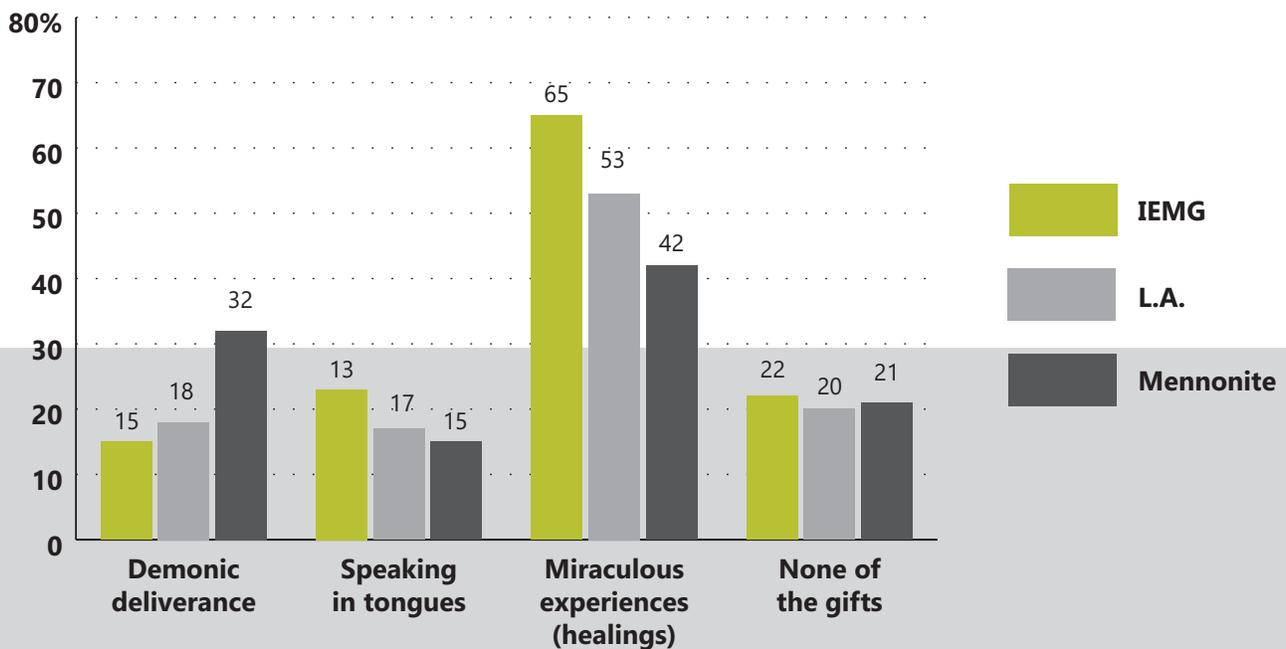
HISTORY

Mennonite presence in Guatemala began in the 1960s with North American missionary work among the indigenous Kekchi population, but expanded in the 1970s when missionaries began an outreach in the capital city among the Spanish-speaking population. The Spanish-speaking conference is today known as the Iglesia Evangélica Menonita de Guatemala. Mennonite relief work following the 1976 earthquake supported the growth and consolidation of the Mennonite church in Guatemala City. Casa Horeb was founded a few years later in 1979 and has been an important source of leadership for the denomination, as well as a center for Mennonite activities in the city. Despite its impact, the conference has never been large numerically. As of 2015 there were eight congregations in the city—two in the city center and six further out in the neighborhoods that ring the city.

Which of the following words describe your own religious beliefs?



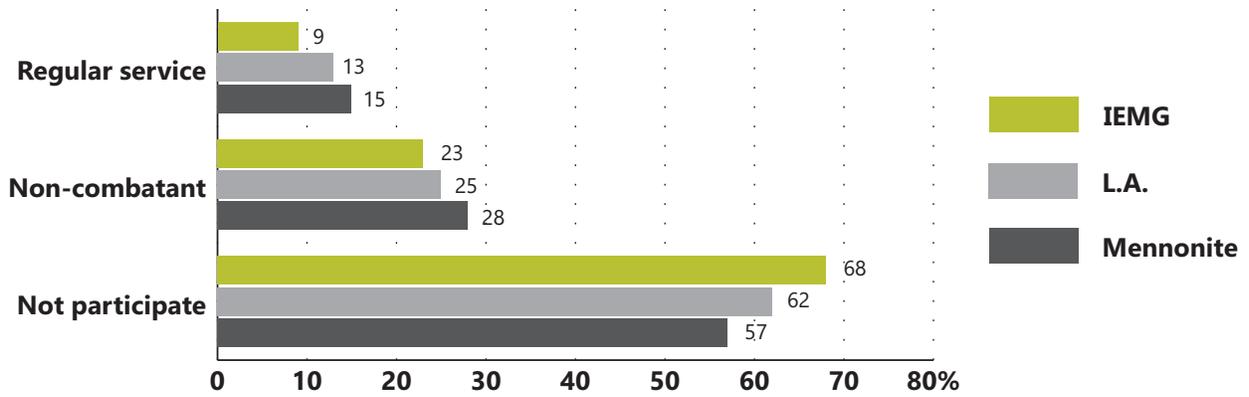
Have you ever personally experienced the following manifestations of the Holy Spirit?



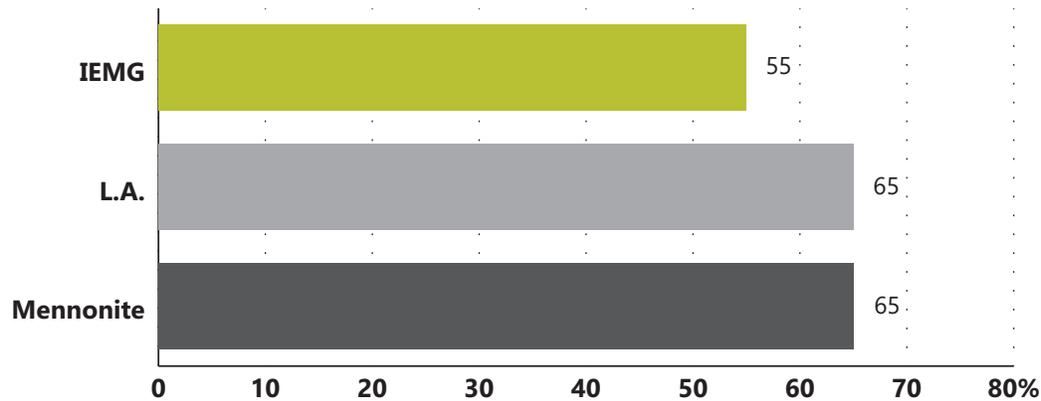
CHALLENGES

For the most part, the survey was implemented in local congregations following the Sunday morning worship service. Unfortunately not all church members were able to stay after and complete the survey along with the others.

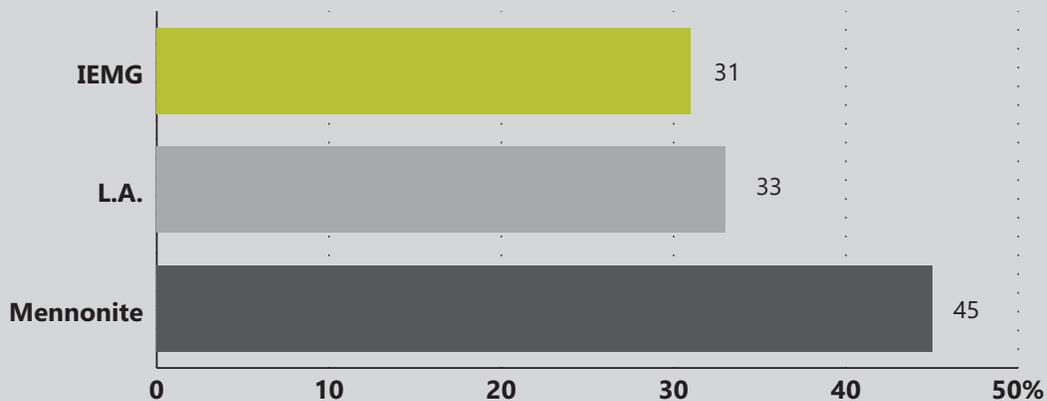
If the government required military service, what would you do?



I believe that the Bible promises that followers of Christ will be more blessed and have better health than non-Christians.



I believe that Christians should participate in politics.



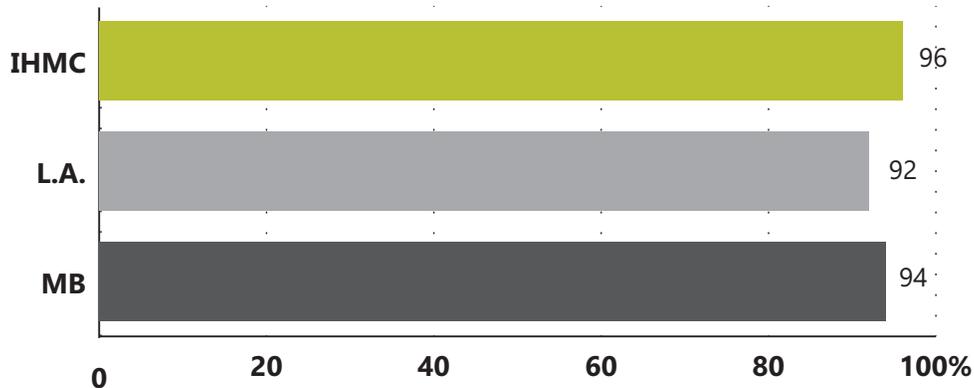
IGLESIAS HERMANOS MENONITAS DE COLOMBIA

CONGREGATIONS: 46 | MEMBERS: 2,181

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

1. One-hundred percent of congregations in the original sample participated in the GAP—because not all congregations reported membership size we could not calculate the response rate for members.
2. The average size of congregations in the Iglesias Hermanos Menonitas de Colombia is 68 members.
3. Sixty-two percent of respondents in the profile were women and 38 percent were men.
4. Sixty-four percent of members reported living in urban areas and 37 percent in rural areas.
5. The average age of respondents is 47 years and forty-nine percent are within childbearing age (18-45 years).
6. Twenty-eight percent of members are single. Fifty-five percent are married and five percent live with someone to whom they are not legally married.
7. A large percentage of respondents are homemakers (37%), 22 percent are engaged in agriculture, and only 12 percentage are professionals.
8. Forty-five percent graduated from high school and 13 percent are college graduates.
9. Seventy-three percent grew up in a home where neither parent was a member of a Hermanos Menonitas congregation.
10. Twenty-three percent of members were baptized in a church other than a Hermanos Menonitas congregation and 74 percent have been baptized in a Hermanos Menonitas congregation.

I believe the following statement: “Jesus is the only way to God and those without faith in Jesus will not be saved.”



“In Bogotá we face a big challenge with megachurches who are promising a cheap prosperity gospel. [This survey] confirmed that it is crucial to emphasize Anabaptist principles. We also need to give more attention to the training of pastors.”

Luz Elena Franco Soto, IHMC representative

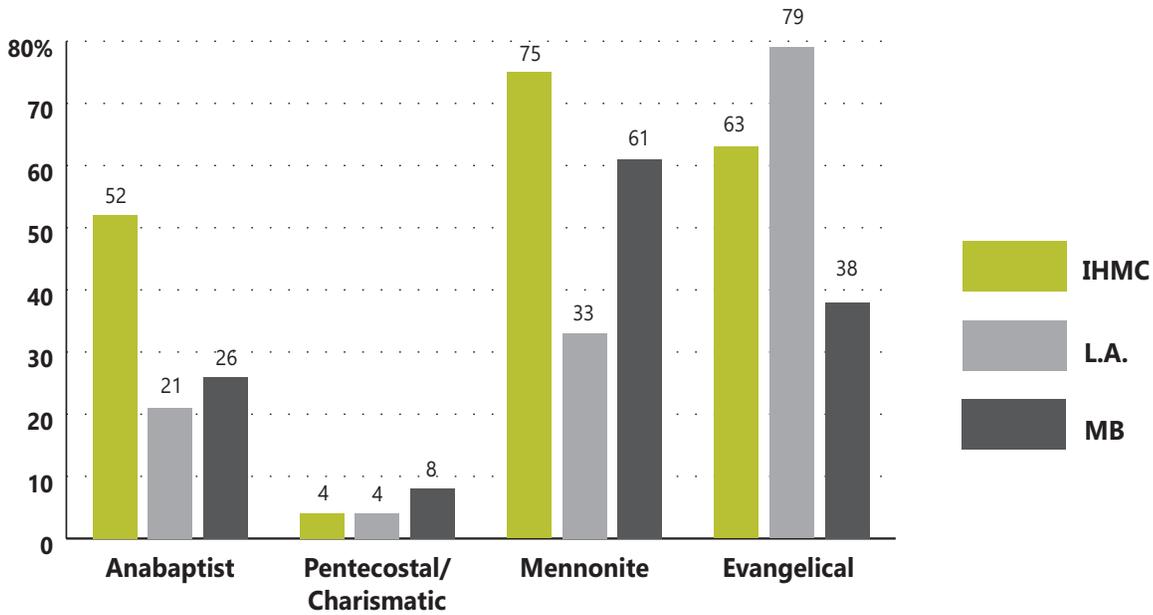


HISTORY

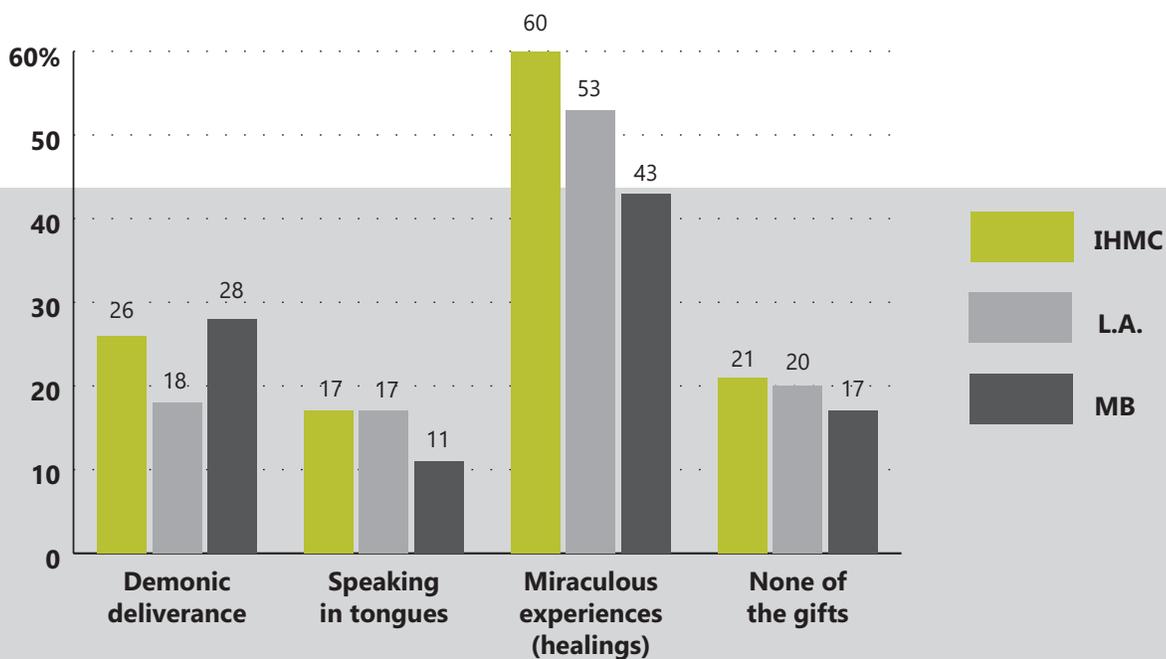
The Mennonite Brethren Church in Colombia began in 1946 with the arrival of Russian-Canadian missionaries to the regions of Valle del Cauca and Chocó. In the early years, converts faced significant opposition, and mission schools and clinics were repeatedly closed by the government. In the 1960s toleration of Protestants increased, and the Mennonite Brethren began intensive church planting in the cities.

By the early 1980s the Mennonite Brethren had churches in Chocó, Valle del Cauca, and the capital city of Bogotá. Today the denomination is officially divided into these three distinct geographical and cultural regions for administrative purposes. In recent years the churches in Valle del Cauca and Chocó have most directly experienced strain and threat as a result of Colombia’s armed conflict, and church ministries have grown in response. Church planting and mission continue to be central, and the denomination has sent missionaries to Panama and Mexico.

