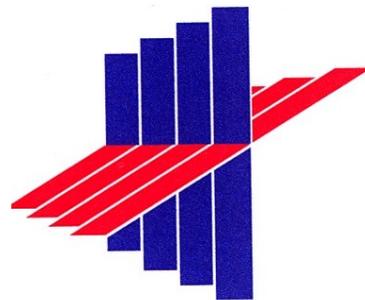


# Churchgoing in England and Norfolk today

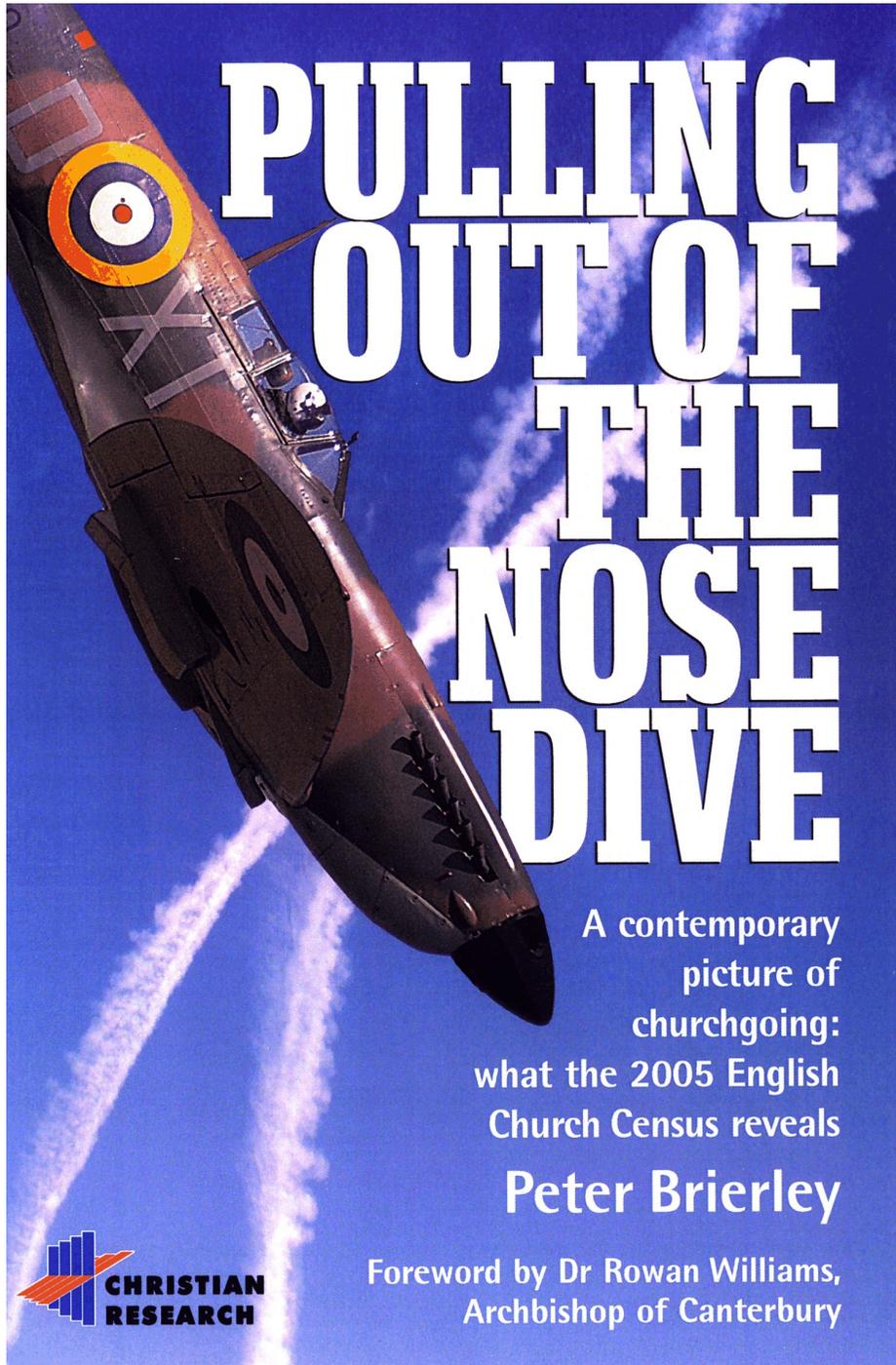
Presentation to Sheriff's  
Conference, Norwich,  
17th April 2007



**CHRISTIAN RESEARCH**

Some key  
findings  
from the  
2005  
English  
Church  
Census





**Results  
were  
published  
in this  
book**



# Previous English Church Censuses were held in

1979

1989

1998



**In May 2005 all 37,500 churches in England were asked to give attendance and other details**



**The sects were not included**



**Information  
came from  
just over  
half of them**

Are we supposed to count how many  
are in at the start of your service or  
how many there are left  
at the end?



## OVERALL Finding: Numbers continue to decline ...

- 1979 5.4 million 12%
- 1989 4.7 million 10%
- 1998 3.7 million 7.5%
- 2005 3.2 million 6.3%

... but the rate of decline is slowing ...