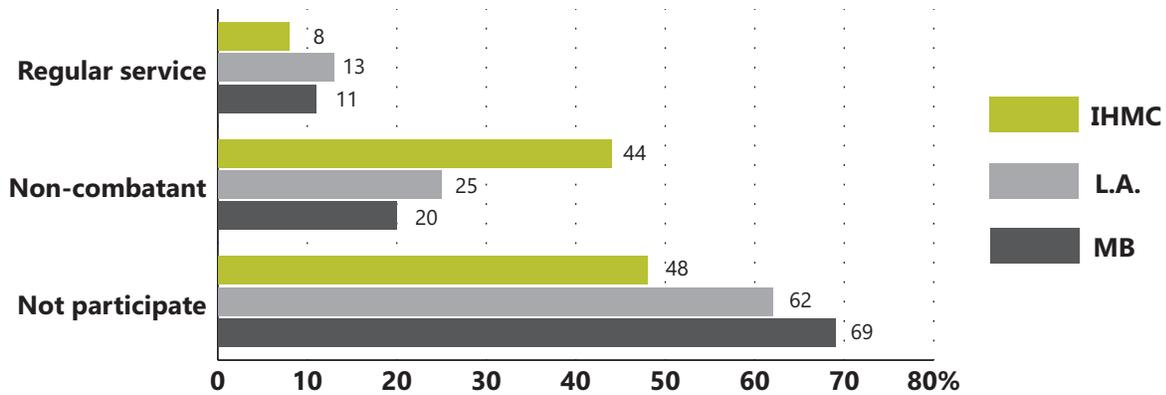
Which of the following words describe your own religious beliefs?



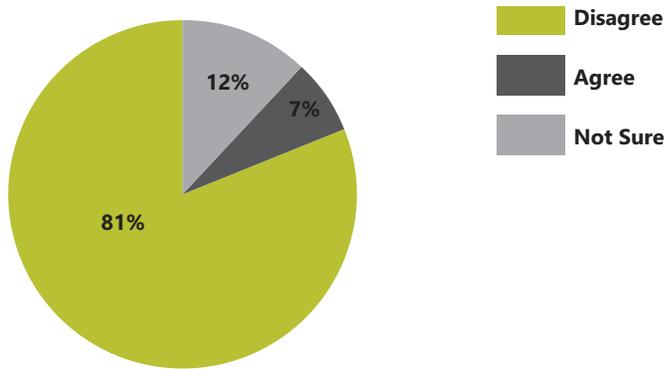
Have you ever personally experienced the following manifestations of the Holy Spirit?



If the government required military service, what would you do?



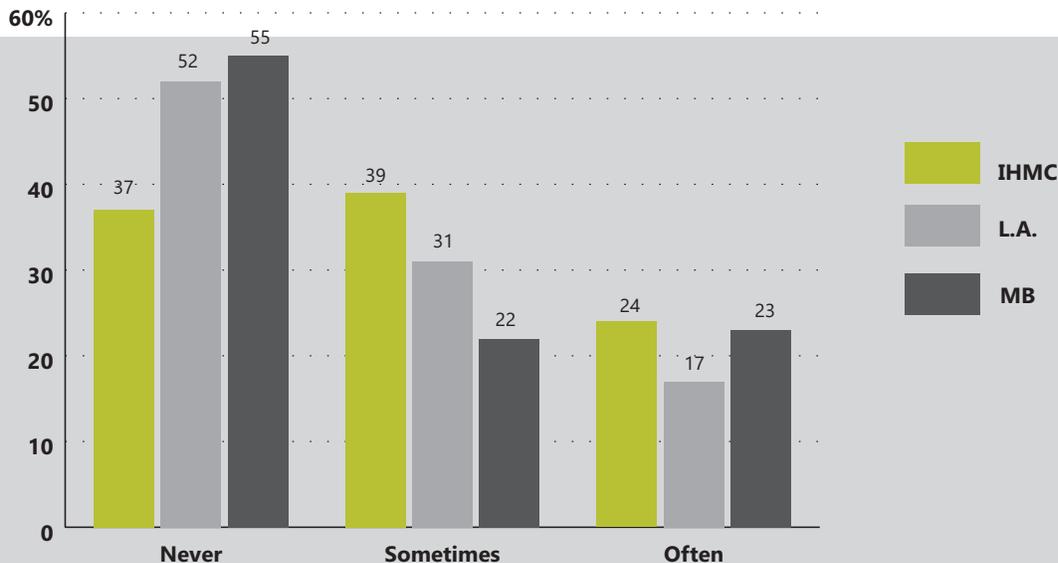
I believe that it's okay for Christians to fight in a war.



“Despite the fact that Colombia is a violent country and lives in continuous war, the GAP confirmed that our members clearly reject war and the death penalty.”

*-Luz Elena Franco Soto,
IHMC representative*

Member experience of persecution:



VEREINIGUNG DER MENNONITEN BRÜDER GEMEINDEN PARAGUAYS

CONGREGATIONS: 30 | MEMBERS: 3,164

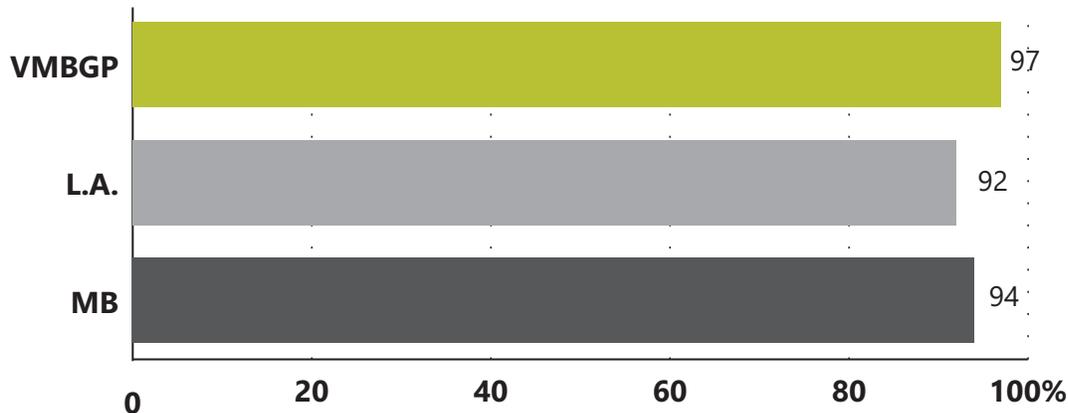
DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

1. One hundred percent of congregations and 29 percent of members in the original sample participated in the GAP.
2. The average size of congregations in the Vereinigung der Mennoniten Brüder Gemeinden Paraguays is 105 members.
3. Of those who participated in the GAP, fifty percent were women and 50 percent were men.
4. Forty-six percent of members reported living in rural communities and 54 percent in urban areas.
5. The average age of respondents is 45 years and 55 percent of women are within childbearing age (18-45 years).
6. Eighty percent are married, 15 percent are single, one percent are separated or divorced, 2 percent are widowed, and 2 percent are living with someone to whom they are not legally married.
7. Thirty-one percent are homemakers, 33 percent are professionals, 17 are engaged in agriculture, and 11 do manual labor. Eight percent reported their occupation as church-related—the highest percentage of any GAP church in Latin America.
8. Fifty-nine percent have completed high school and 23 percent have a college degree.
9. Fifty-five percent grew up in a home where one or both parents was a member of a congregation in the Vereinigung der Mennoniten Brüder Gemeinden Paraguays and 21 percent in a different church.



Research Associate Theodor Unruh

I believe the following statement: "Jesus is the only way to God and those without faith in Jesus will not be saved."



"We are truly a growing worldwide family that has been blessed by God."

-Kornelius Neufeld, representative of VMBGP



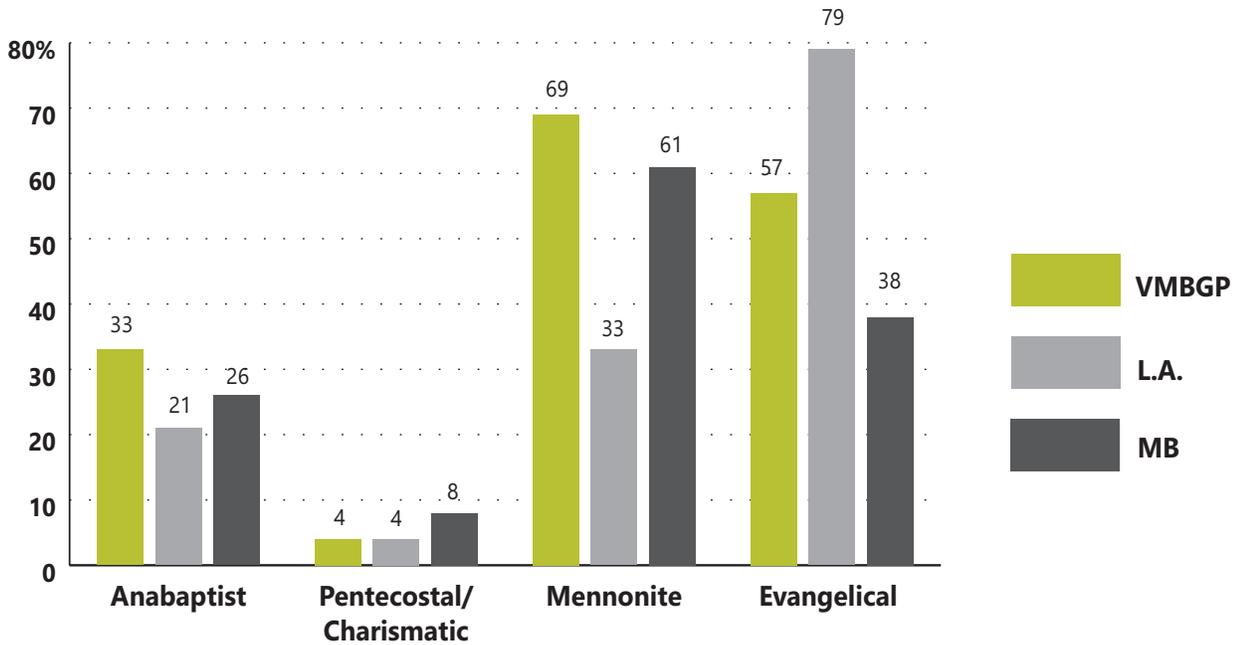
HISTORY

In 1930 a large group of Russian Mennonites migrated to Paraguay and established the first church in Fernheim. Between 1937 and 1963, additional churches were founded in Friesland, Volendam, Neuland, Blumental, and Asunción.

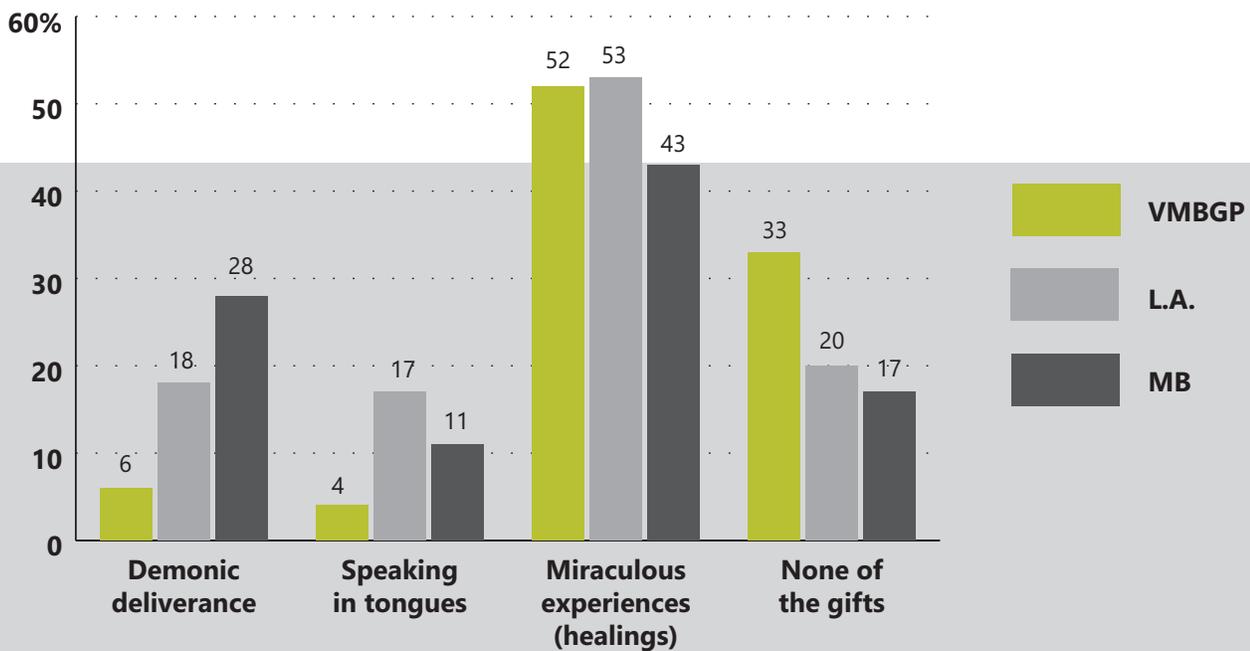
Growing missionary work led to the founding of a Mennonite Brethren Church Association in Paraguay in 1961 (changing its name to Vereinigung der Mennoniten Brüder Gemeinden Paraguays in 1993). This new conference was characterized by its missionary spirit, including strong support for the mission organization "Light to the Indians." There was also a renewed commitment to young people's groups and Sunday School education. Beginning in the 1960s many Mennonite Brethren churches began mission work among the Spanish-speaking population. Today seven of the association's churches are Germans-speaking and twenty-three are Spanish-speaking.

The association is heavily involved in education as a form of ministry. In addition to their involvement with the Protestant Union University, they support a number of private schools for neighborhood children and operate a seminary, a teaching training school, and a bilingual high school.

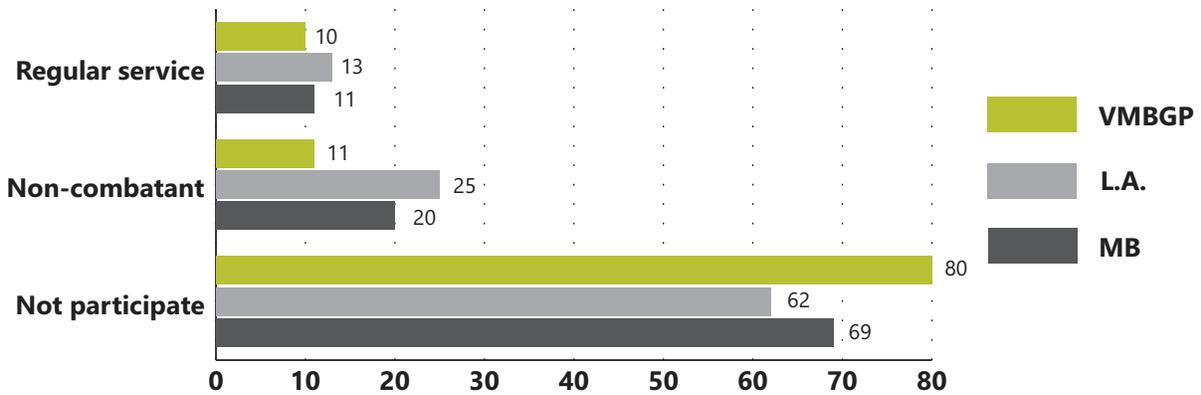
Which of the following words describe your own religious beliefs?



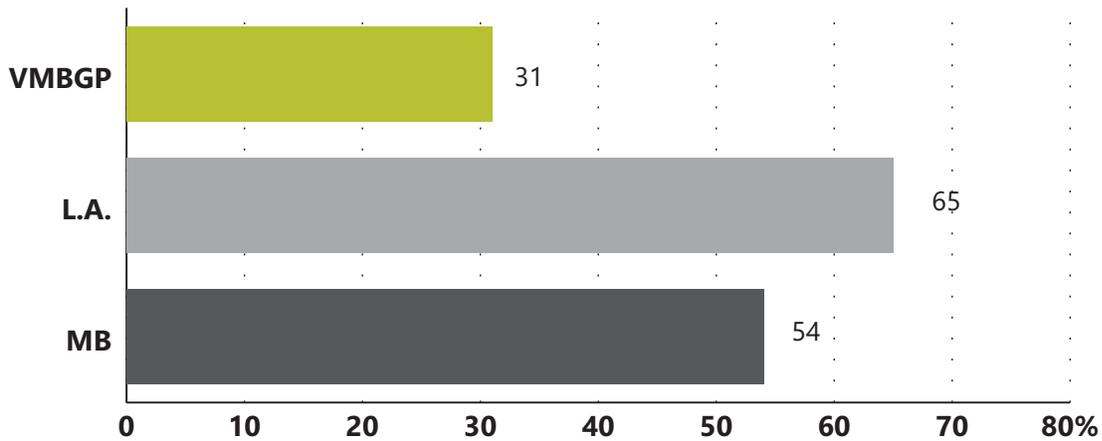
Have you ever personally experienced the following manifestations of the Holy Spirit?



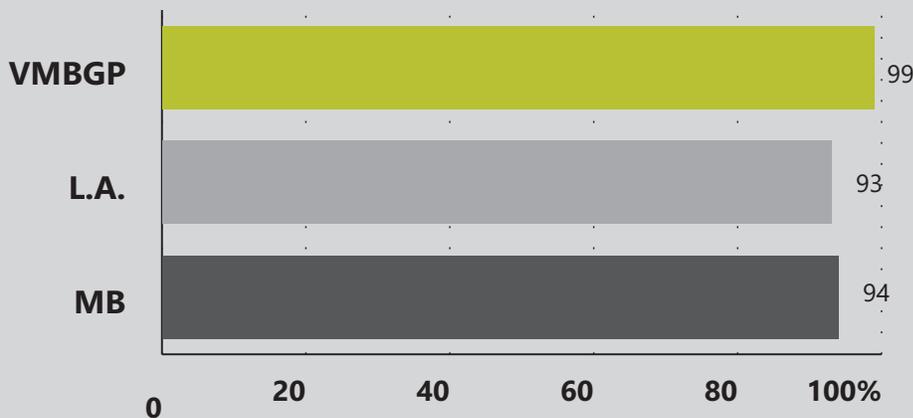
If the government required military service, what would you do?



I believe that the Bible promises that followers of Christ will be more blessed and have better health than non-Christians.



It is very important to be saved or born again.



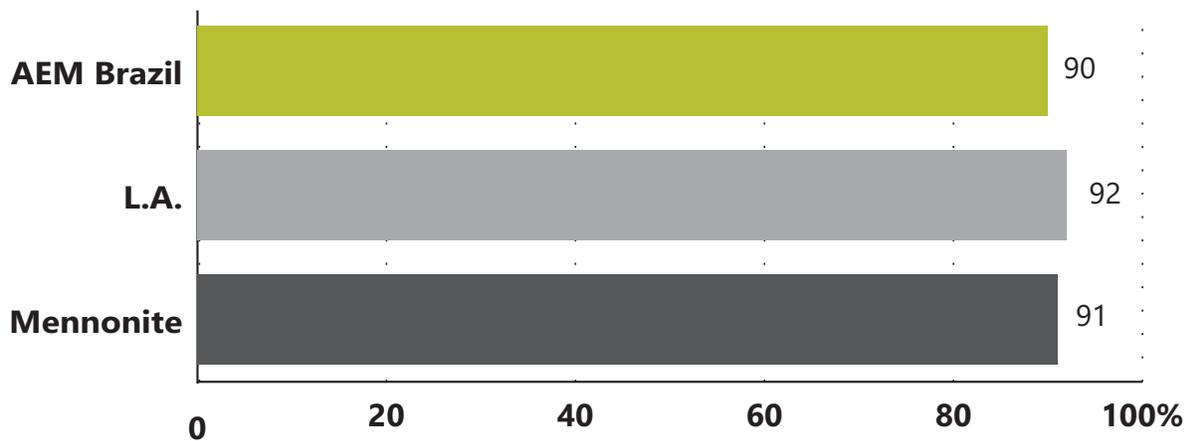
ALIANÇA EVANGÉLICA MENONITA (BRAZIL)

CONGREGATIONS: 31 | MEMBERS: 845

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

1. Twenty-nine percent of congregations and 23 percent of members in the original sample participated in the GAP.
2. The average size of congregations in the Aliança Evangélica Menonita is 27 members.
3. Of those who participated in the GAP, fifty-seven percent were women and 43 percent were men.
4. Ninety-eight percent of members reported living in urban communities and just 2 percent in rural areas.
5. The average age of respondents is 43 years and 57 percent of women are within childbearing age (18-45 years).
6. Twenty-one percent do not have a high school diploma, 58 percent have at least a high school diploma, and 22 percent achieved a college degree.
7. Sixty-two percent are married, 21 percent are single, and 7 percent are living with someone to whom they are not legally married.
8. Among Brazilian Mennonites, 53 percent are engaged in manual labor, 23 percent are professionals, 17 percent homemakers, and only one percent are farmers.
9. Seventy-nine percent of members did not grow up in homes where either parent was a member of the Aliança Evangélica Menonita—only 14 percent grew up in a home where both parents were members.
10. Seventy-one percent have been baptized in the Aliança Evangélica Menonita, while 25 percent were baptized in a different church.

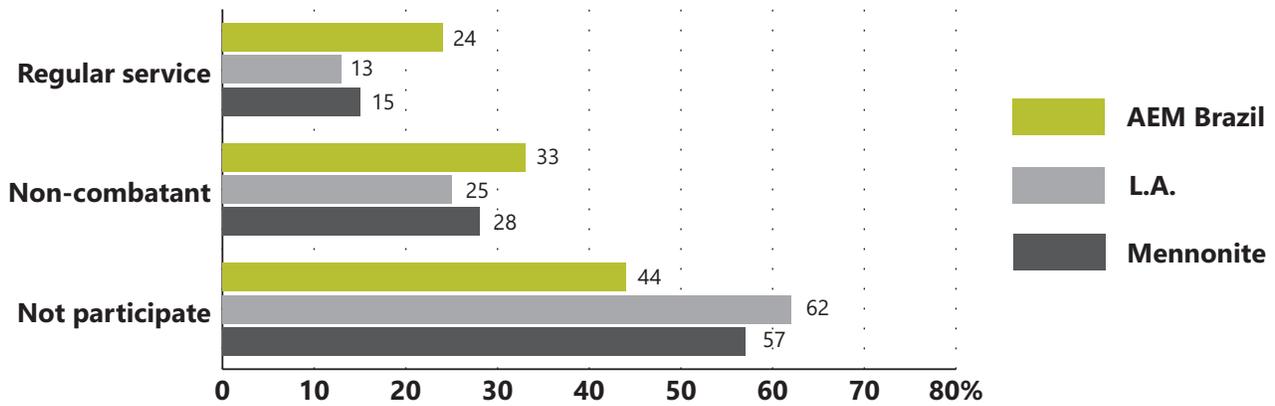
I believe the following statement: “Jesus is the only way to God and those without faith in Jesus will not be saved.”



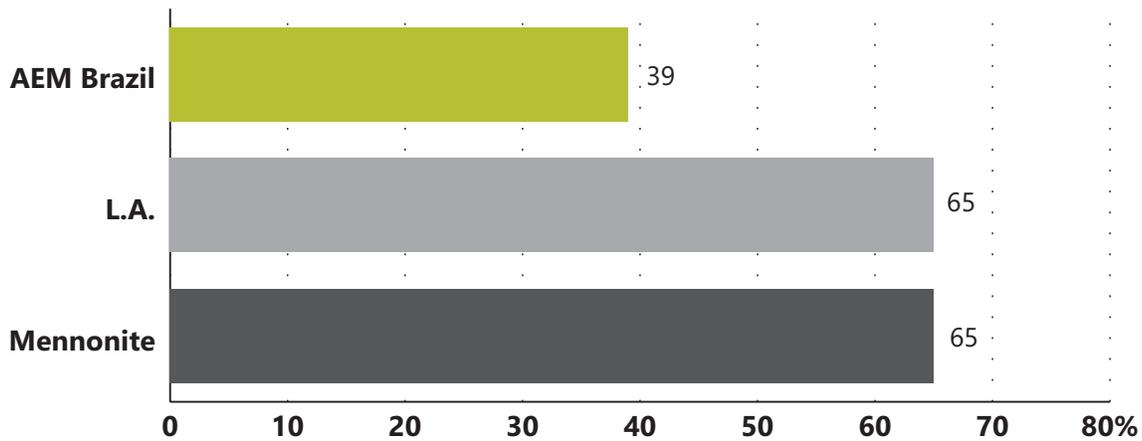
HISTORY

In 1954 Mennonite missionaries from North America arrived in São Paulo state. Within the next few years, churches were established in São Paulo, Valinhos, and Sertãozinho. Another work was started simultaneously in Araguacema, in the Amazonian state of Goiás. Today Aliança Evangélica Menonita (AEM) has Portuguese-speaking Mennonite churches in five distinct geographical regions. In 1998 AEM founded Junta Menonita de Missoes Internacionais (JMMI) to send missionaries to Mozambique and Albania, efforts that resulted in churches in both locations. Currently JMMI is engaged in church planting within Brazil. AEM is also involved in social ministry, counseling, and creating original evangelical worship music and choreography.

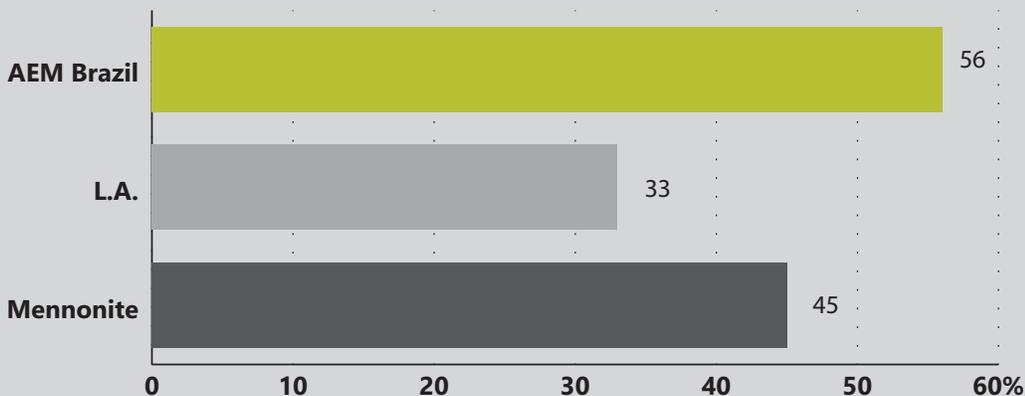
If the government required military service, what would you do?



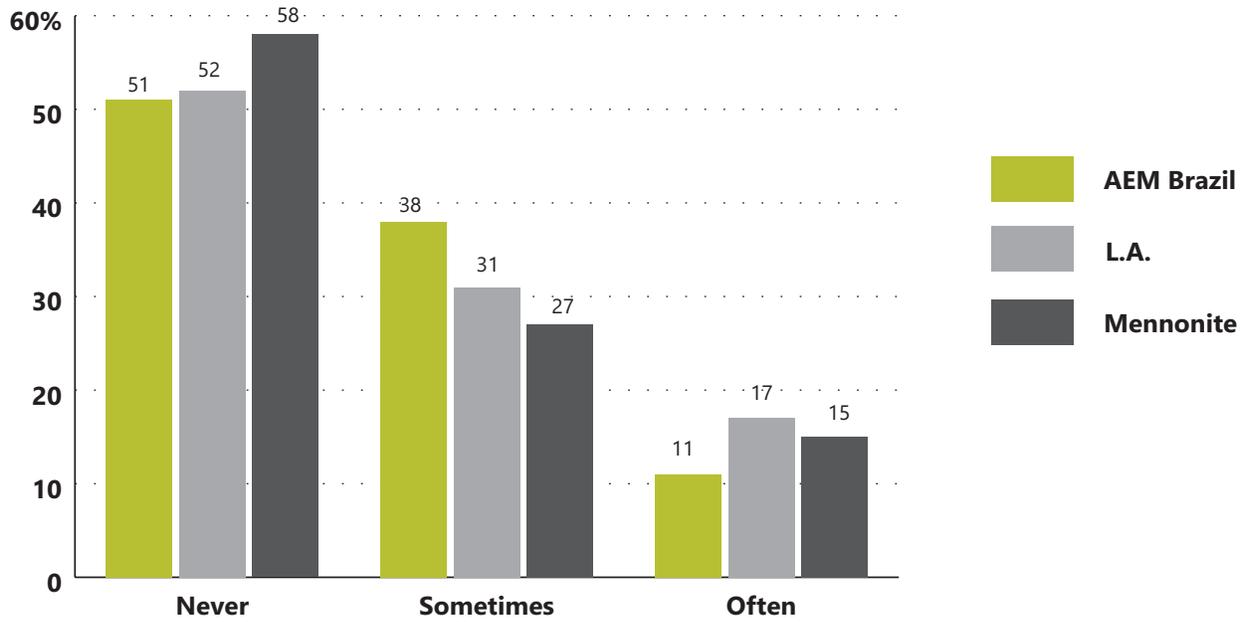
I believe that the Bible promises that followers of Christ will be more blessed and have better health than non-Christians.



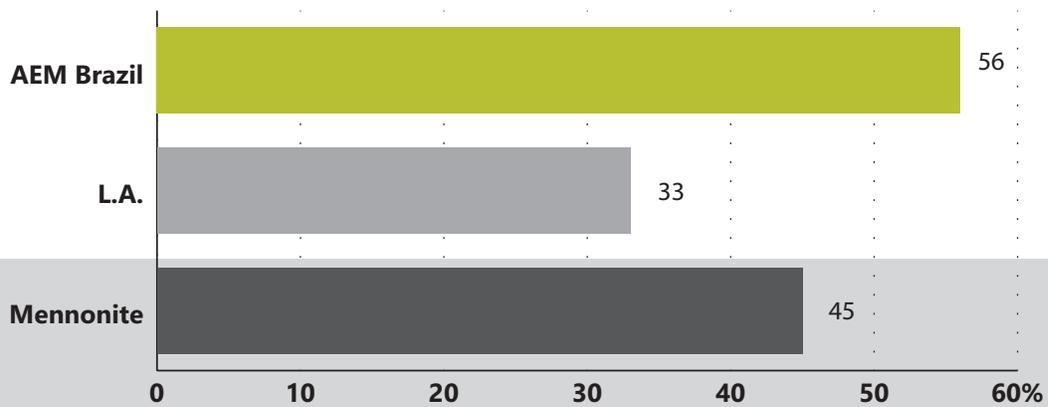
I believe that Christians should participate in politics.



Member experience of persecution:



I believe that it is okay for Christians to vote.



CONVENCIÓN DE IGLESIAS EVANGÉLICAS MENONITAS DE NICARAGUA

CONGREGATIONS: 115 | MEMBERS: 5,282

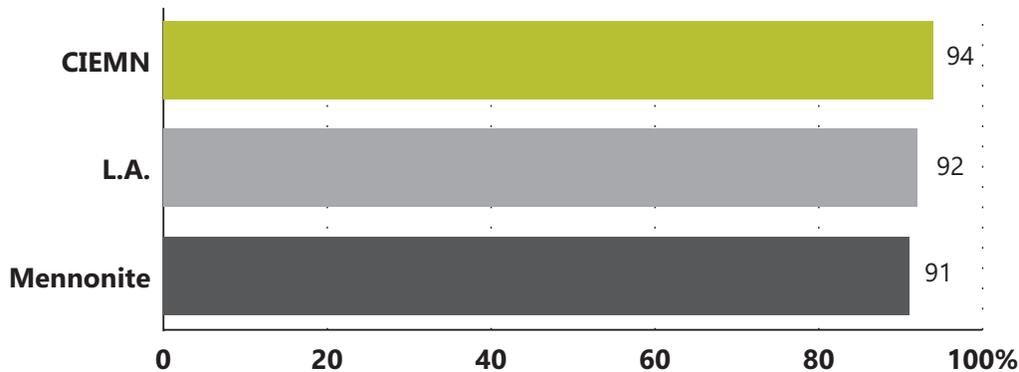
DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

1. Eighty-three percent of congregations and 36 percent of members in the original sample participated in the GAP.
2. The average size of congregations in the Convención de Iglesias Evangélicas Menonitas de Nicaragua is 45 members.
3. Of those who participated in the GAP, 70 percent were women and 30 percent were men—this is the highest percentage of women of any GAP church in North or Latin America.
4. Fifty-three percent of members reported living in rural communities and 47 percent in urban areas.
5. The average age of respondents is 43 years and 59 percent of women are within childbearing age (18-45 years).
6. Sixty percent of members are married, 22 percent are single, 10 percent are widowed (the highest percentage in Latin America), 4 percent are separated or divorced, and 3 percent are living with someone to whom they are not legally married.
7. Fifty-five percent of respondents reported being homemakers (the highest percentage in North and Latin America), 21 percent are engaged in agriculture, 15 percent are in professional occupations, 7 percent have positions in a church, and 3 percent are engaged in manual labor.
8. Seventy-nine percent have not completed a high school education. Twenty-one percent are high school graduates and 5 percent have graduated from college.
9. Only 30 percent grew up in a home where one or both parents was a member of a congregation in the Convención de Iglesias Evangélicas Menonitas de Nicaragua.
10. Seventy-one percent of respondents were baptized in a congregation of the Convención de Iglesias Evangélicas Menonitas de Nicaragua.