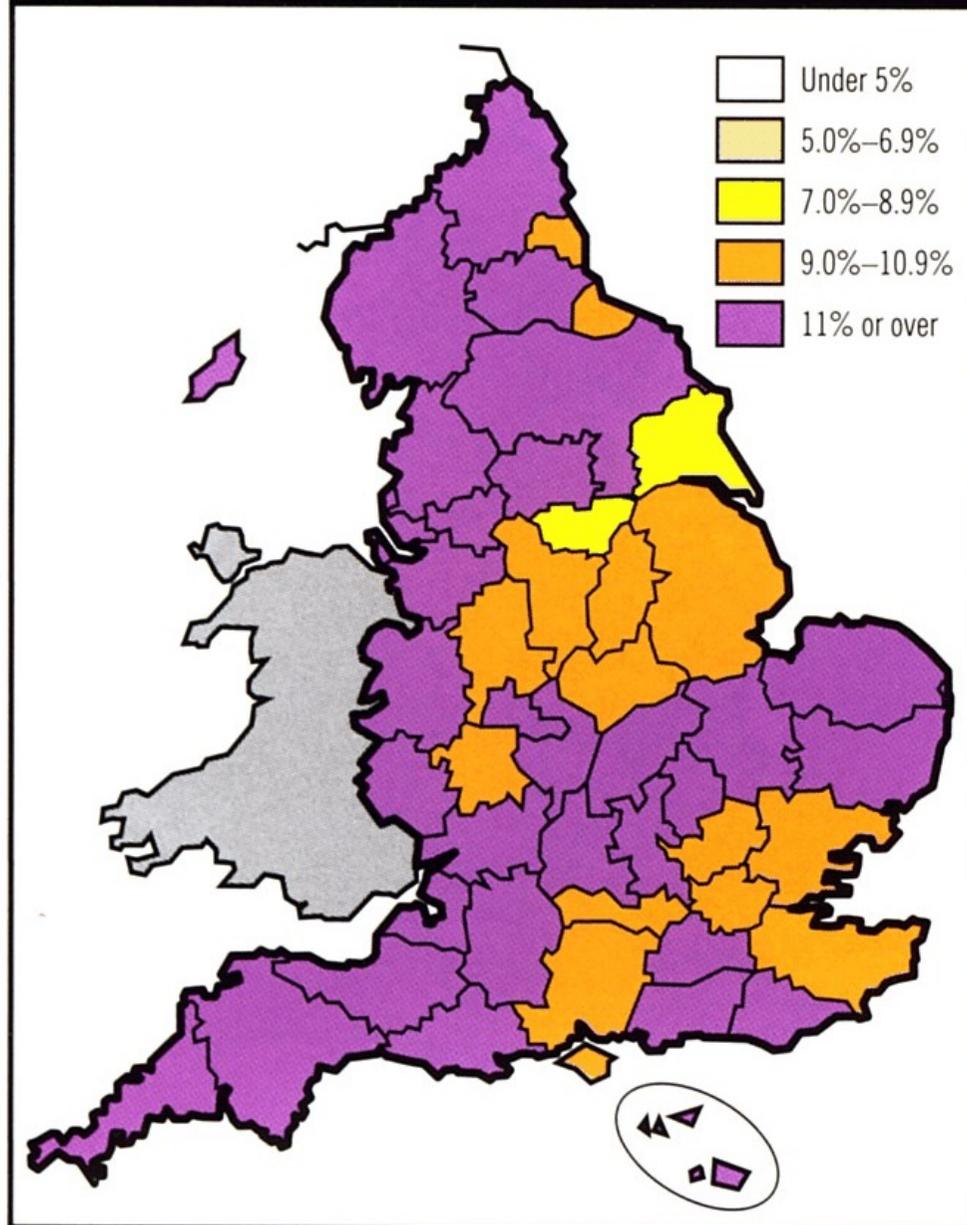
1 million drop in 9 years

$\frac{1}{2}$  million drop in 7 years

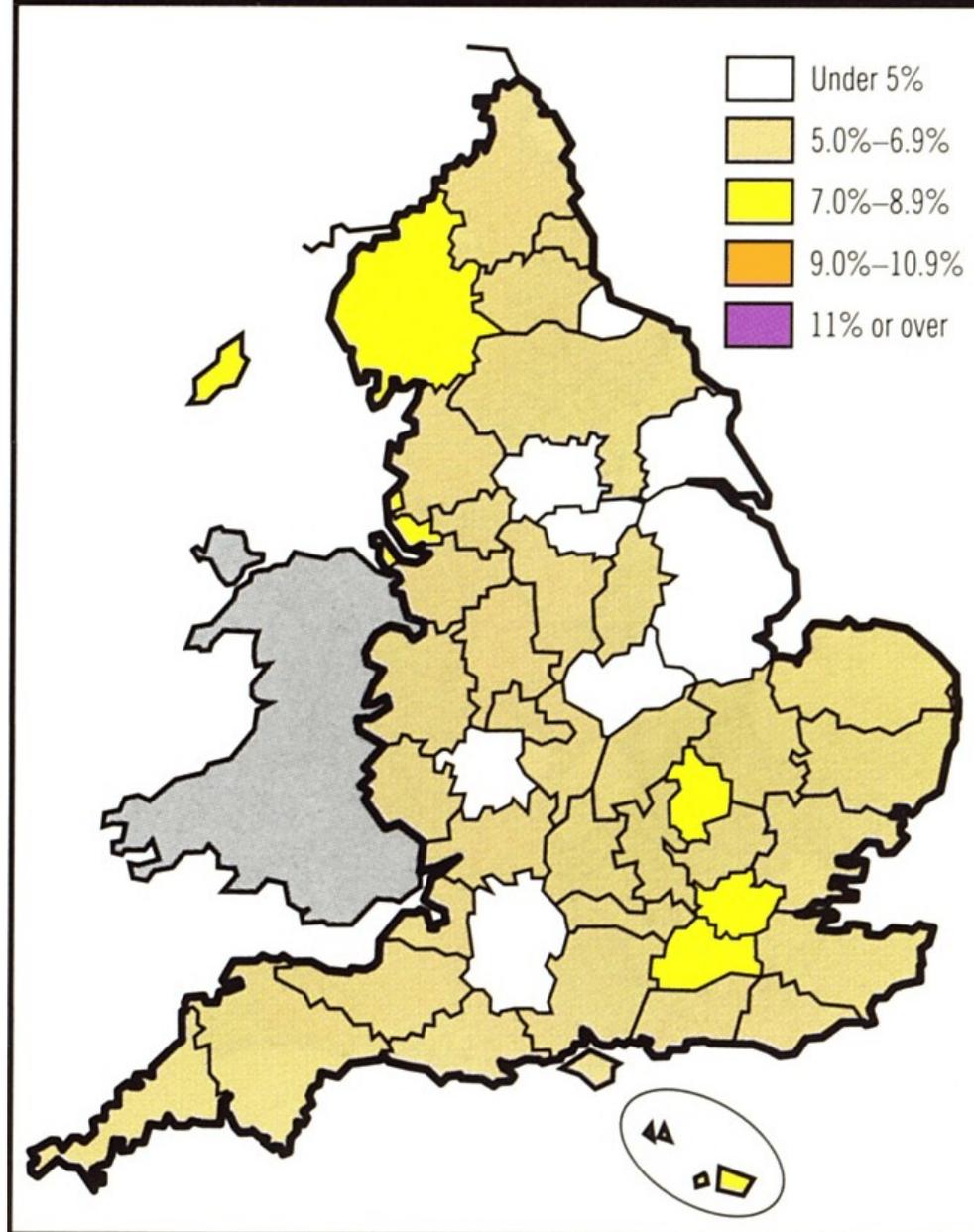
## Numbers continue to decline in Norfolk also ...

- 1979 85,000 12%
- 1989 74,000 10%
- 1998 54,000 6.8%
- 2005 44,000 5.3%

**Figure 2.11.1** Total Sunday church attendance (1979)



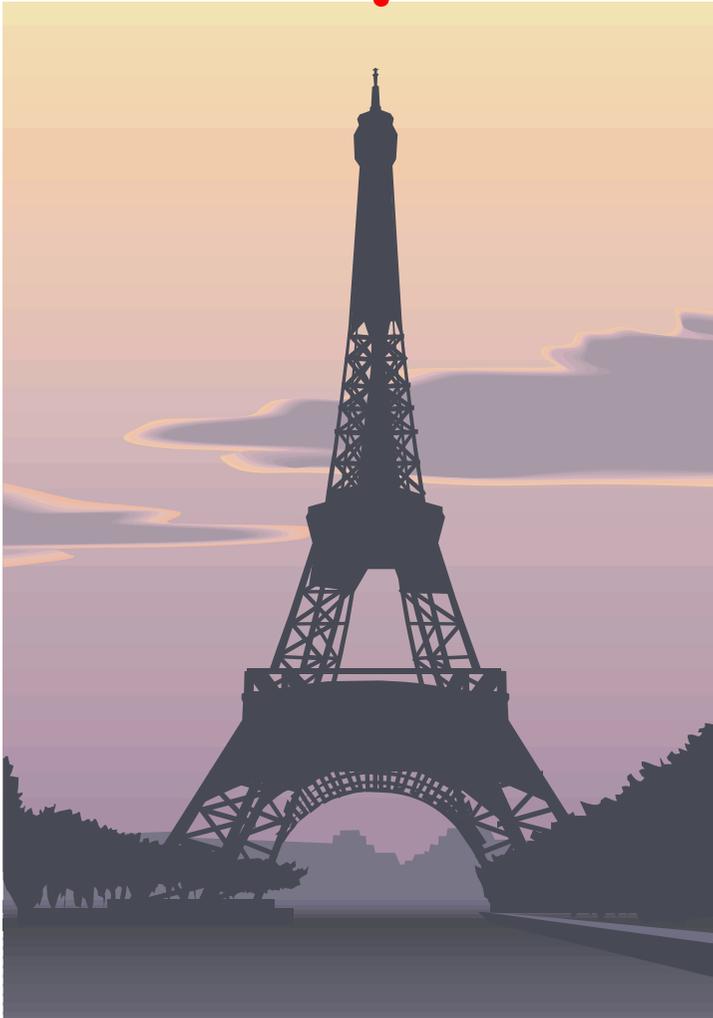
**Figure 2.11.9** Total Sunday church attendance (2005)



# Reasons for the decline

- Drastic loss of young people in the 1990s
- Lack of relevance of church to life
- Increase in Sunday Trading
- Attraction of alternative activities
- Changing patterns of family & family life

# A contemporary picture of churchgoing

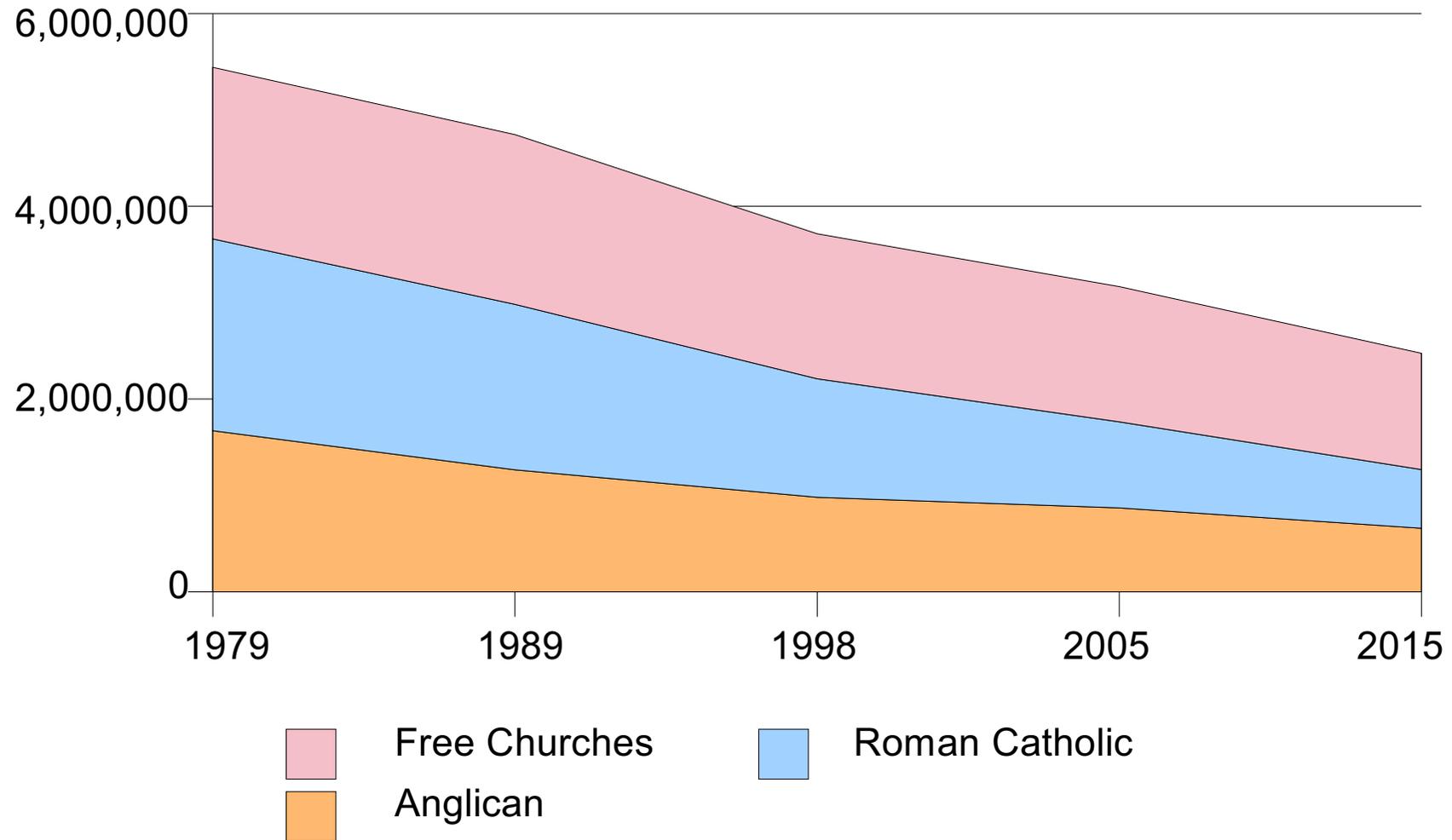


4 strengths  
and 3  
weaknesses



1st Weakness:  
Not enough  
evangelism  
- more deaths  
than conversions!