Research Assistant Lois Orzoco

I believe the following statement: “Jesus is the only way to God and those without faith in Jesus will not be saved.”



“I think it is necessary to learn of the experiences of other brothers and sisters in the global church family, recognizing that we each have weaknesses and strengths that we need to reinforce and improve.”

-Research Associate Marcos Orozco



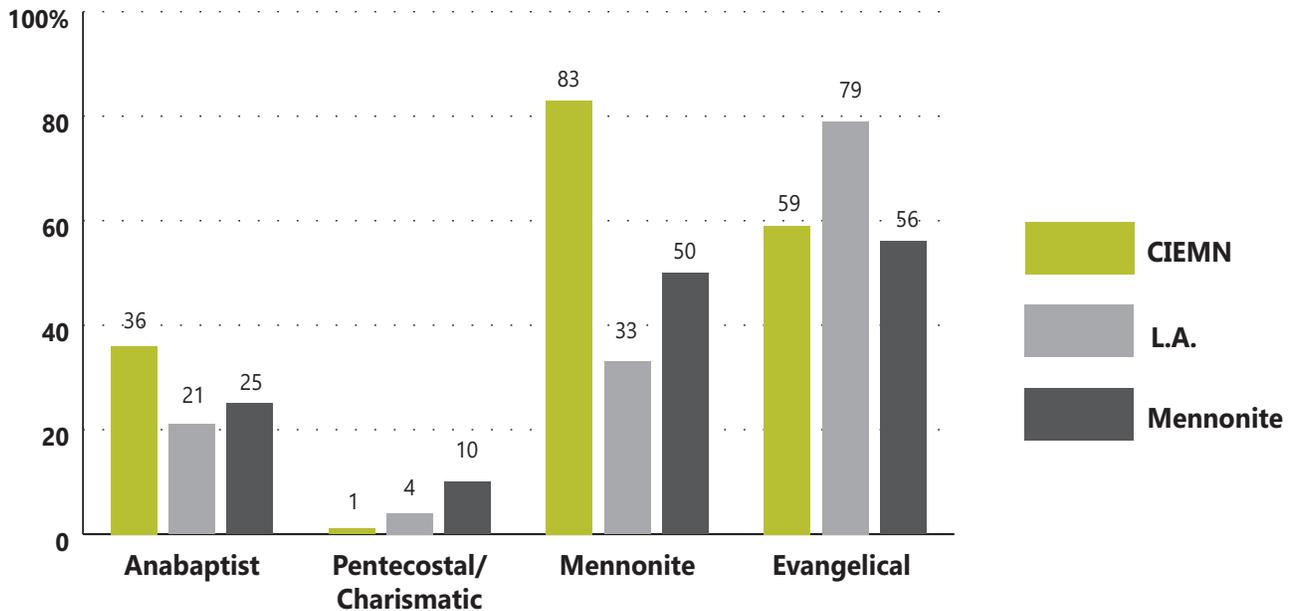
HISTORY

When the capital city of Managua was almost completely destroyed by an earthquake in 1972, Mennonite volunteers from the United States arrived to help in the reconstruction of the city. Their presence acted as a catalyst for earlier church plants and expanded the church’s reach through literacy and evangelization initiatives.

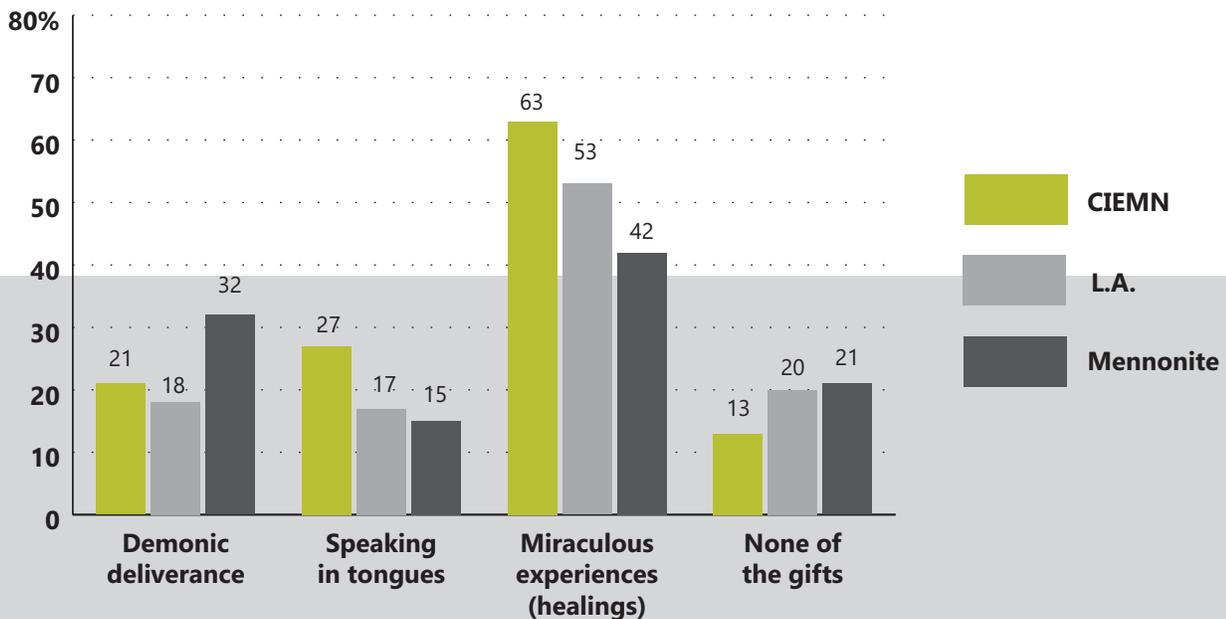
Later the civil war against Somoza and the triumph of the Sandinista Party left 50,000 dead and tremendous moral and economic destruction in their wake. The new revolutionary government imposed mandatory military service for the first time in Nicaragua, taking the church unawares. Neither the church nor its leaders were prepared to face this new challenge. The young people were taken against their will and obliged to fulfill their military service, although the Mennonite churches had proposed a conscientious objection option to the government.

In the midst of these difficult and adverse circumstances, the number of churches tripled. Today the convention sees its biggest challenges in shaping leaders and discipling new believers, as well as deepening its Anabaptist roots as a peace church in a context of violence and resource scarcity.

Which of the following words describe your own religious beliefs?



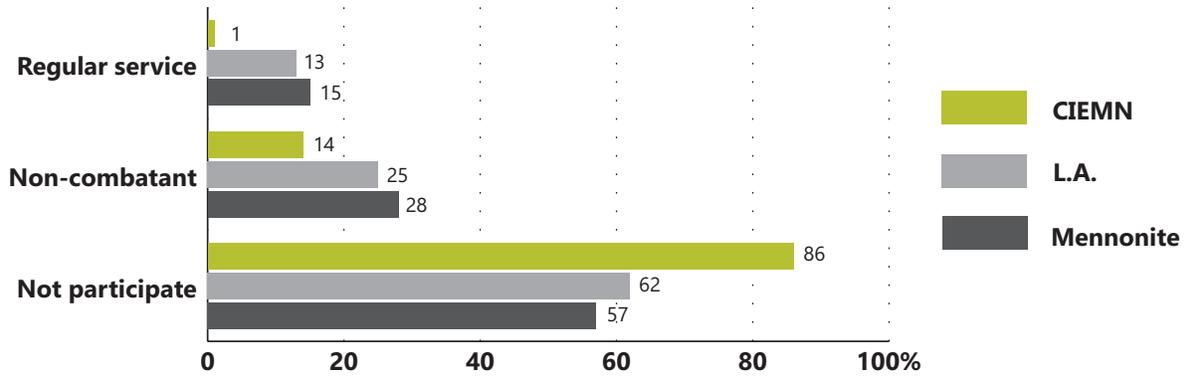
Have you ever personally experienced the following manifestations of the Holy Spirit?



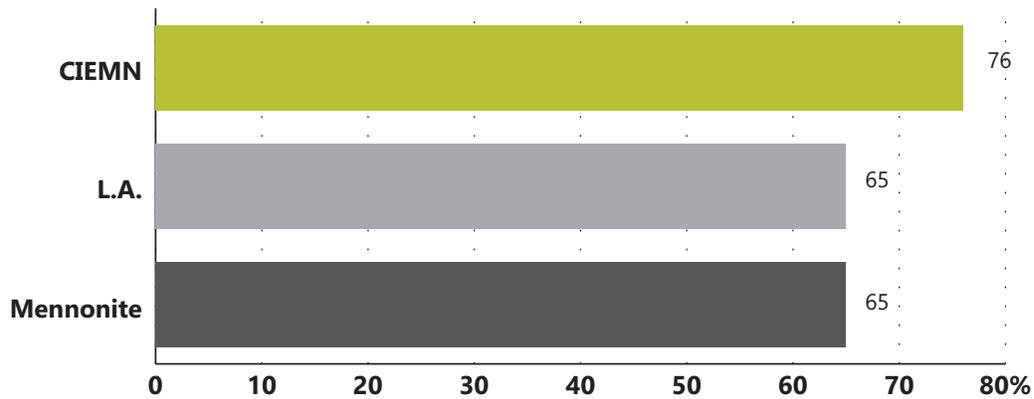
CHALLENGES:

Some of the churches were remote and hard to reach, which delayed distribution and implementation of the survey. In some locations there was a lack of understanding regarding the project.

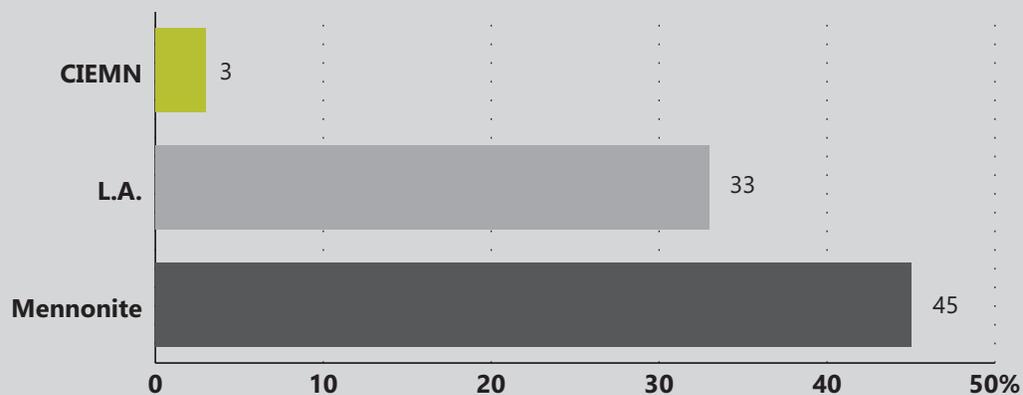
If the government required military service, what would you do?



I believe that the Bible promises that followers of Christ will be more blessed and have better health than non-Christians.



I believe that Christians should participate in politics.



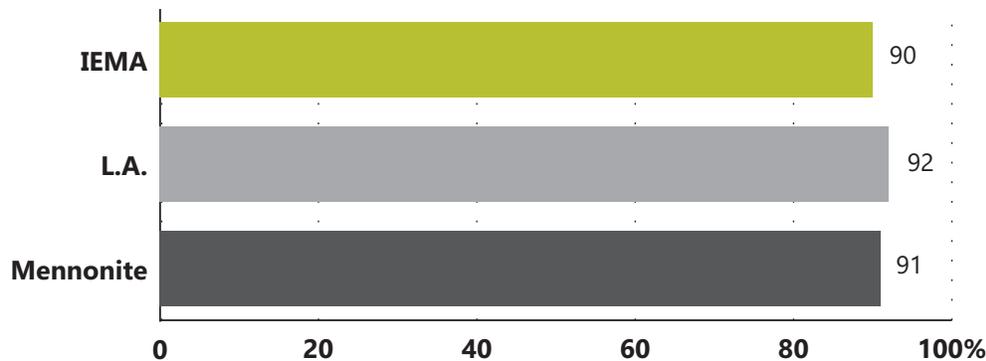
IGLESIA EVANGÉLICA MENONITA ARGENTINA

CONGREGATIONS: 52 | MEMBERS: 3,342

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

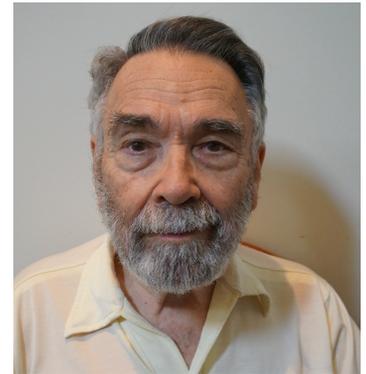
1. Ninety-four percent of congregations and 33 percent of members in the original sample participated in the GAP.
2. On average, congregations in the Iglesia Evangélica Menonita Argentina have 64 members.
3. In the Iglesia Evangélica Menonita Argentina sample, 56 percent were women and 44 percent were men.
4. The Iglesia Evangélica Menonita Argentina is a very rural church, with 96 percent living in rural communities.
5. The average age of respondents is 48 years—making this church the oldest of all GAP churches in Latin America. Forty-eight percent of women are between 18-45 years of age.
6. Sixty percent of respondents are married, 17 percent are single, 8 percent are widowed, 5 percent are separated or divorced, and 10 percent are living with someone to whom they are not legally married (the highest of the Latin American churches in the GAP for whom we have information).
7. Among Iglesia Evangélica Menonita Argentina respondents, 37 percent are professionals, 15 percent do manual labor, and 33 percent are homemakers. Though largely rural, only 2 percent engage in agriculture.
8. Forty percent have not completed a high school education, 44 percent have gone as far as to complete high school, and 16 percent are college graduates.
9. Forty-five percent grew up in a home where neither parent was a member of a congregation in the Iglesia Evangélica Menonita Argentina.
10. Sixty-six percent of respondents were baptized in a congregation of the Iglesia Evangélica Menonita Argentina and 30 percent in another church.

I believe the following statement: “Jesus is the only way to God and those without faith in Jesus will not be saved.”



“At the Elizabethtown GAP consultation I saw that most of the churches in Latin America were similar as well as in some other continents. The Global Anabaptist Profile has helped our churches see some of their similarities as well as some differences.”

-Research Associate Delbert Erb

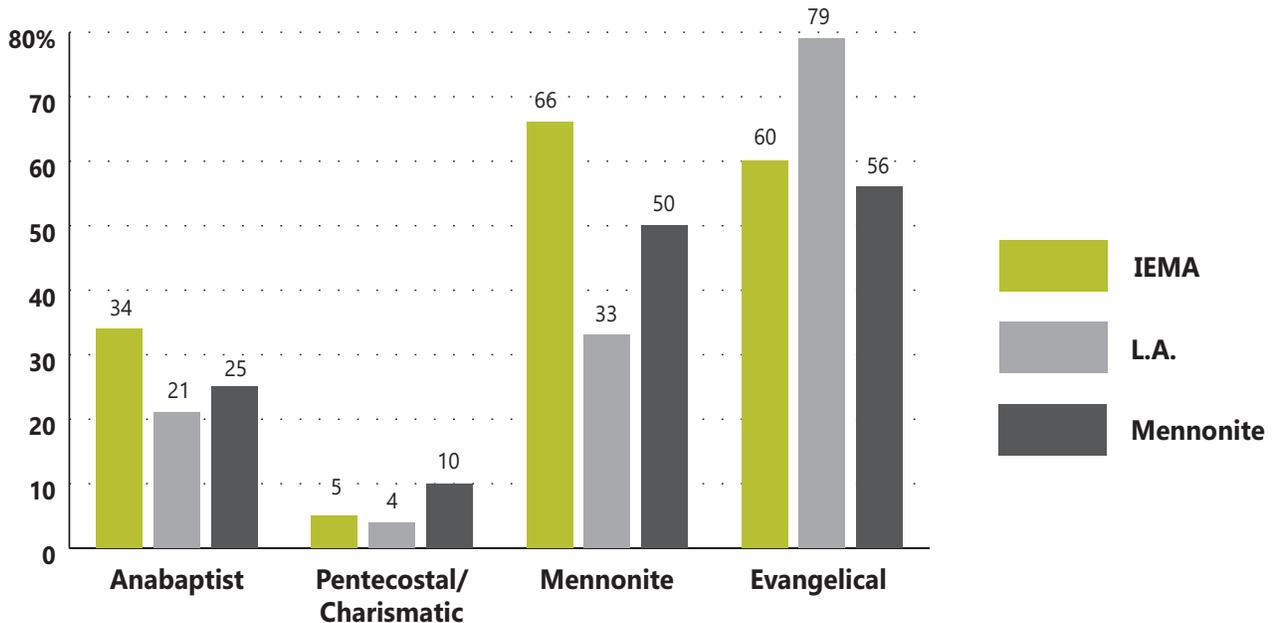


HISTORY

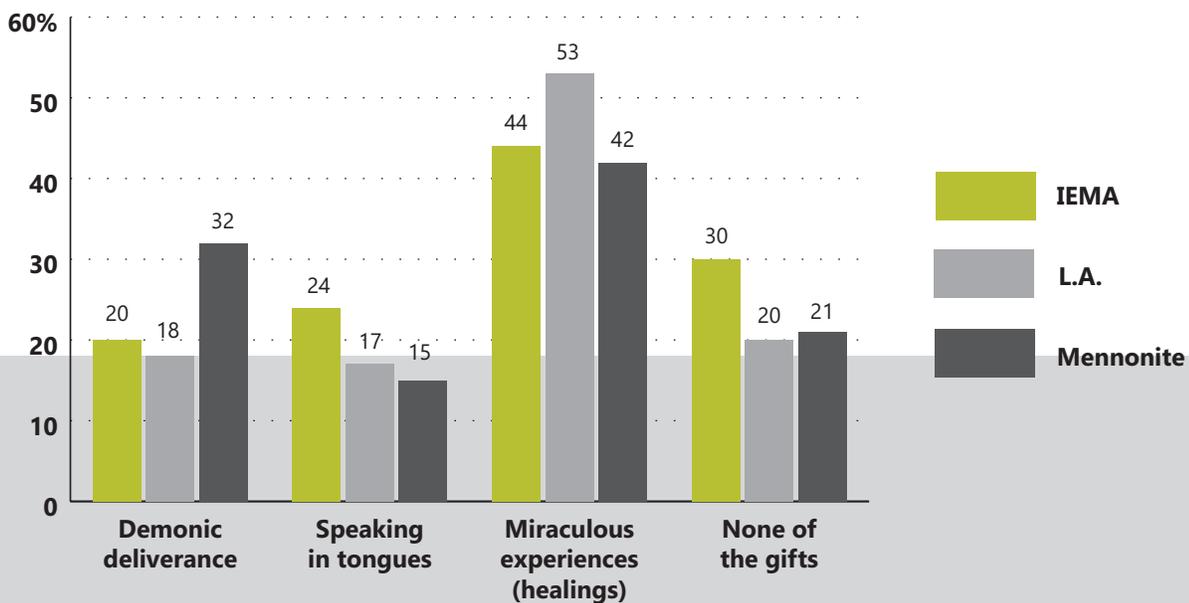
The Iglesia Evangélica Menonita Argentina is the oldest Mennonite church in Latin America. Mennonite missionaries from North America opened the first mission in 1919 in the rural village of Pehuajó, two hundred miles west of Buenos Aires. A Bible School in Pehuajó led to the ordination of several Argentine pastors and several single women who were commissioned as Bible readers. Pehuajó served as the center of Mennonite church planting and mission until the 1930s, when the economic crisis produced an exodus of rural people into Argentina’s urban centers, particularly Buenos Aires. By the 1950s Mennonite mission efforts had begun in the capital.

Following the establishment of the independent Iglesia Evangélica Menonita Argentina in the 1950s, North American missionaries and Argentine pastors and laypeople worked together in strengthening the church’s financial and organizational independence. Over time North American leadership withdrew and Argentine leadership increased. In more recent years the Argentine congregations have developed their own mission projects, and the church has slowly begun to grow in number and geographical area.

Which of the following words describe your own religious beliefs?



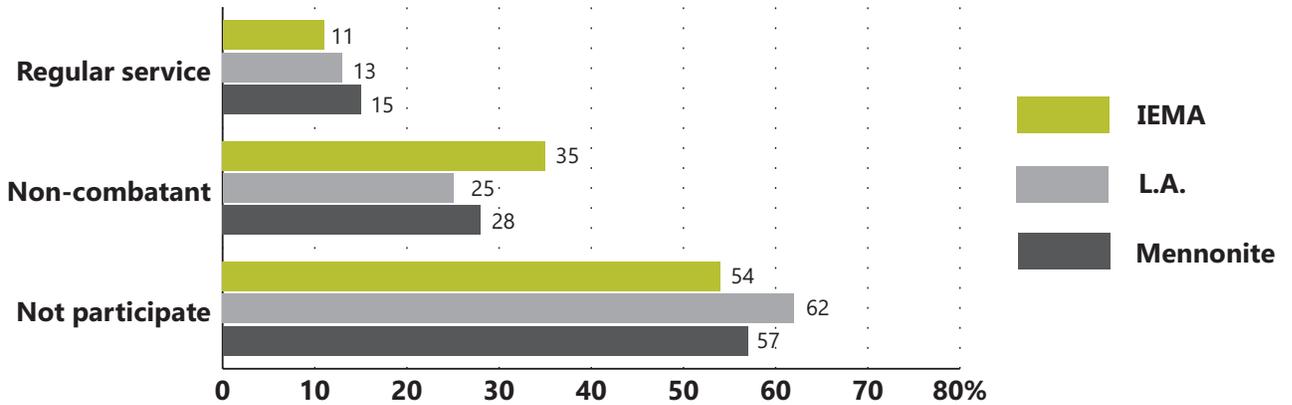
Have you ever personally experienced the following manifestations of the Holy Spirit?



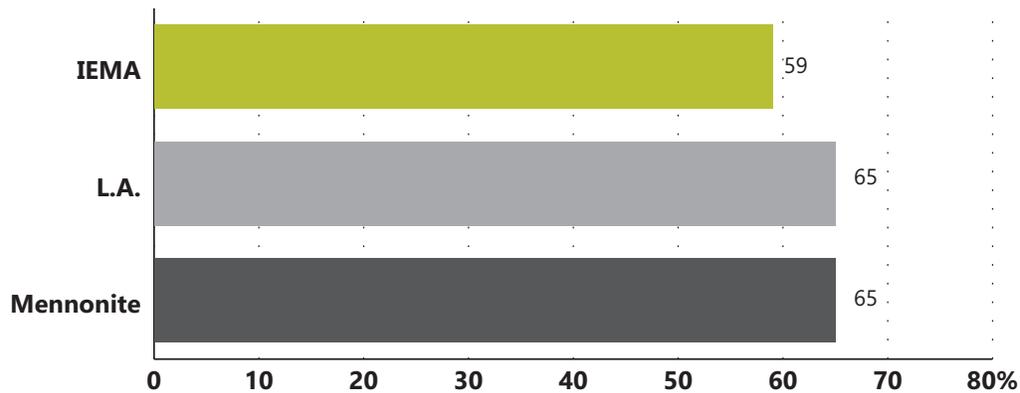
CHALLENGES

The distance between the northernmost and southernmost congregations participating in the survey was more than 2000 km, requiring significant travel. Raúl Garcia assisted Research Associate Delbert Erb in implementing the survey in some of the southern congregations. Several congregations also opted not to participate in the survey, although alternate congregations were selected to replace them.

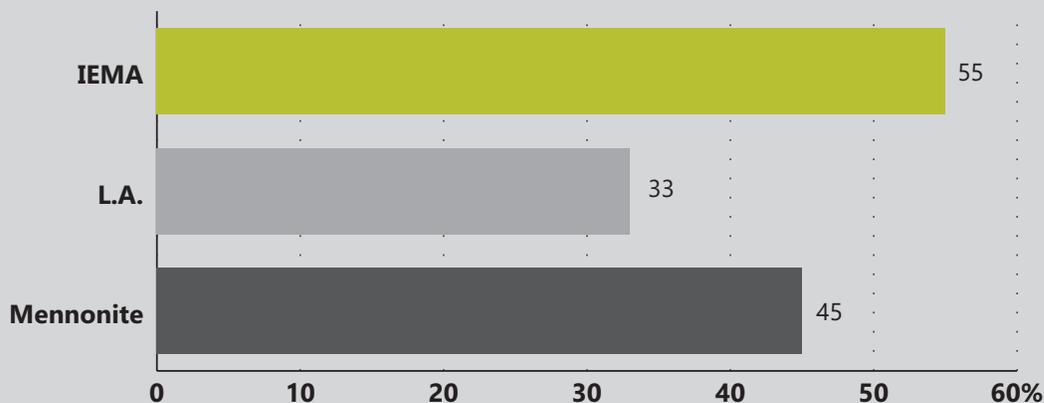
If the government required military service, what would you do?



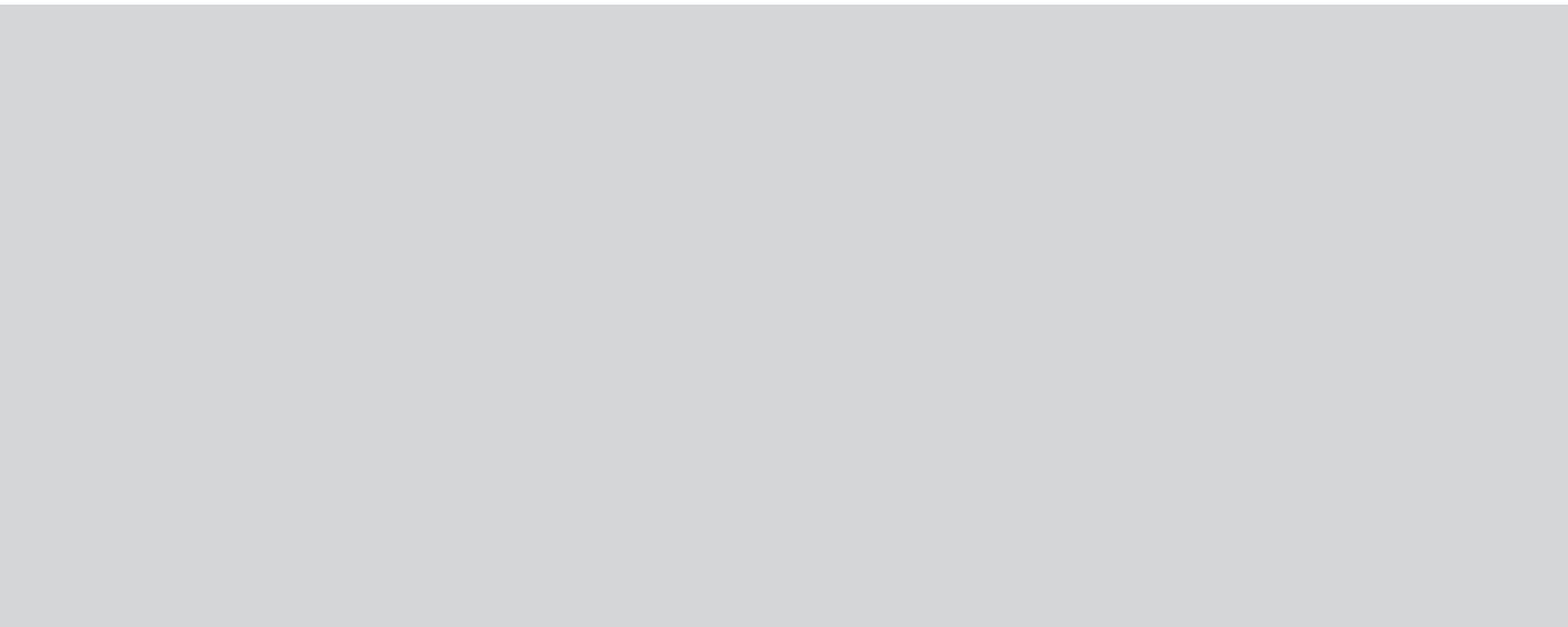
I believe that the Bible promises that followers of Christ will be more blessed and have better health than non-Christians.



I believe that Christians should participate in politics.



NORTH AMERICA



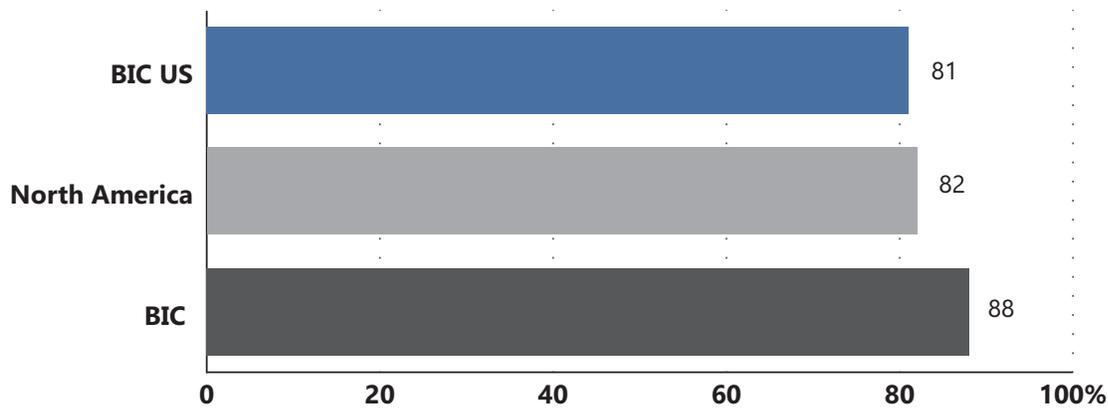
BRETHREN IN CHRIST CHURCH (UNITED STATES)

CONGREGATIONS: 252 | MEMBERS: 23,980

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

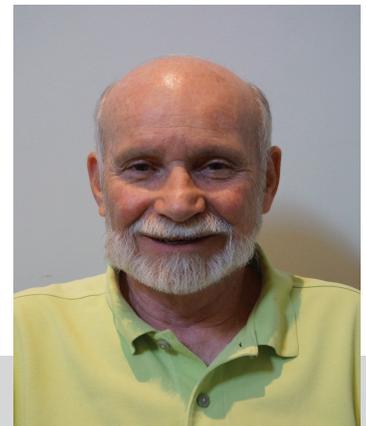
1. The Brethren in Christ Church (USA) distributed the survey to members in all congregations for whom the congregation had an email address. As a result, it is not possible to determine response rates of congregations or members.
2. The average size of congregations in the Brethren in Christ Church (USA) is 94 members.
3. Forty-seven percent of respondents were women and 53 percent were men.
4. Fifty-seven percent of members live in rural areas—making this church the most rural of all the North American GAP conferences.
5. The average age of respondents is 54 years. Twenty-nine percent are within childbearing age (18-45 years), the lowest percentage among North American churches in the GAP.
6. Eighty-four percent of respondents are married and just 7 percent are single.
7. Only six percent are homemakers (the lowest of the churches in North America), 18 percent are engaged in church-related work, only 6 percent are in agriculture, and 56 percent are professionals.
8. Seventy percent have graduated from college.
9. Sixty-eight percent grew up in a home where neither parent was a member of the Brethren in Christ Church (USA), second highest among North American GAP churches.
10. Fifty-six percent of respondents reported being baptized in a church other than the Brethren in Christ Church (USA).