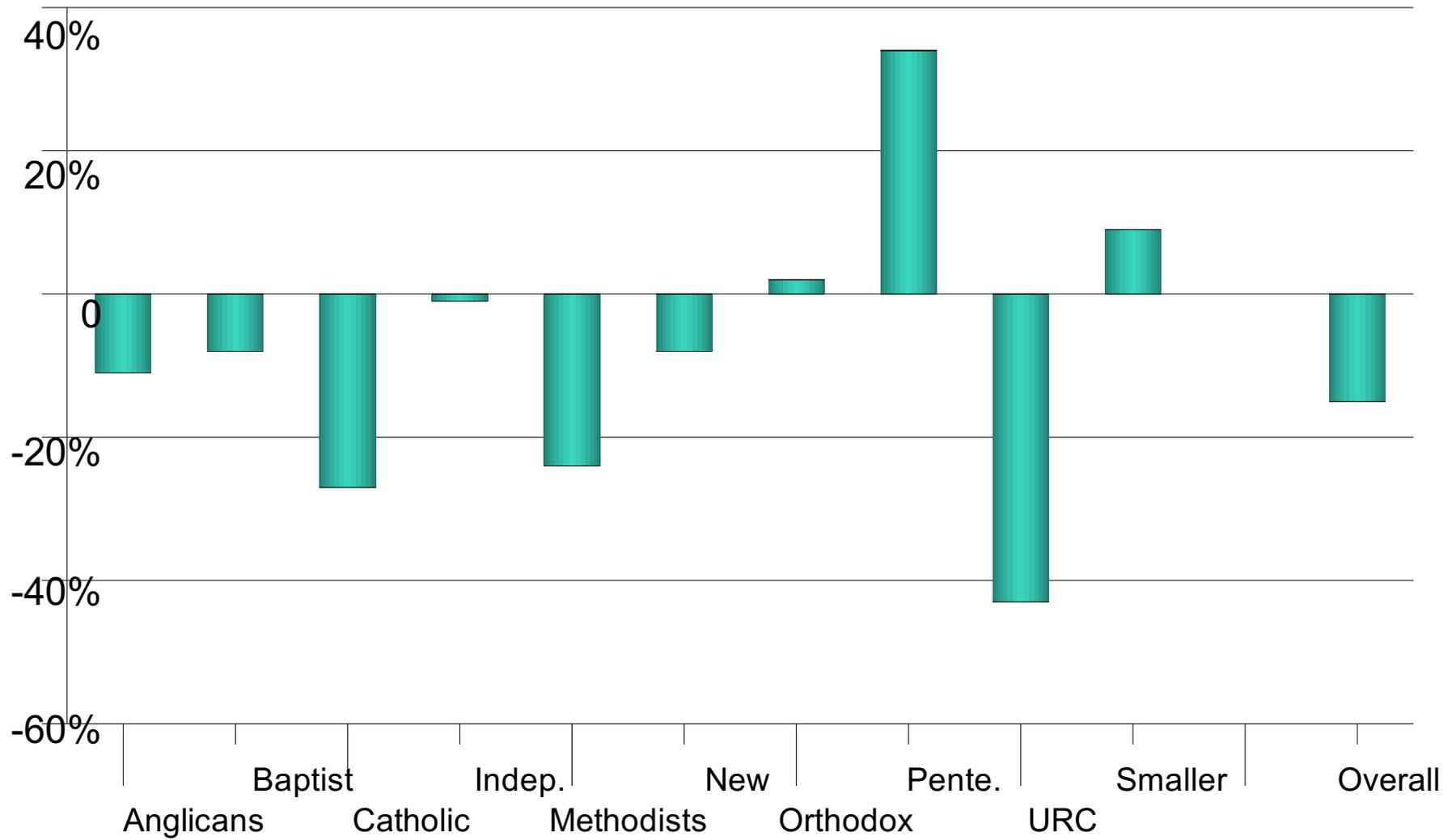
# Usual Sunday Church Attendance in England 1979-2015



# 3.2 million Sunday churchgoers by Denomination, 2005

890,000	Roman Catholic
870,000	Anglican
289,000	Methodist
288,000	Pentecostal
250,000	Baptist
190,000	Independent
180,000	New Churches
100,000	Smaller Denominations
70,000	United Reformed Church
26,000	Orthodox

# Denominational change 1998-2005

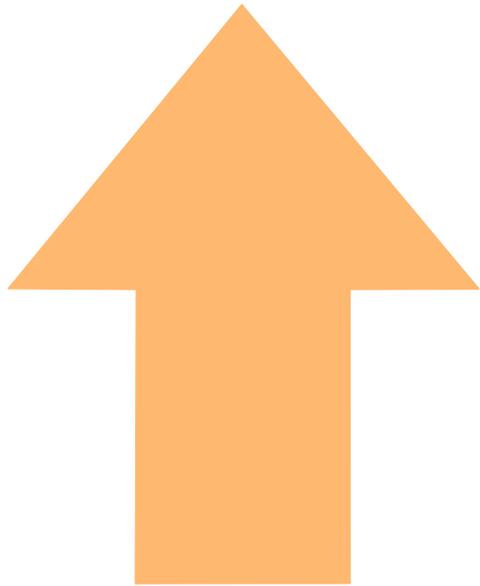


Nationally the much  
smaller non-Sunday  
midweek worship is  
growing



42% of  
churches  
hold a  
midweek  
service

**Midweek  
worship is  
growing**



**240,000 midweek in  
1998  
(=0.5% of population)**

**310,000 in 2005  
(=0.6% of population)  
0.6% + 6.3% = 6.9%  
average weekly church  
attendance**

# Not enough evangelism: let's go back to the basic numbers

3,720,000 in 1998

3,170,000 in 2005 = a fall of

550,000 in 7 years

That 550,000 drop comes from

Gains 350,000 less

Losses 900,000

38% of English churches have held an Alpha Course



*Alpha*

# Gains

100,000 conversions through Alpha courses

50,000 conversions through other courses

100,000 came to faith in other ways

100,000 children starting to attend =

350,000 new people in church

Equivalent to 1,000 starting every week

# Losses

300,000 deaths

(more deaths than conversions)

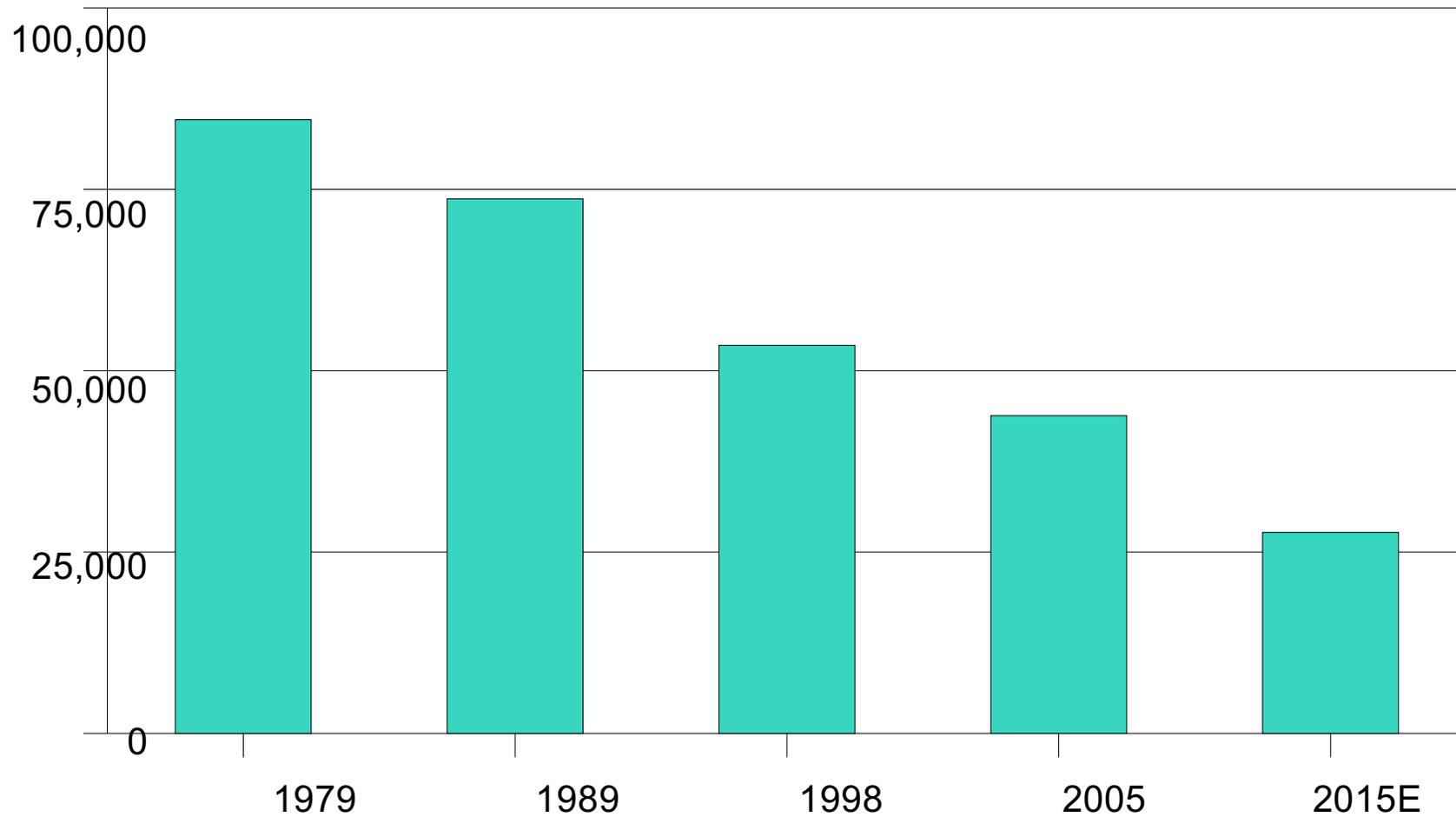
250,000 leave church for good

350,000 equivalent come less often =

900,000 fewer people in church

Equivalent to 2,500 stopping every week

# Norfolk attendance could be down to 28,000 by 2015

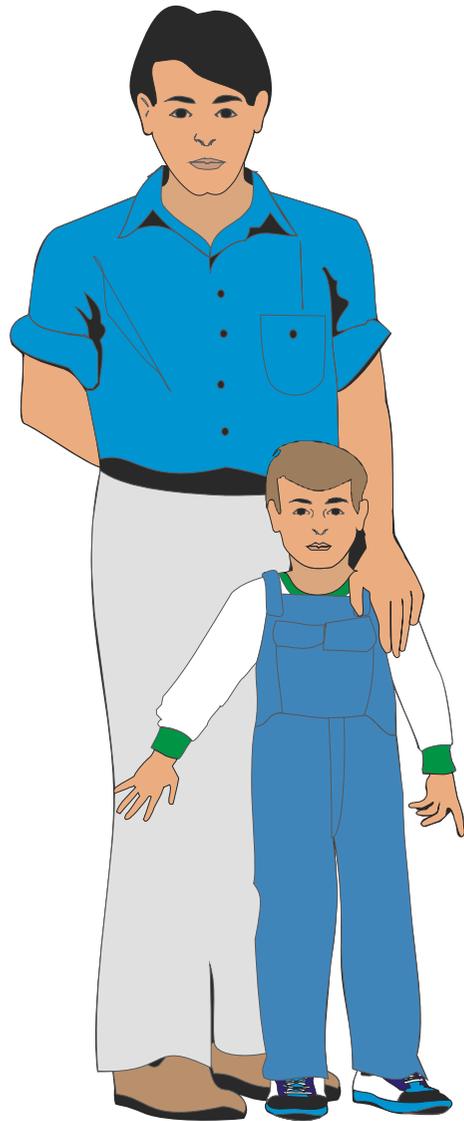




Over next 10  
years, if  
present trends  
continue ...

Ordinary mortality could  
claim 9,400 Norfolk  
churchgoers

- almost certainly more  
deaths than conversions



1,000 conversions per  
year (for 10 years) would  
overturn this!

Equivalent to an average  
of one person coming to  
faith per church in  
Norfolk each year for 10  
years



1st Strength:  
London is  
different!

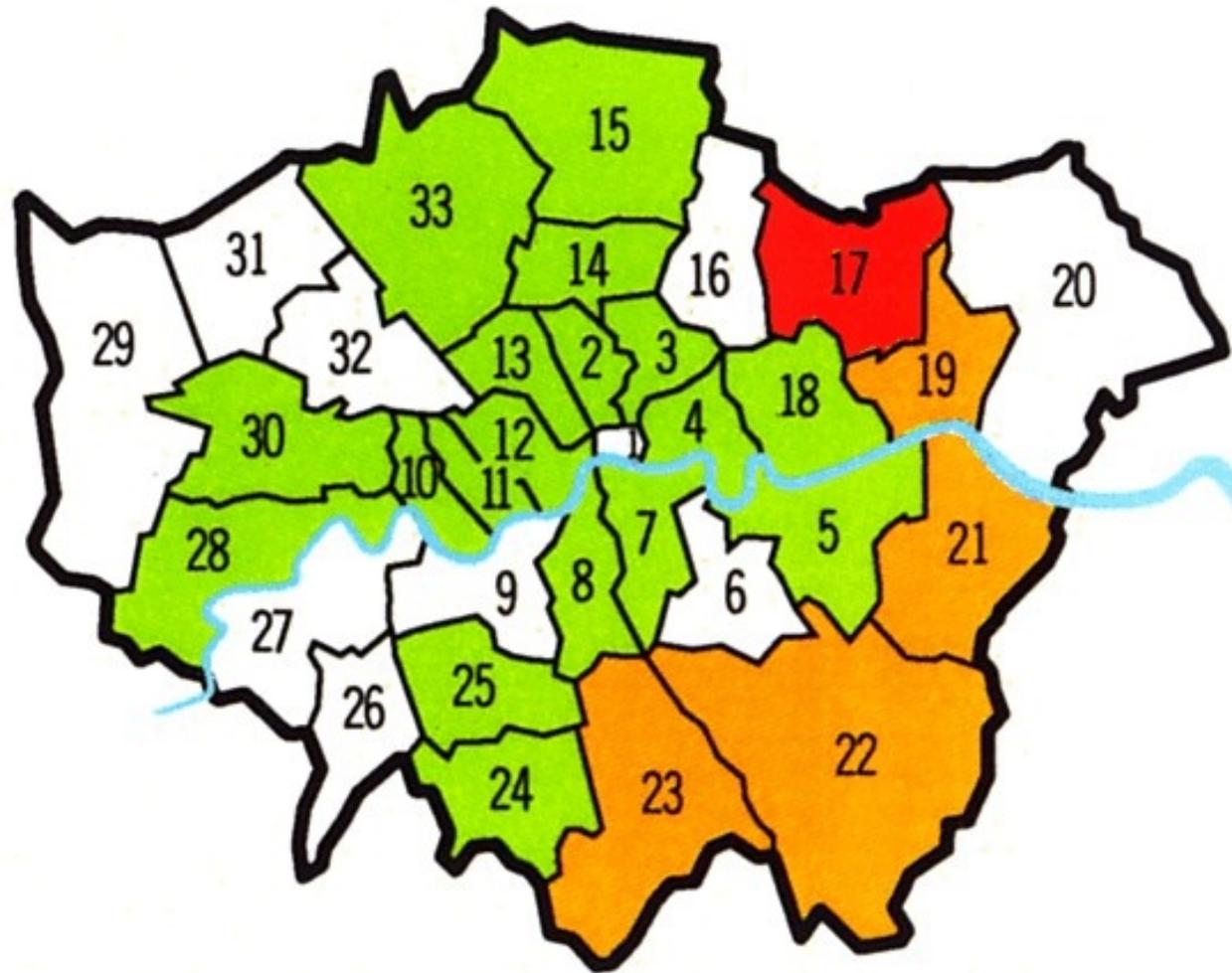
# The churches in London are larger on average

- 11% of all the churches
- 20% of all the churchgoers
- ... so it has larger churches
- Average size 150 to 75 outside

In London the numbers  
have recently  
increased ...

- 1998    618,000    8.6%
- 2005    623,000    8.3%
- Numbers have also increased  
in rural Herefordshire

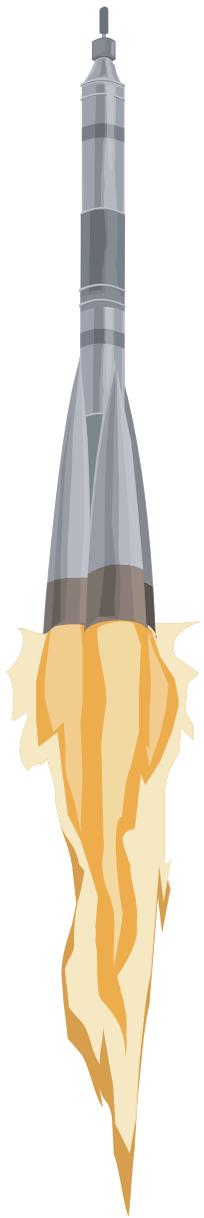
Growth  
greater  
than 1%



GREATER LONDON

25% of  
London's 4,100  
churches are  
Pentecostal  
(against 6%  
nationally)

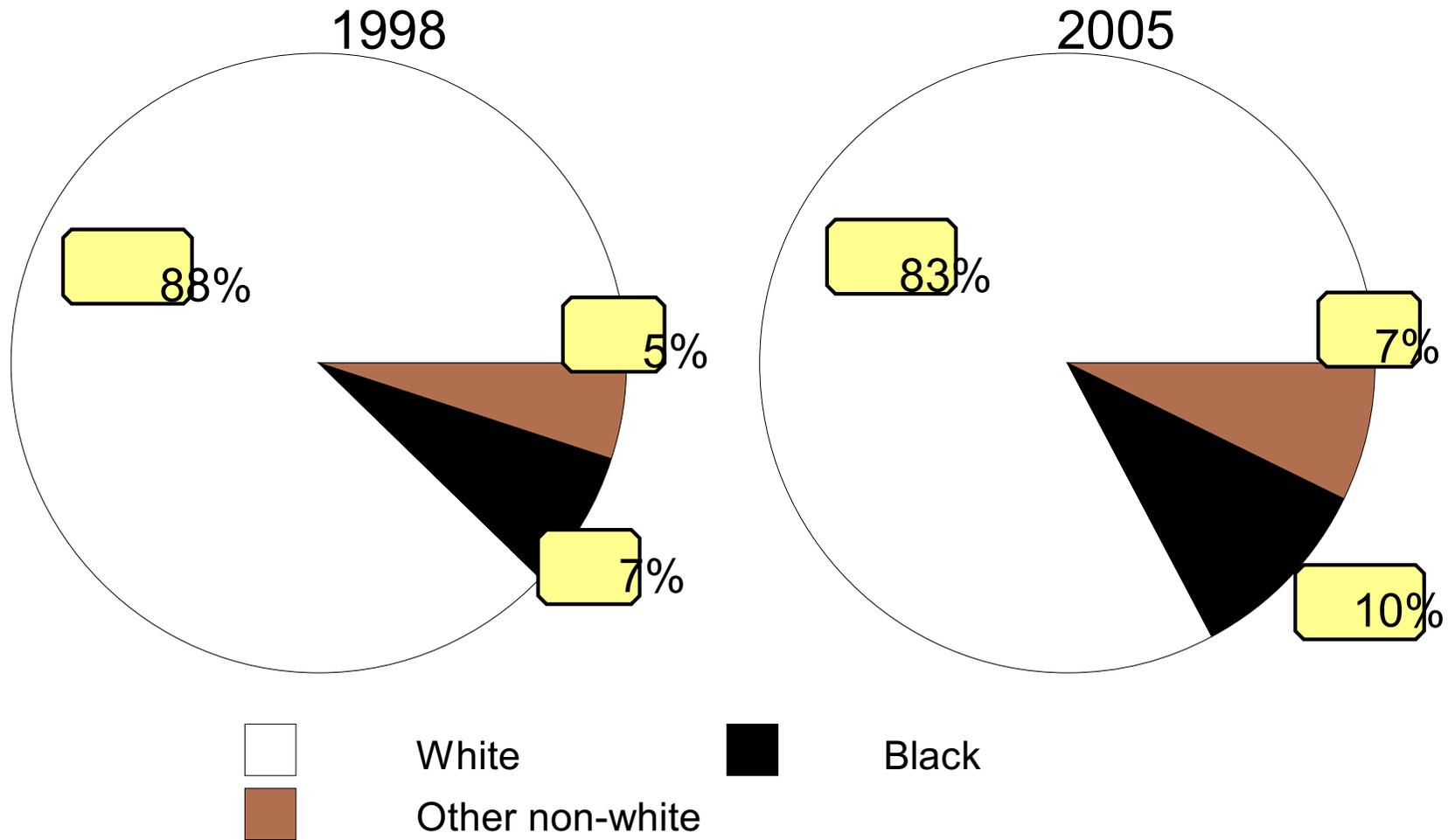
The  
Pentecostal  
Capital: 53%  
of England's  
Pentecostals  
are in London



## 2nd Strength: Ethnic churches are taking off!

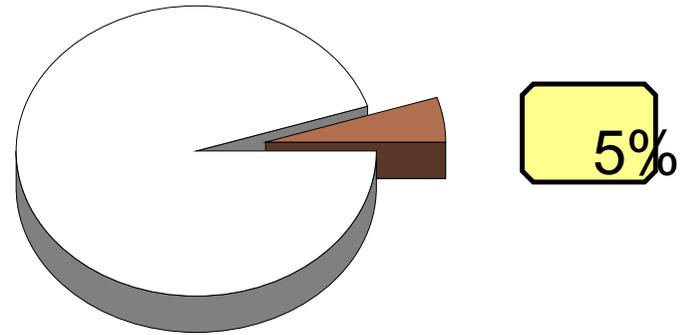
- But not quite as fast as a rocket!