I believe the following statement: “Jesus is the only way to God and those without faith in Jesus will not be saved.”



“We can use this data to correct misconceptions of our church, for example, to point to the diversity of the church with regard to various theological traditions.”

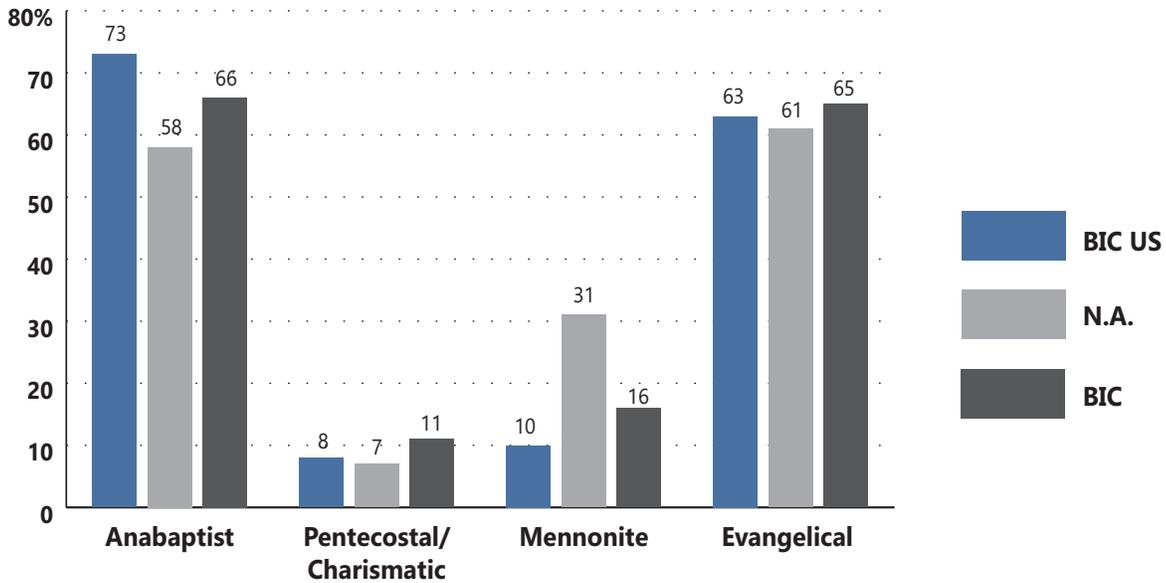
-Research Associate Ron Burwell



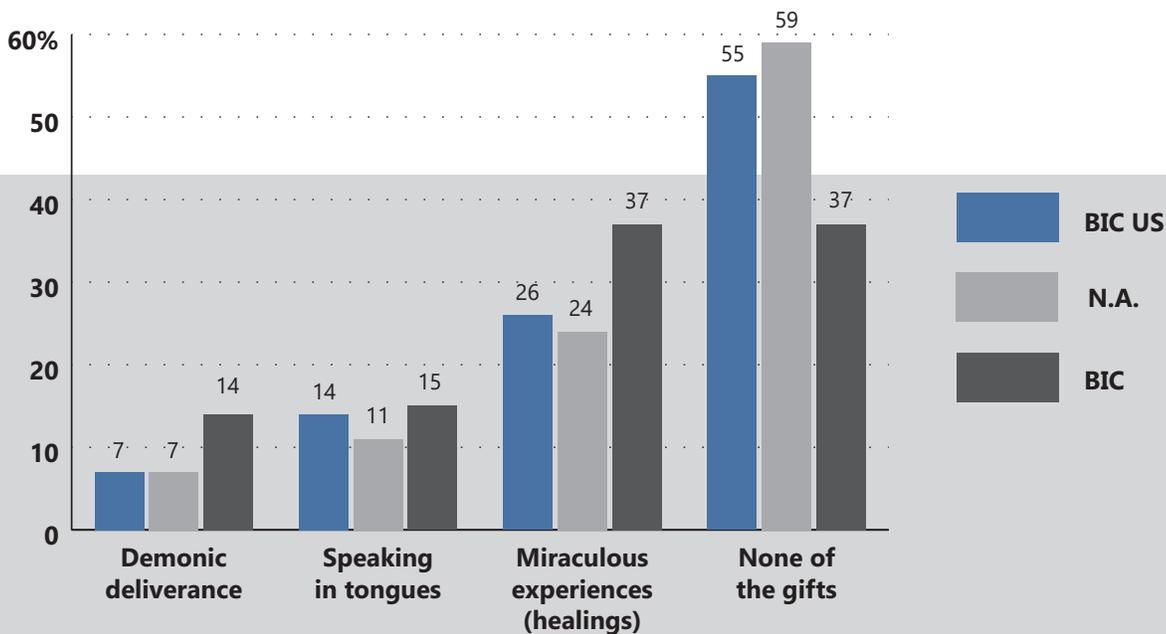
HISTORY

The Brethren in Christ in the US formed in south-central Pennsylvania between 1775 and 1778, in response to revival movements in the region at that time. The first meetings were held on Jacob Engle’s farm, and German-speaking Anabaptists from a variety of groups joined. Participants emphasized the importance of an individual conversion experience and baptism by immersion. Through migration the group expanded to Canada and the US Midwest and western states. Historically the Brethren in Christ have reflected a combination of Anabaptism, Pietism, Holiness tradition, and evangelicalism. The Brethren in Christ began mission work domestically and internationally in the 1890s; by the mid-twentieth century, they were very active in international mission work. The 1950s brought additional changes, including permitting musical instruments in worship, more programming for youth, and less strict dress requirements.

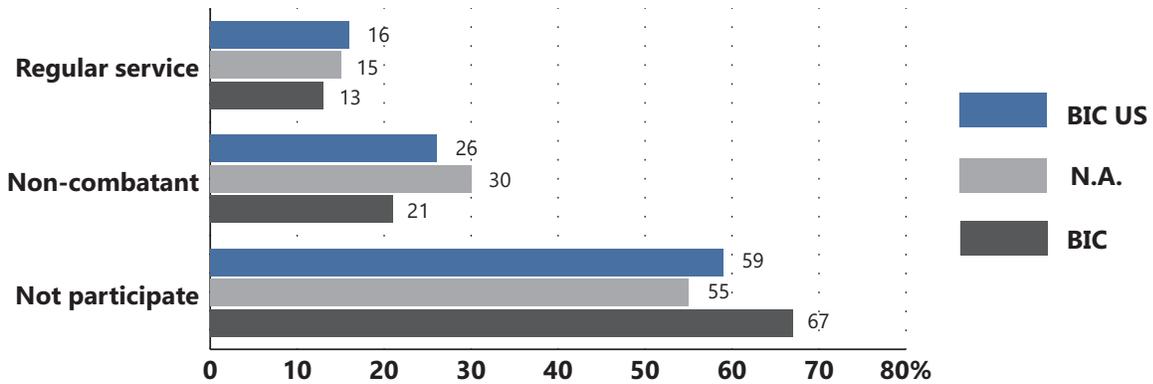
Which of the following words describe your own religious beliefs?



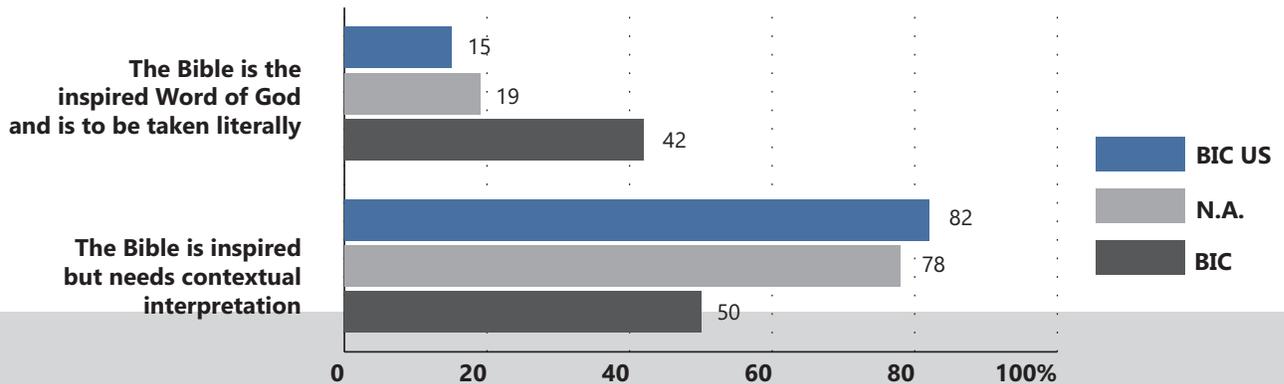
Have you ever personally experienced the following manifestations of the Holy Spirit?



If the government required military service, what would you do?



Statement that best expresses your beliefs about the Bible



CHALLENGES

The Brethren in Christ Church sent an electronic survey to email addresses provided by the national church office. In comparing the results with previous surveys conducted by the denomination, however, there is some evidence that this method may have deterred members with limited computer knowledge or access from responding.

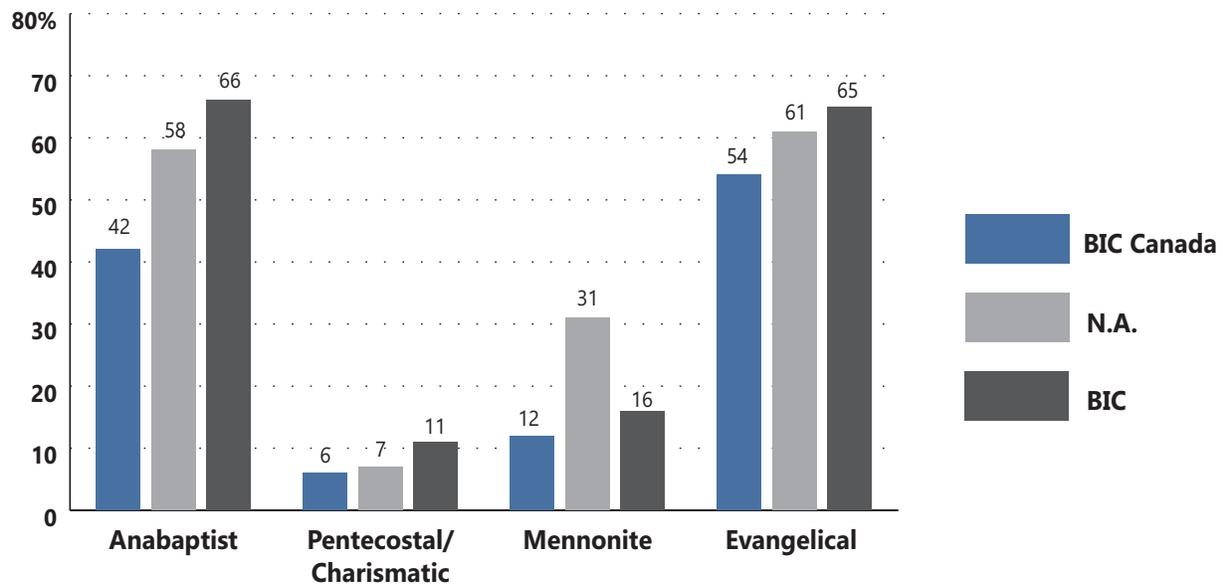
BRETHREN IN CHRIST CANADA

CONGREGATIONS: 54 | MEMBERS: 4,013

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

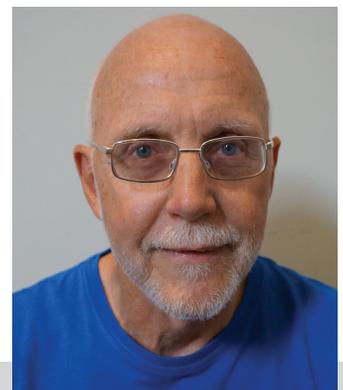
1. Eighty-nine percent of congregations and 32 percent of members in the original sample participated in the GAP.
2. The average size of congregations in the Brethren in Christ Canada is 74 members.
3. Fifty-five percent of respondents were women and 45 percent were men.
4. Thirty-seven percent of members live in rural areas and 63 percent in urban areas, making this church the most urban in North America among the GAP churches.
5. The average age of respondents is 50 years. Forty percent are within child-bearing age (18-45 years).
6. Fourteen percent of respondents are single, 7 percent separated or divorced (the highest percentage among North American churches), and 74 percent are married.
7. Nine percent reported being homemakers, only 7 percent are engaged in agriculture, 49 percent are professionals, and 24 percent do some kind of manual labor.
8. One percent of members did not graduate from high school, 30 percent received at least a high school diploma, and 70 percent are college graduates.
9. Eighty-six percent grew up in a home where neither parent was a member of the Brethren in Christ Canada—by far the highest percentage of any GAP church in North America.
10. Sixty-six percent of respondents reported being baptized in a church other than the Brethren in Christ Canada, the highest percentage of any North American GAP church.

Which of the following words describe your own religious beliefs?



“When it came to the church-specific questions, there was an overwhelming agreement that the church needs to continue planting churches. This will inspire and encourage the leadership to keep on that mission.”

-Research Associate Roger Massie

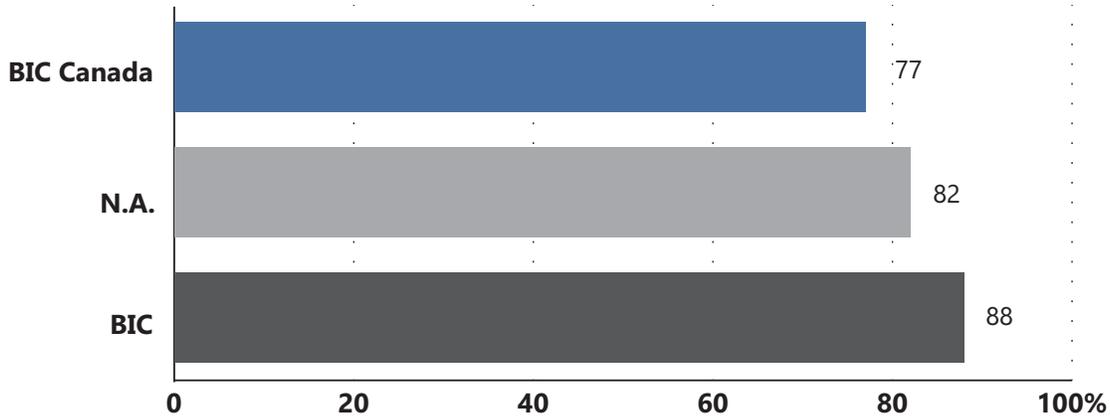


HISTORY

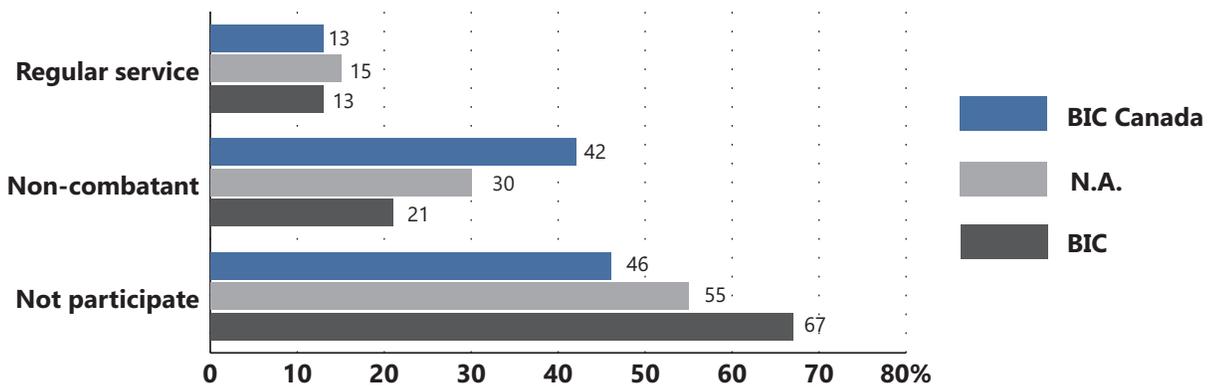
The Brethren in Christ formed in Pennsylvania, around 1778, following revival efforts in the area. This movement grew and soon spread into Ontario and across the United States through resettlements. Brethren in Canada began meeting with Brethren in the United States as a united conference around 1870. In addition to Ontario, groups also settled in what is now Saskatchewan in the early twentieth century and established congregations there.