# 10% of English churchgoers are now black!





In Norfolk only 5% of churchgoers are non-white



Non-white



White

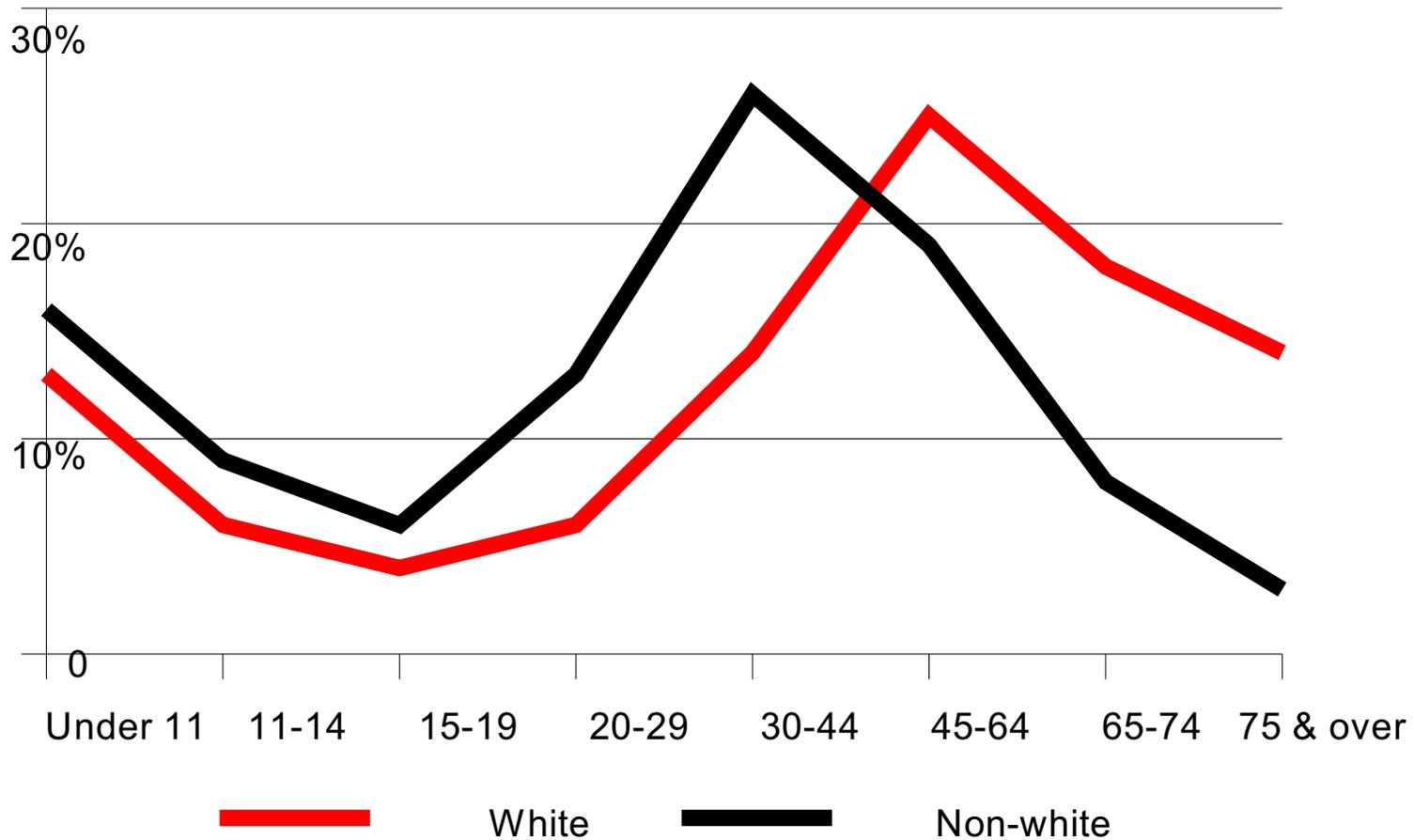


**Black Churches are growing  
- explosively!**

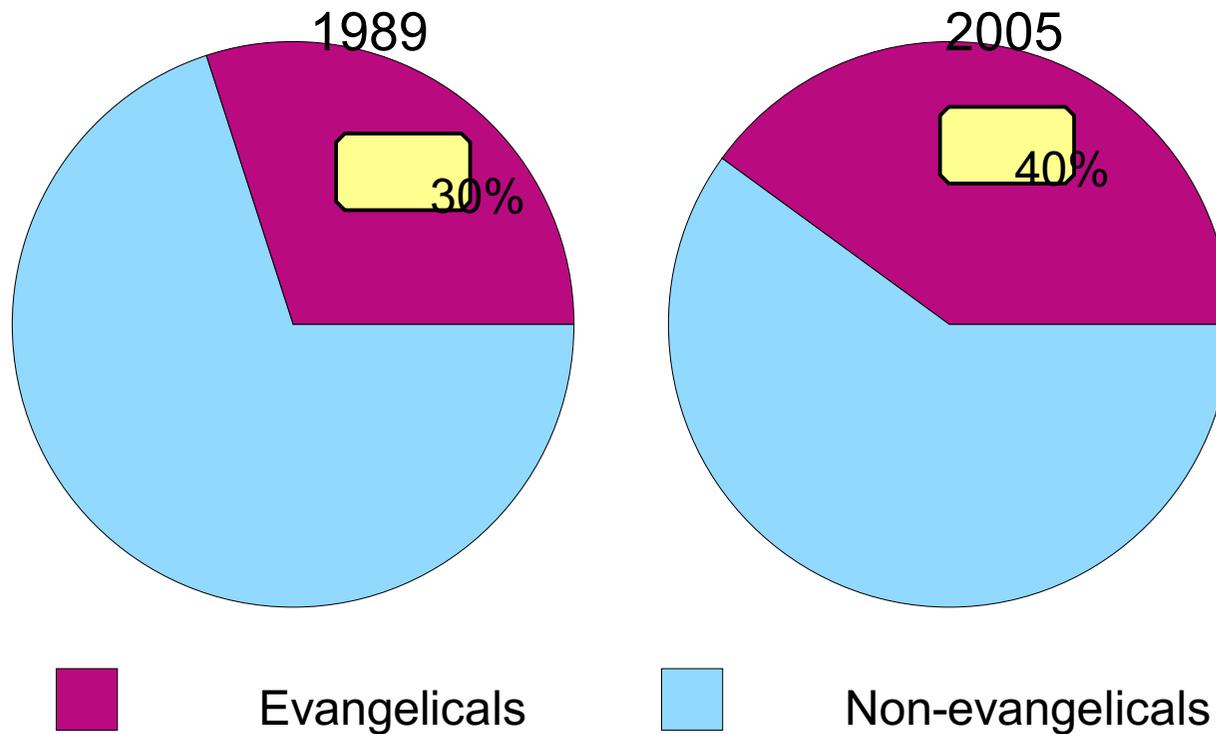
# Other ethnic churches are growing also, especially in Greater London

- Chinese churches
- Korean churches
- Indian churches such as the Tamil church
- White European churches such as the Croatian, Italian, Portuguese, Spanish and Swiss churches

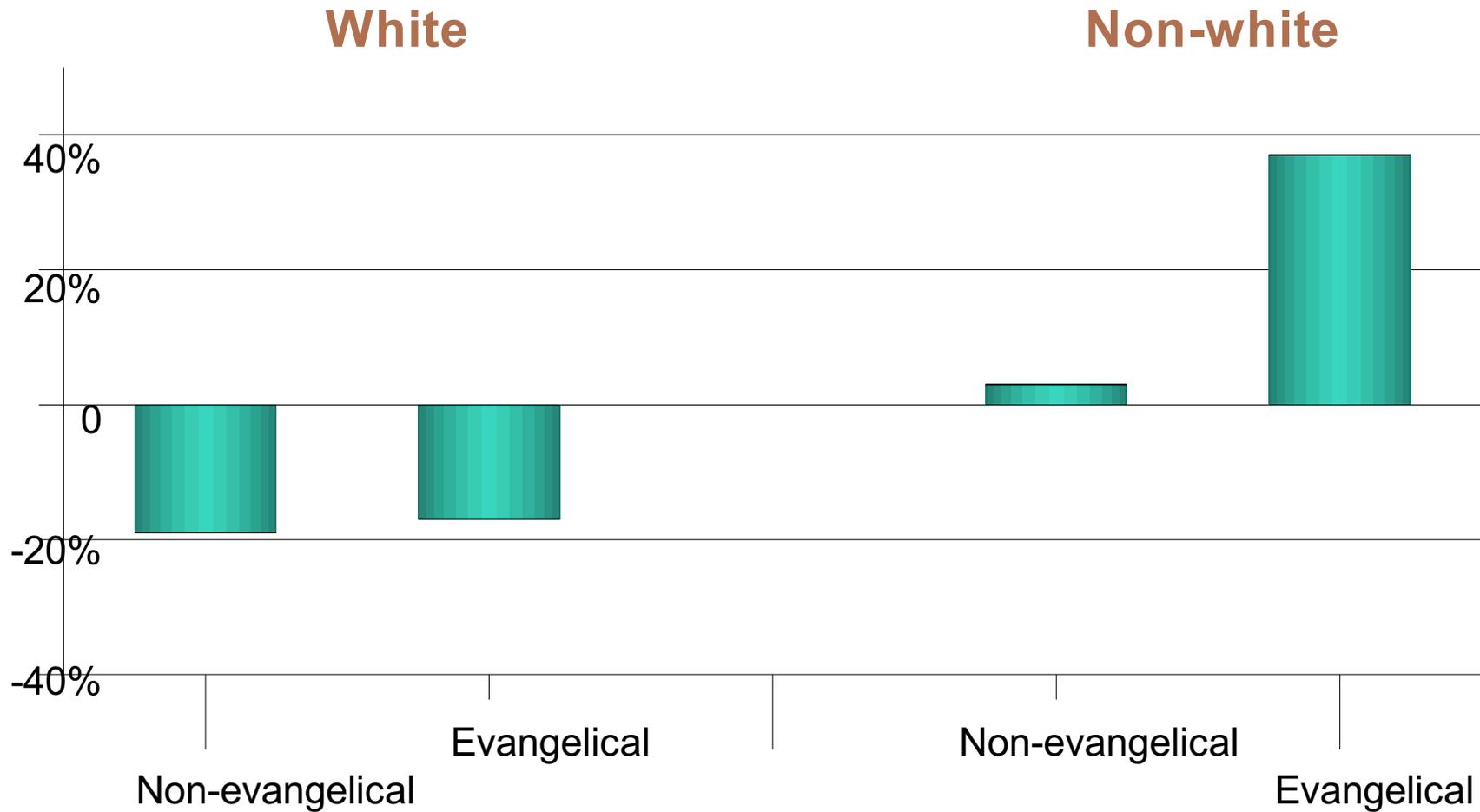
# Ethnic minority churchgoers are younger than others (average age 34 to 47)



# The percentage of Evangelicals is increasing, but ...



... but only because they include so many non-white Evangelicals

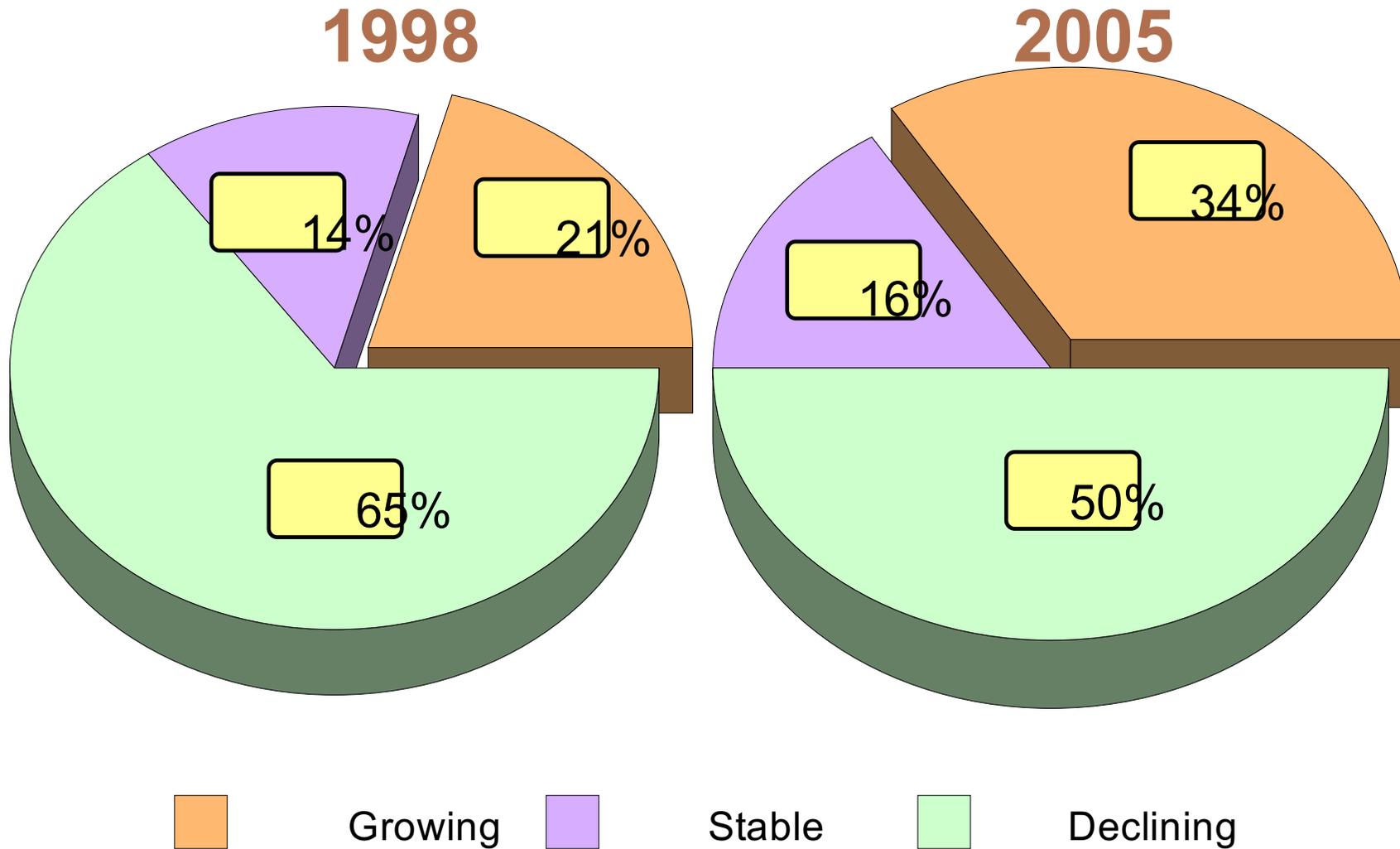




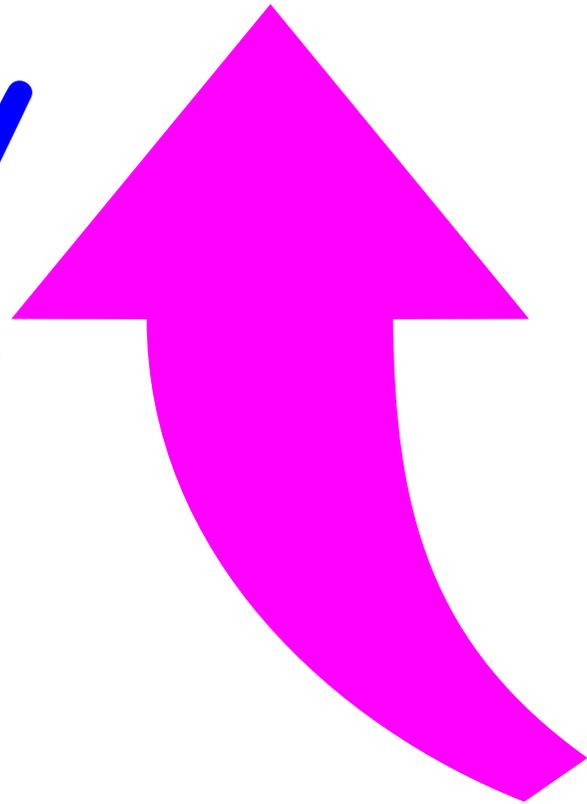
3rd  
Strength:  
More  
growing  
churches in  
2005 than in  
1998

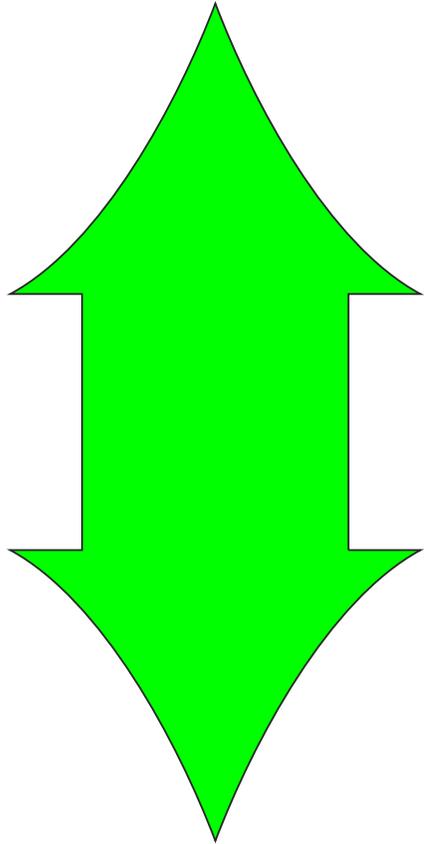
Growth = At least 10% over 9 years

# More growing churches!



The larger the  
church, the  
more likely  
it is to be  
growing





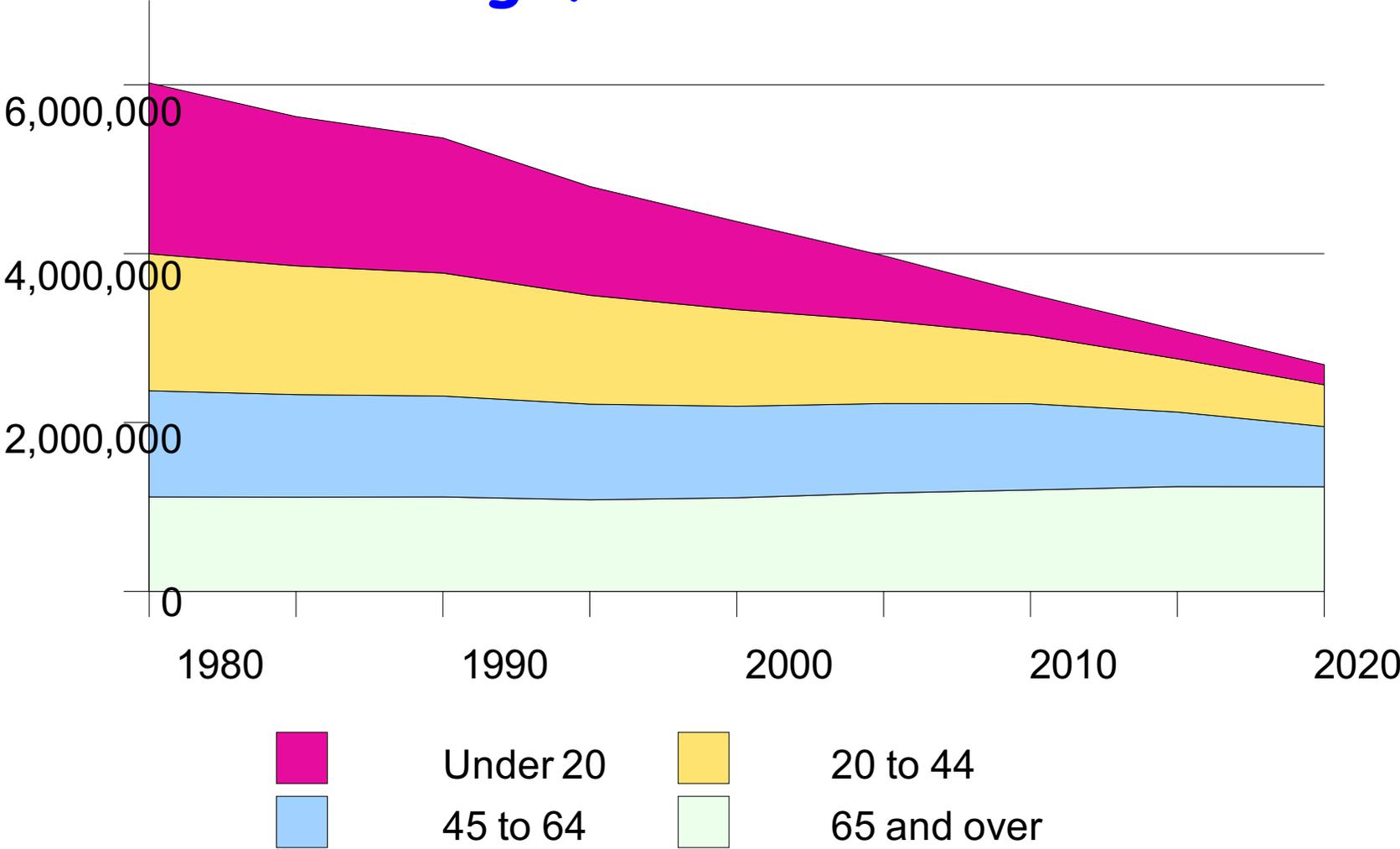
60% attending church  
3 or 4 times a year go  
to a growing church  
compared with 41%  
who attend weekly

... because these are  
churches are very  
friendly, or because  
infrequent attenders  
feel they will be less  
noticed?