During World War I, several Brethren in Christ men were incarcerated for refusing to enlist and to wear the uniform, even as non-combatants. Another challenge to the unity of the group was the movement to adopt Wesleyan Holiness teaching, which came through the Brethren in the U.S. Despite some strong resistance to this teaching, it was officially adopted and promoted in the Canadian church. Today the church seeks to connect its mission and Anabaptist perspective with Canada’s increasingly secular context.

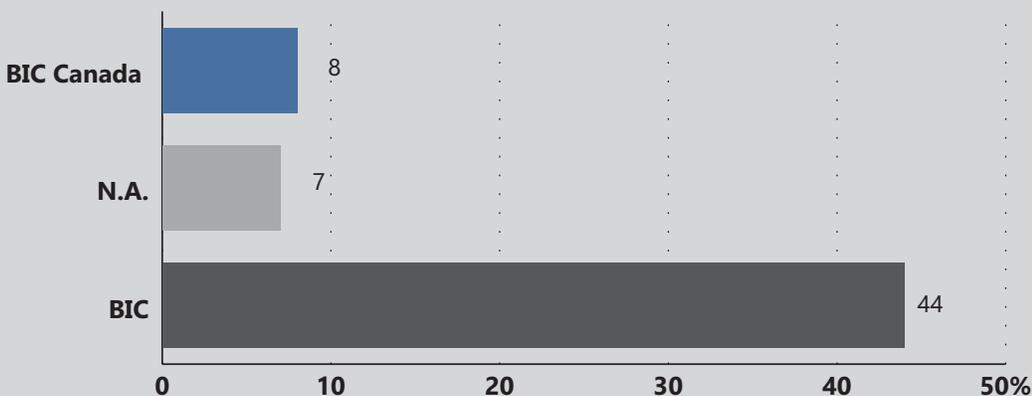
I believe the following statement: "Jesus is the only way to God and those without faith in Jesus will not be saved."



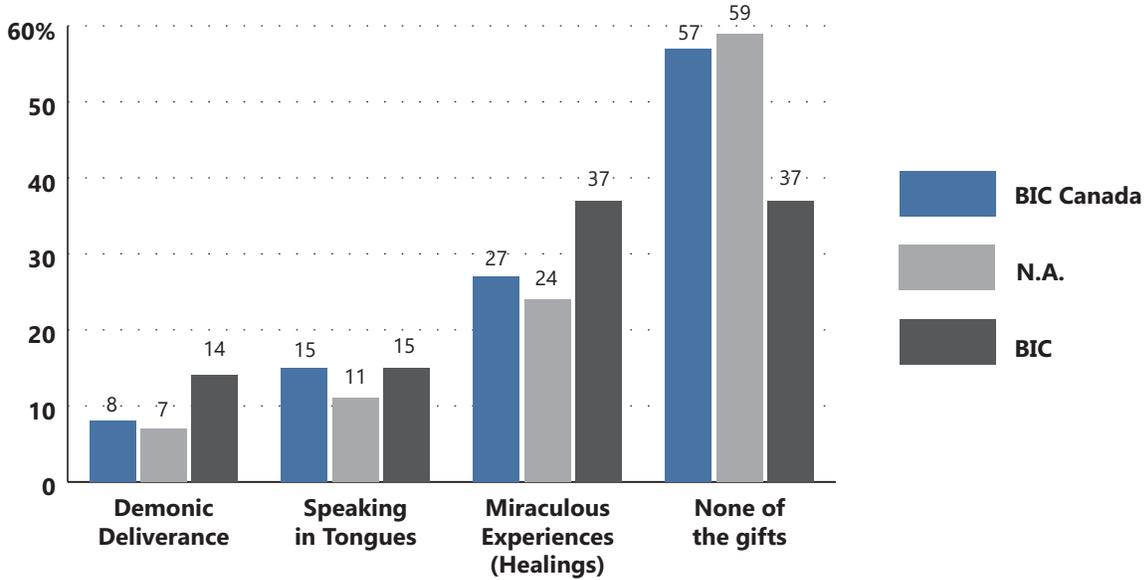
If the government required military service, what would you do?



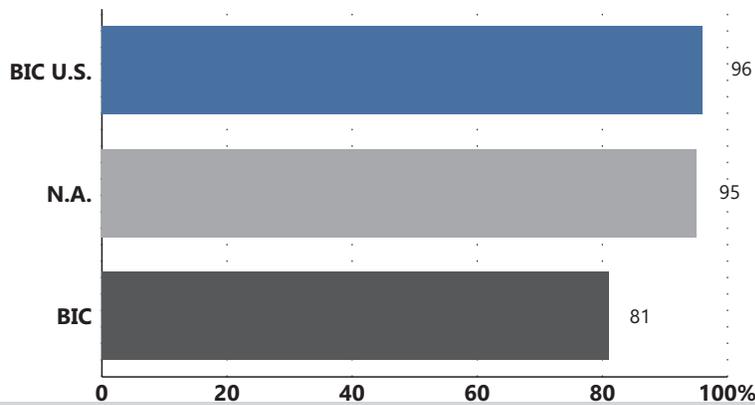
I believe that the Bible promises that followers of Christ will be more blessed and have better health than non-Christians.



Have you ever personally experienced the following manifestations of the Holy Spirit?



I believe that it is okay for Christians to vote.



Rachel Meredith, Research Associate Roger Massie, and Sheryl Roberts served as the GAP research team for the Brethren in Christ Canada.



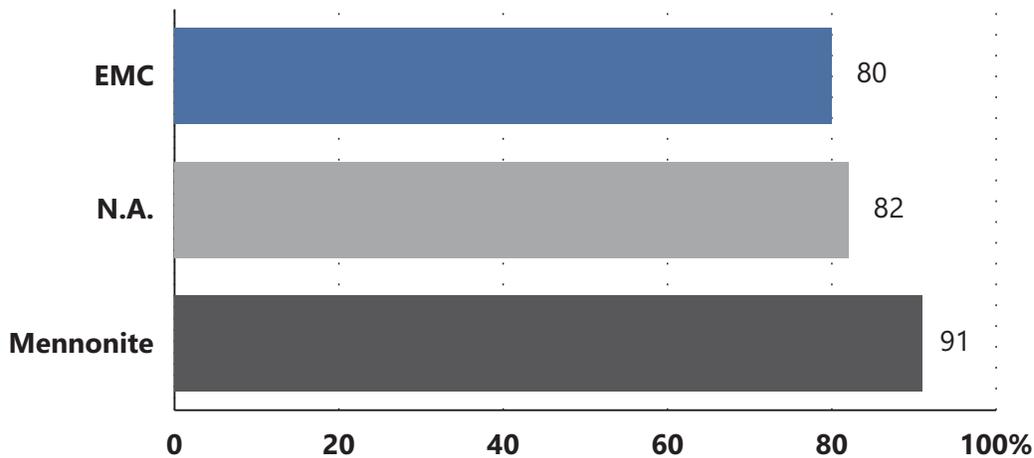
EVANGELICAL MENNONITE CONFERENCE (CANADA)

CONGREGATIONS: 62 | MEMBERS: 7,255

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

1. Seventy-one percent of congregations and 16 percent of members in the original sample participated in the GAP.
2. The average size of congregations in the Evangelical Mennonite Conference is 117 members.
3. Fifty percent of respondents were women and 50 percent were men.
4. Fifty-four percent of members live in rural areas and 46 percent in urban areas.
5. The average age of respondents is 47 years, making the Evangelical Mennonite Conference the youngest North American church in the GAP. Fifty-one percent are within childbearing age (18-45 years), the highest percentage among North American conferences.
6. Seventeen percent of respondents are single—a reflection of the younger age of this church—77 percent are married.
7. Seventeen percent are homemakers and 25 percent are engaged in agriculture—both percentages being the highest among any GAP church in North America. Only 37 percent are professionals—the lowest among North American GAP churches.
8. Seventy-seven percent have graduated from high school, and 41 percent from college—educational levels that are the lowest among North American GAP churches.
9. Fifty-four percent grew up in a home where neither parent was a member of the Evangelical Mennonite Conference.
10. Forty-three percent of respondents reported being baptized in a church other than the Evangelical Mennonite Conference.

I believe the following statement: “Jesus is the only way to God and those without faith in Jesus will not be saved.”



“We [the Evangelical Mennonite Conference] are more charismatic than I thought we were.”

-Abe Bergen, EMC representative

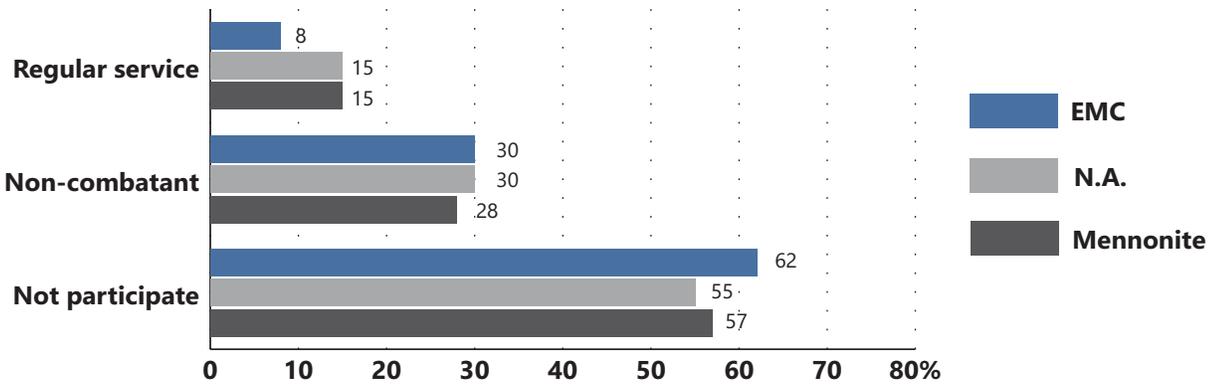


HISTORY

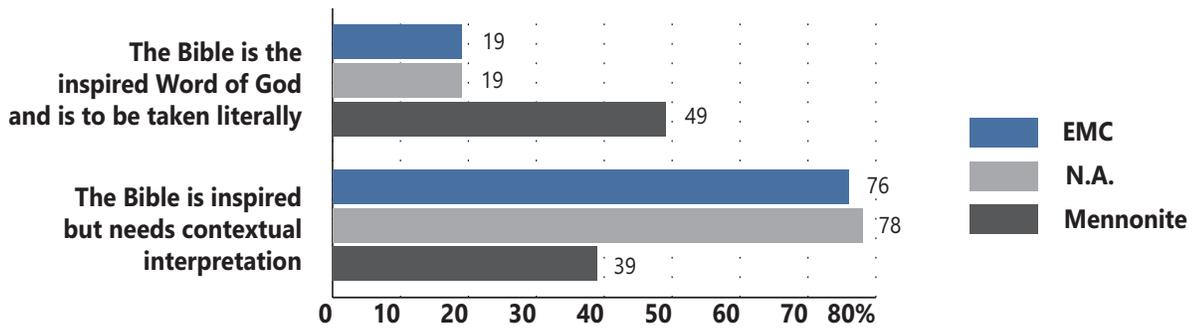
The Evangelical Mennonite Church of Canada traces its roots to the Molotschana Mennonite settlement in Russia, where a small group dissatisfied with colony and church leadership formed in 1812, eventually calling itself *Kleine Gemeinde*. Sixty families from the *Kleine Gemeinde* immigrated to Manitoba in Canada in 1874. Contact with John Holdeman of the Church of God in Christ—an offshoot of the Mennonite Church in Ohio—led to a traumatic schism within the *Kleine Gemeinde* in 1881.

The Holdeman schism left leaders suspicious of innovation and change, and the group steadily lost families as the years progressed. Following World War I, however, the EMC started allowing automobiles, developed Sunday School and young people’s meetings, and introduced choir singing, among other changes. These developments were accompanied by remarkable growth, leading to new education and mission efforts in the late 1930s. A strong emphasis on missions has continued to the present day. The EMC is currently experiencing a demographic shift from being a predominantly rural church to an increasingly urban one.

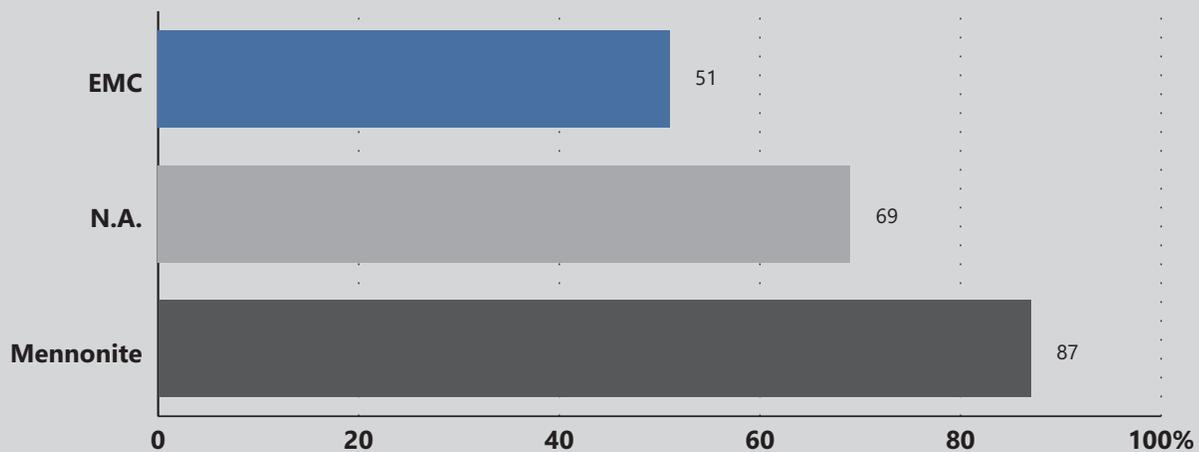
If the government required military service, what would you do?



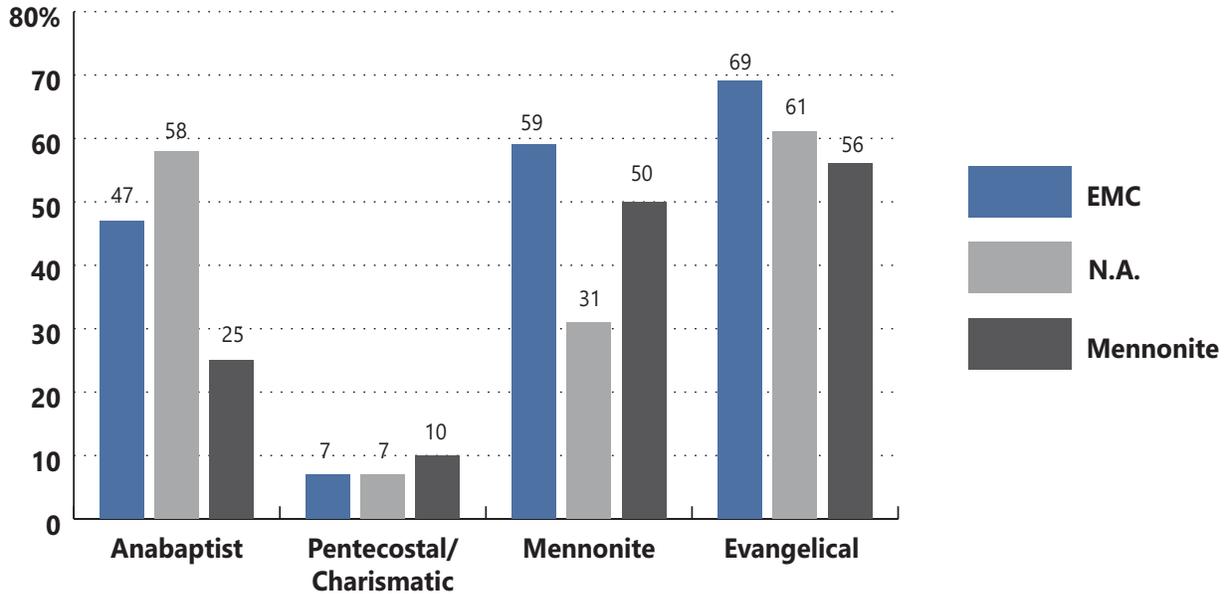
Statement that best expresses beliefs about the Bible:



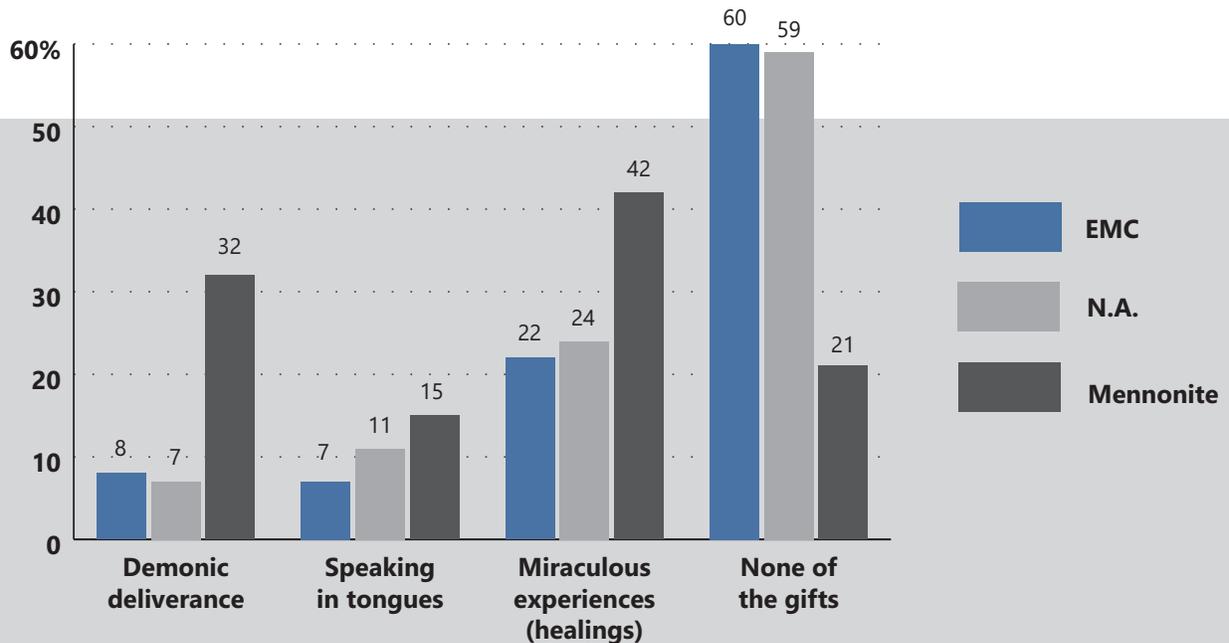
My congregation allows women to have equal ministry roles.



Which of the following words describe your own religious beliefs?



Have you ever personally experienced the following manifestations of the Holy Spirit?

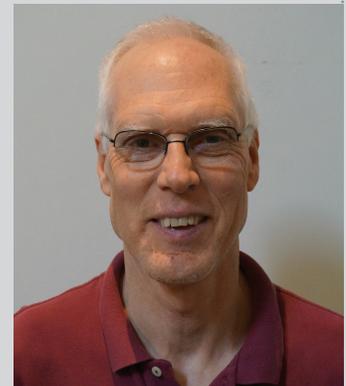


U.S. CONFERENCE OF MENNONITE BRETHREN CHURCHES

CONGREGATIONS: 177 | MEMBERS: 35,125

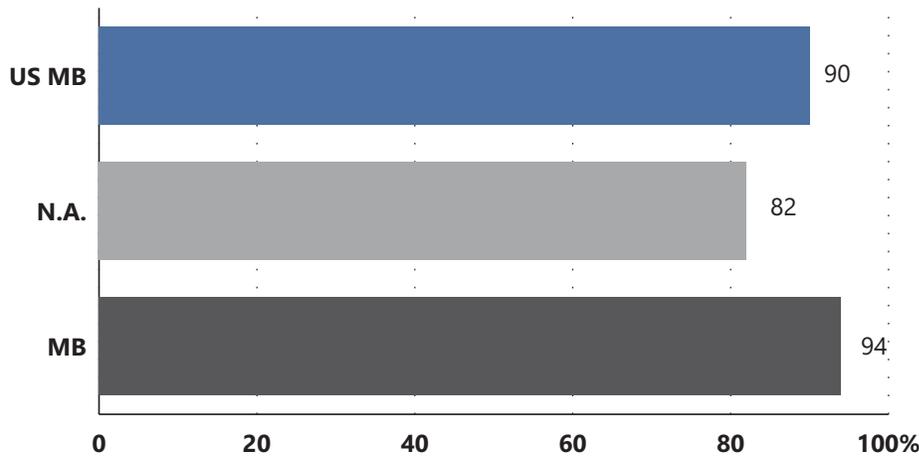
DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

1. The average size of congregations in the U.S. Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches is 198 members.
2. Fifty-two percent of respondents were women and 48 percent were men.
3. Fifty-two percent of members live in rural areas—48 percent in urban areas.
4. The average age of respondents is 58 years, making the U.S. Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches one of the oldest conferences in the GAP study—second only to the Arbeitsgemeinschaft Mennonitischer Gemeinden in Deutschland (Germany). Twenty-three percent are within childbearing age (18-45 years).
5. Eighty-seven percent are married and 5 percent are widowed.
6. Ten percent are homemakers, 13 percent are engaged in agriculture, 19 percent in manual labor, and 50 percent are professionals.
7. All have graduated from high school and 62 percent from college.
8. Nearly one-half (51%) grew up in a home where one or both parents was a member of a Mennonite Brethren congregation—this is the highest intergenerational membership percentage of any North American conference.
9. Forty-four percent of respondents reported being baptized in a church other than a Mennonite Brethren congregation.

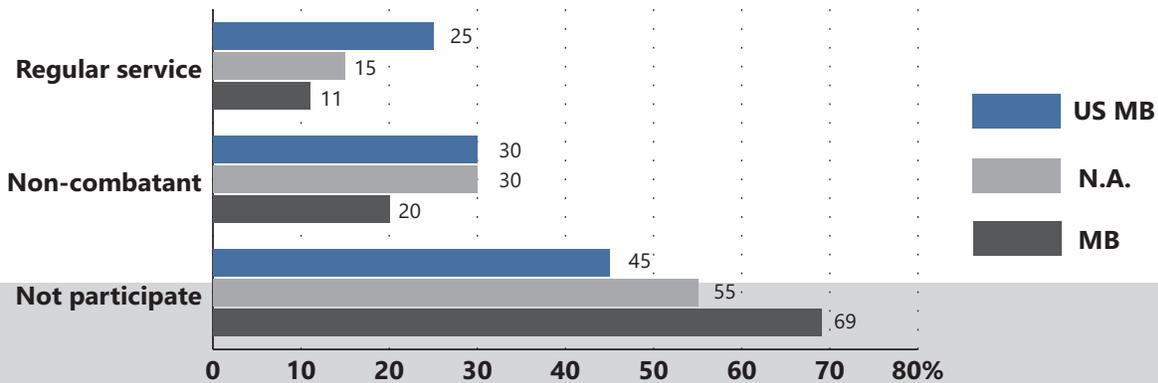


Research Associate Lynn Jost

I believe the following statement: "Jesus is the only way to God and those without faith in Jesus will not be saved."



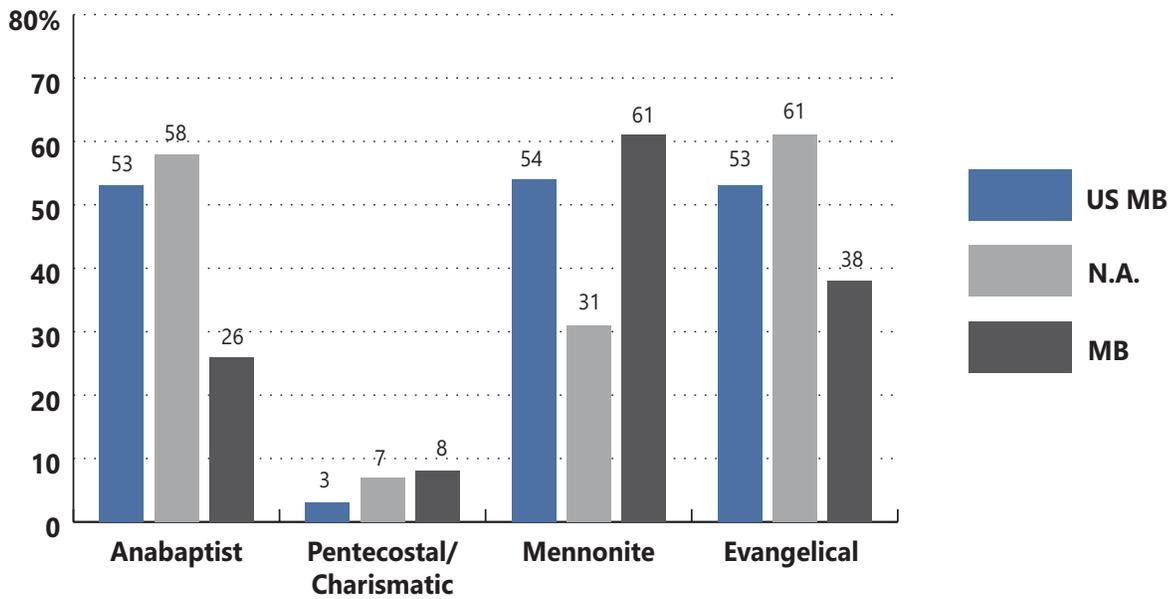
If the government required military service, what would you do?



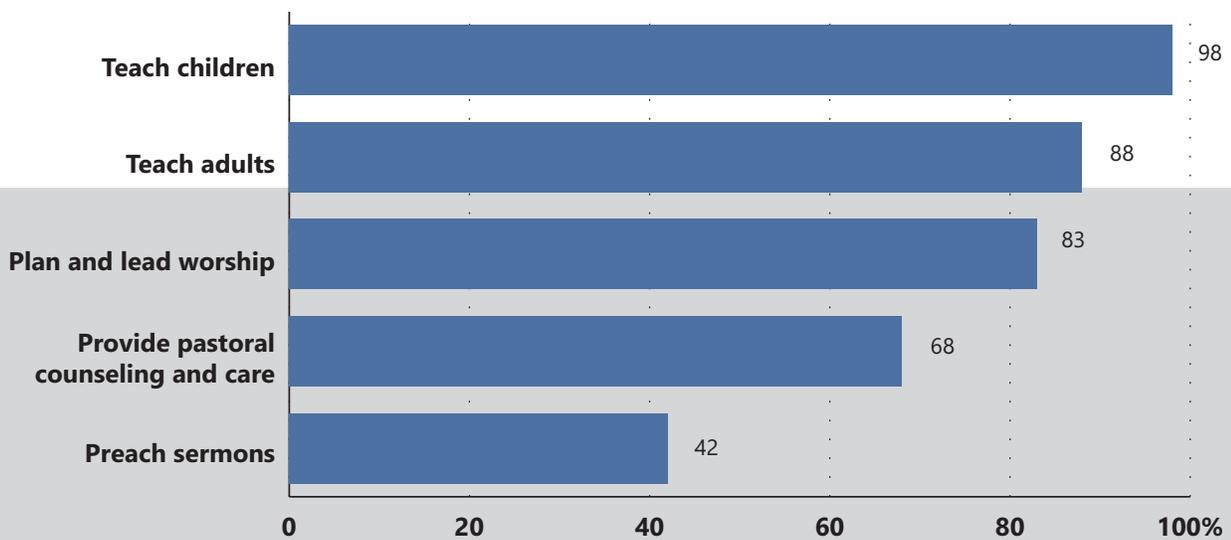
HISTORY

The Mennonite Brethren church in North America has its roots in the mass migrations of Russian Mennonite Brethren to the continent in the late 1800s. The churches that grew out of these migrations formed the General Conference of Mennonite Brethren, joining congregations in the U.S. and Canada in mission and education efforts. Mission work, both domestically and internationally, was of great importance to the conference. In the 1920s a second wave of Mennonite Brethren migration from Russia to Canada added to the existing conference. Partially because they did not receive a wave of Russian immigration at this time, MBs in the U.S. more rapidly adopted English and other cultural trends. By the 1950s, the MB population in Canada surpassed MB membership in the U.S., leading to increasing separation along national lines within the General Conference. The General Conference dissolved in 2002 and the US Conference of Mennonite Brethren has since existed as its own conference.

Which of the following words describe your own religious beliefs?

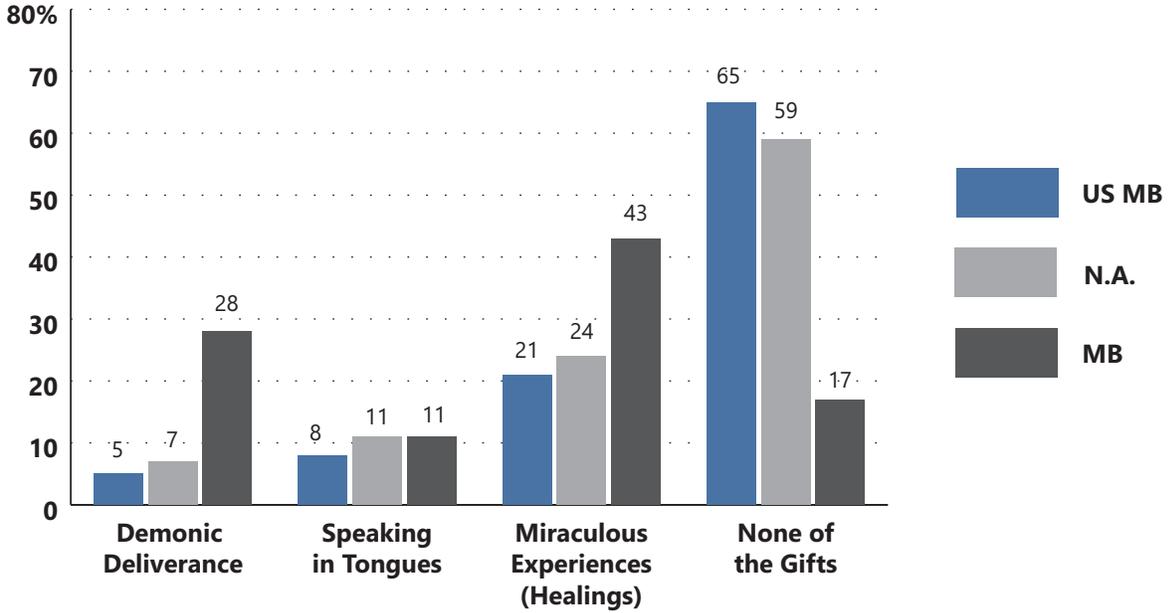


Which of the following are acceptable for women to do in church?

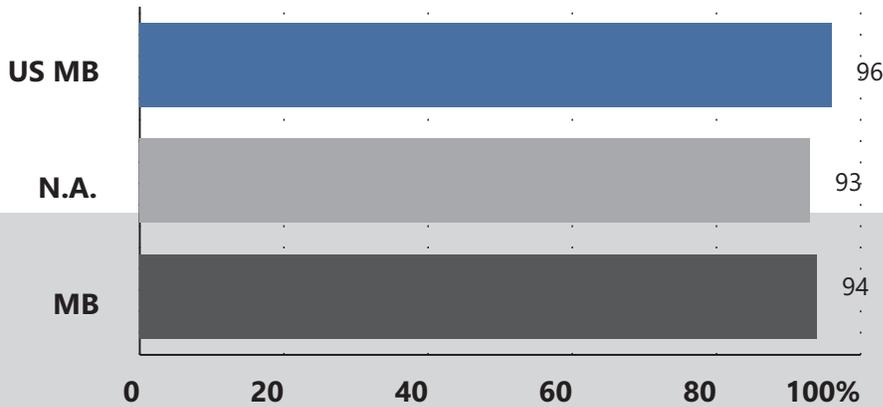


Respondents were asked to check all that apply.

Have you ever personally experienced the following manifestations of the Holy Spirit?



It is very important to be saved or born again.



CHALLENGES

Because of low response rates in the original congregational sample, the U.S. Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches surveyed additional congregations and respondents.

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