# 2nd Weakness: The Church is ageing



# Churchgoers in GB by age, 1980- 2020



# Help!

39% of churches have no one attending under 11 years of age

49% of churches have no one attending between 11 and 14 years of age

59% of churches have no one attending between 15 and 19 years of age

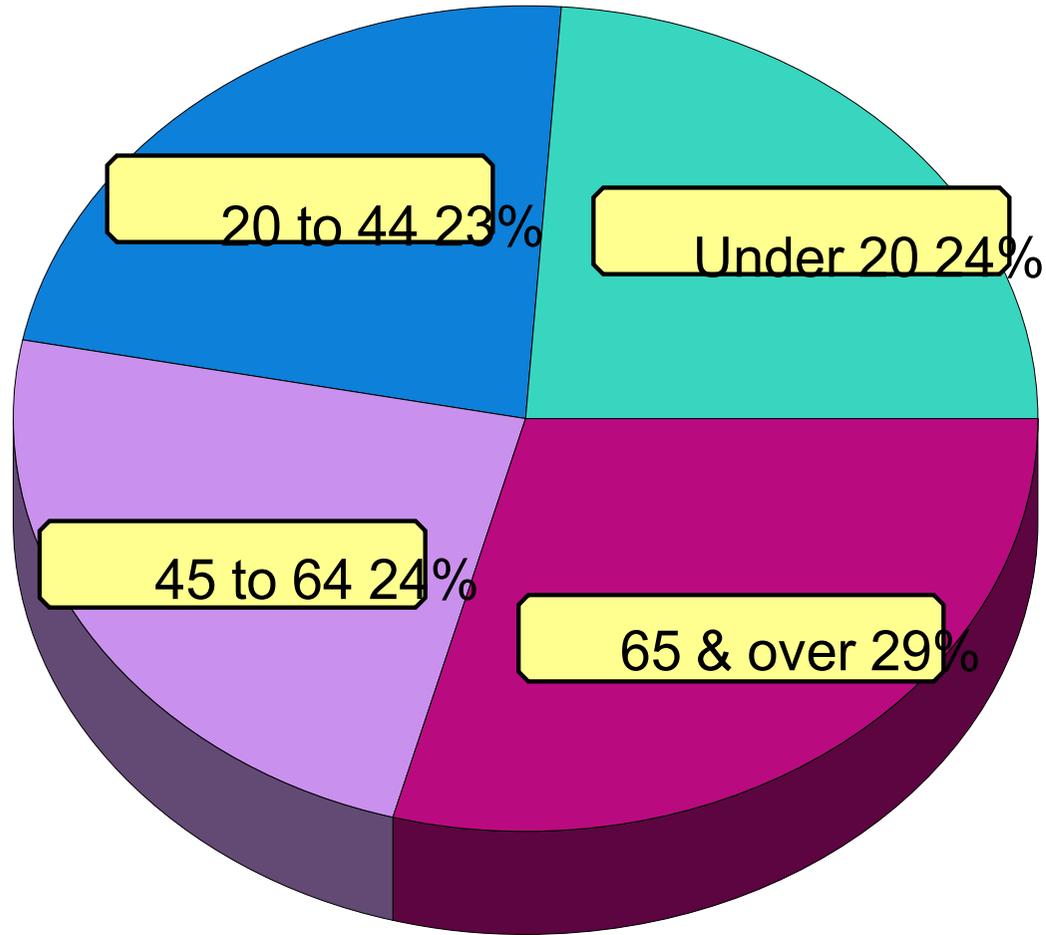
57% of  
England's  
worshippers  
aged 20 to 29  
are located in  
London

So 43% of those in their  
20s attend church outside  
London ...

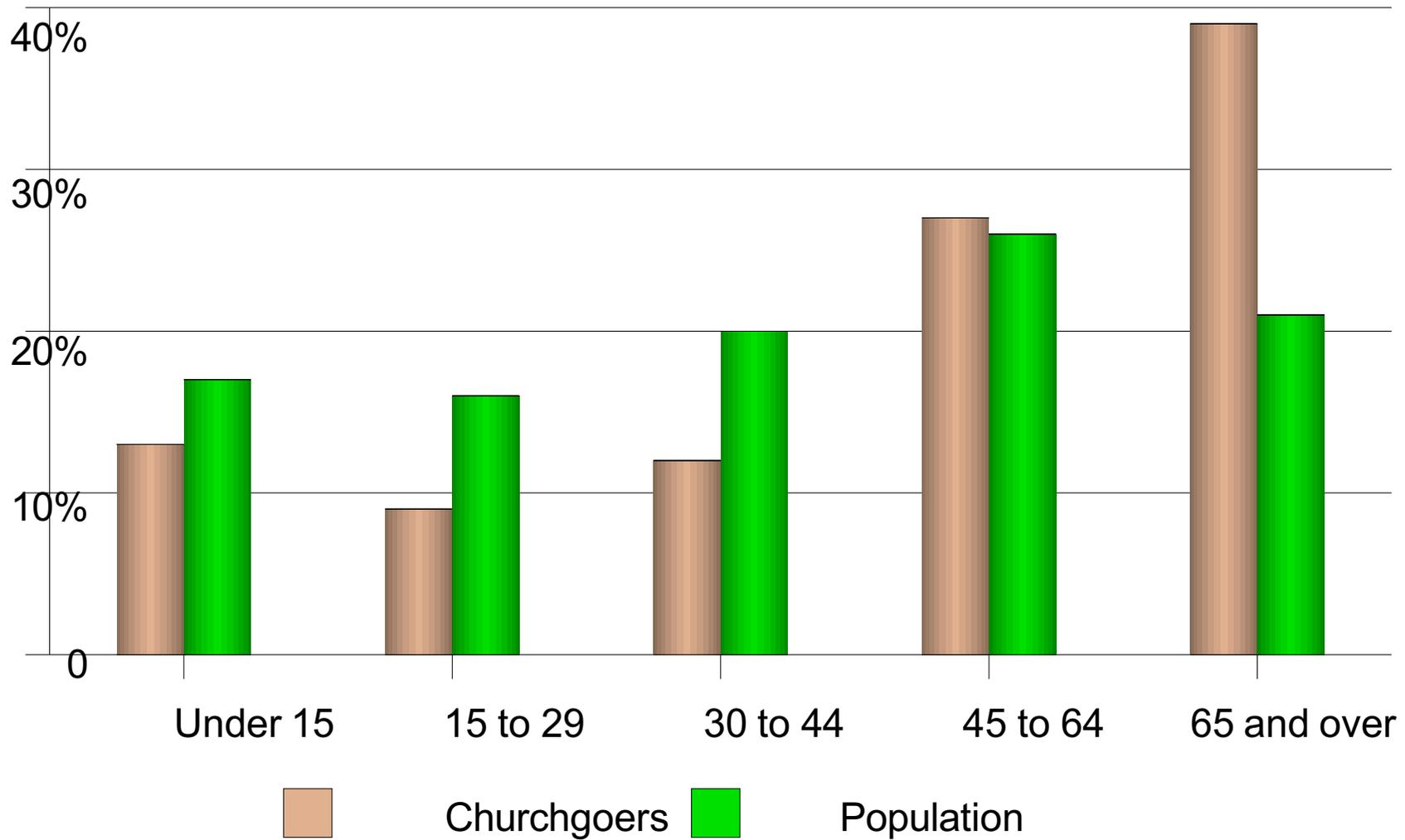
... that is 99,000 in their 20s  
who are spread across the  
33,000 churches outside  
London

Unfortunately, 60,000 of  
these attend the 4,000  
churches outside London with  
congregations in excess of  
200

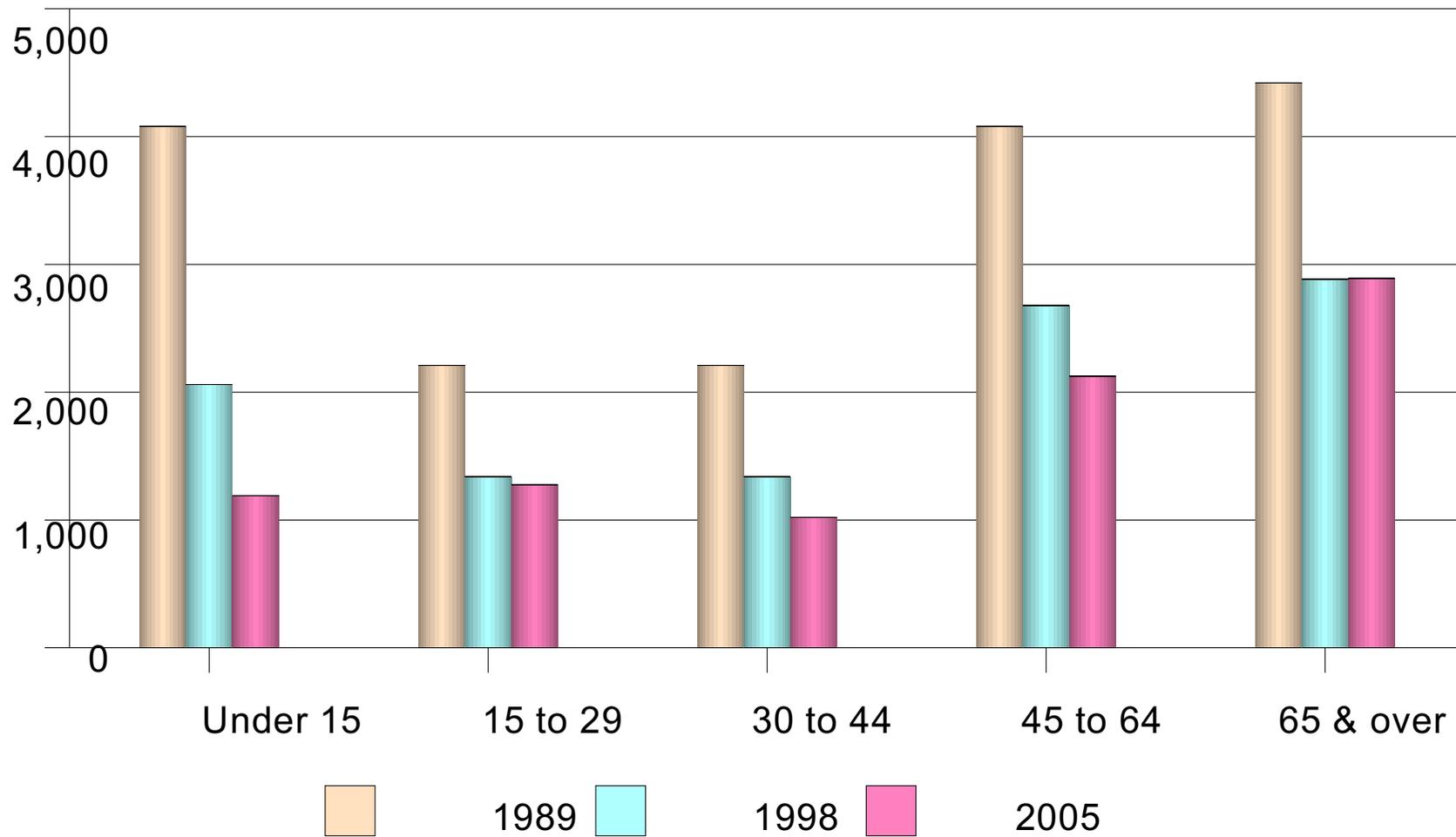
# Churchgoers by age, 2005



# Norfolk churchgoers and population by age, 2005



# Norwich's churchgoers by age 1989 to 2005



# 3rd Weakness: The church has a higher percentage of men ...



42% of churchgoers were male in 1998

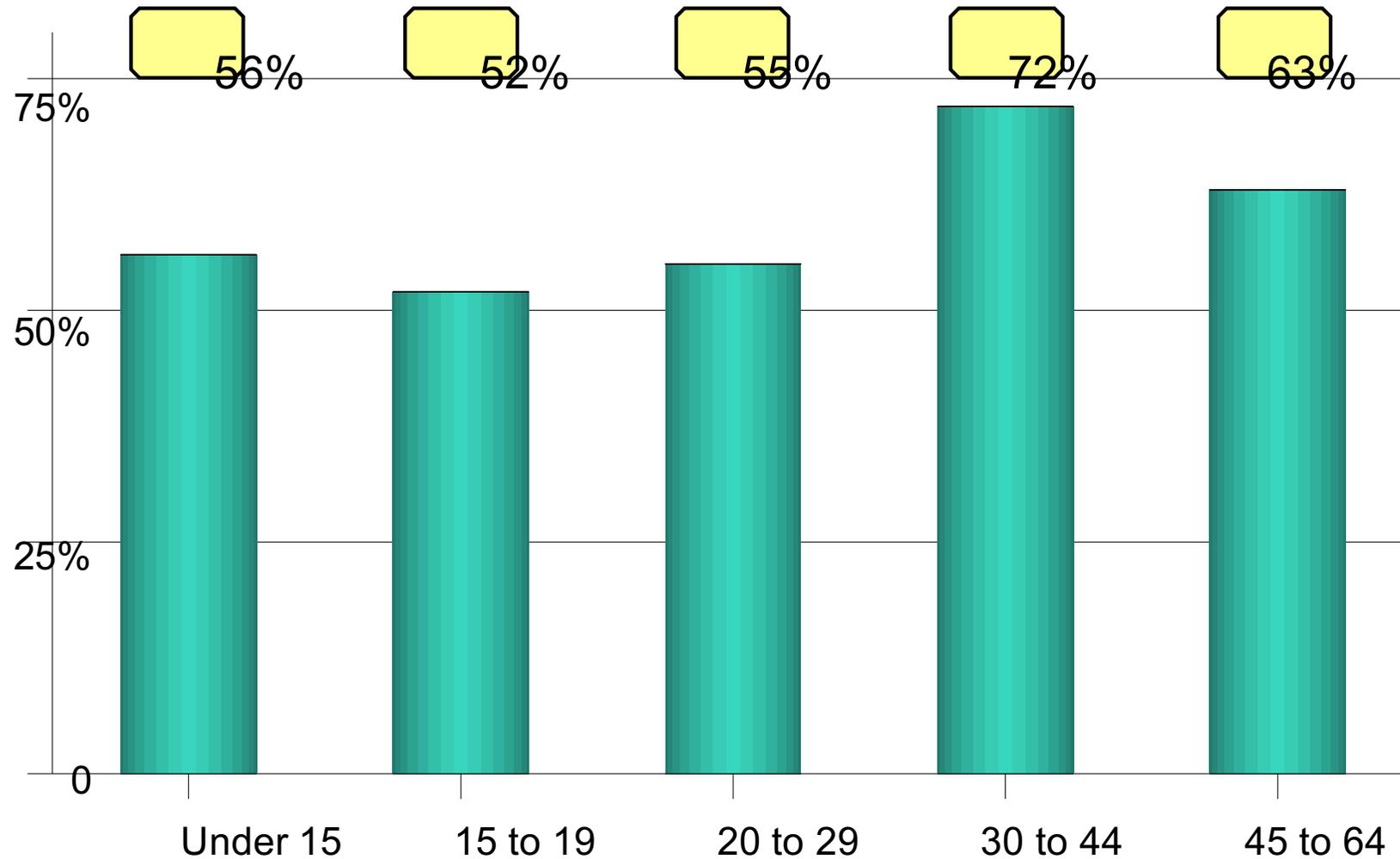
43% in 2005

Why? Because we are ...

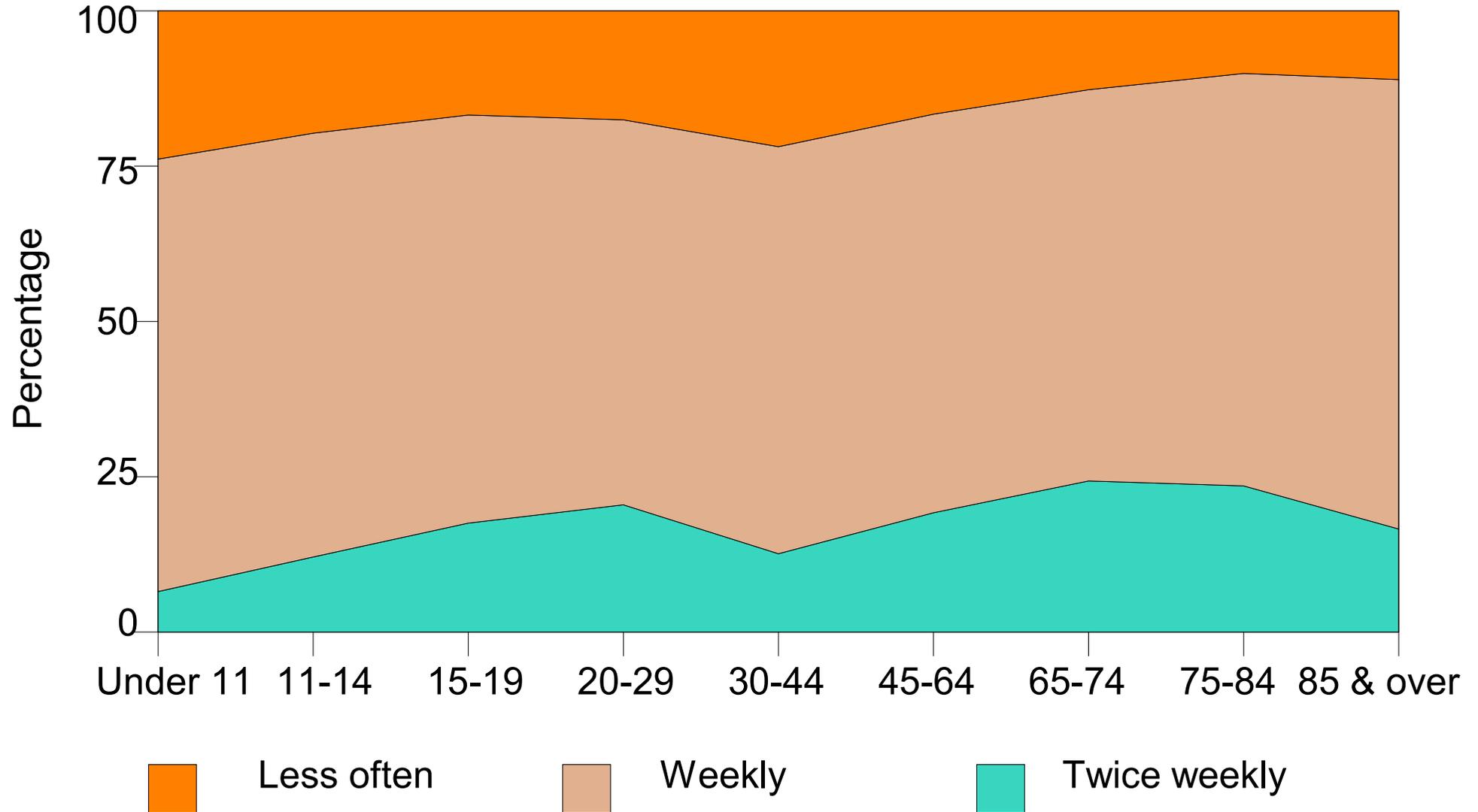


... losing  
the women!

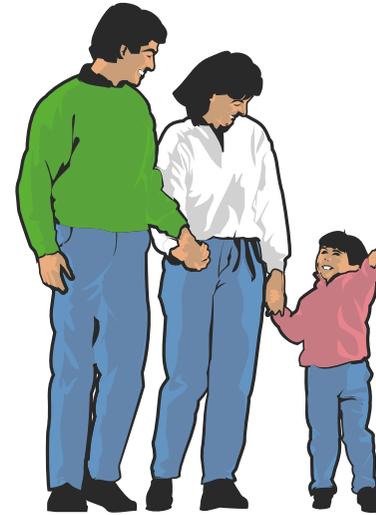
# Percentage of those leaving the church 1998-2005 who are female



# Churchgoers aged 30-44 attend less often

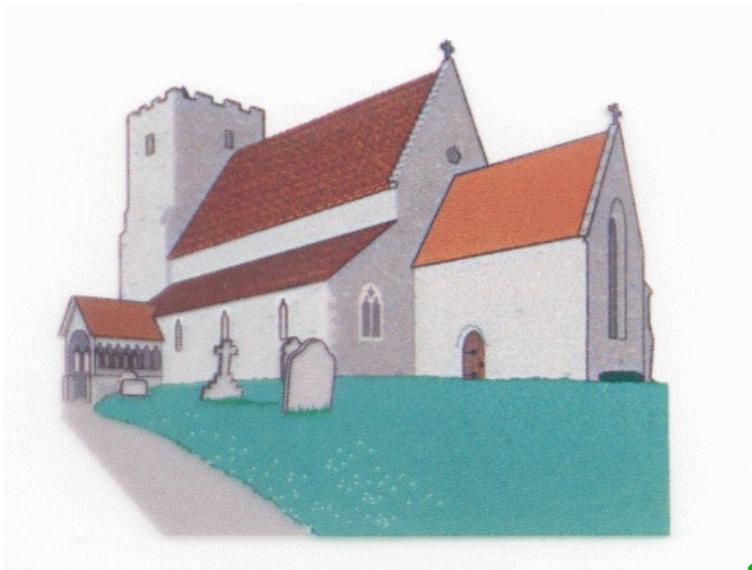


# Pressures faced by those 30-44



- Home
- + Family
- ++ Work
- +++ Church
- So ... some churches have started "a 4 o'clock service"

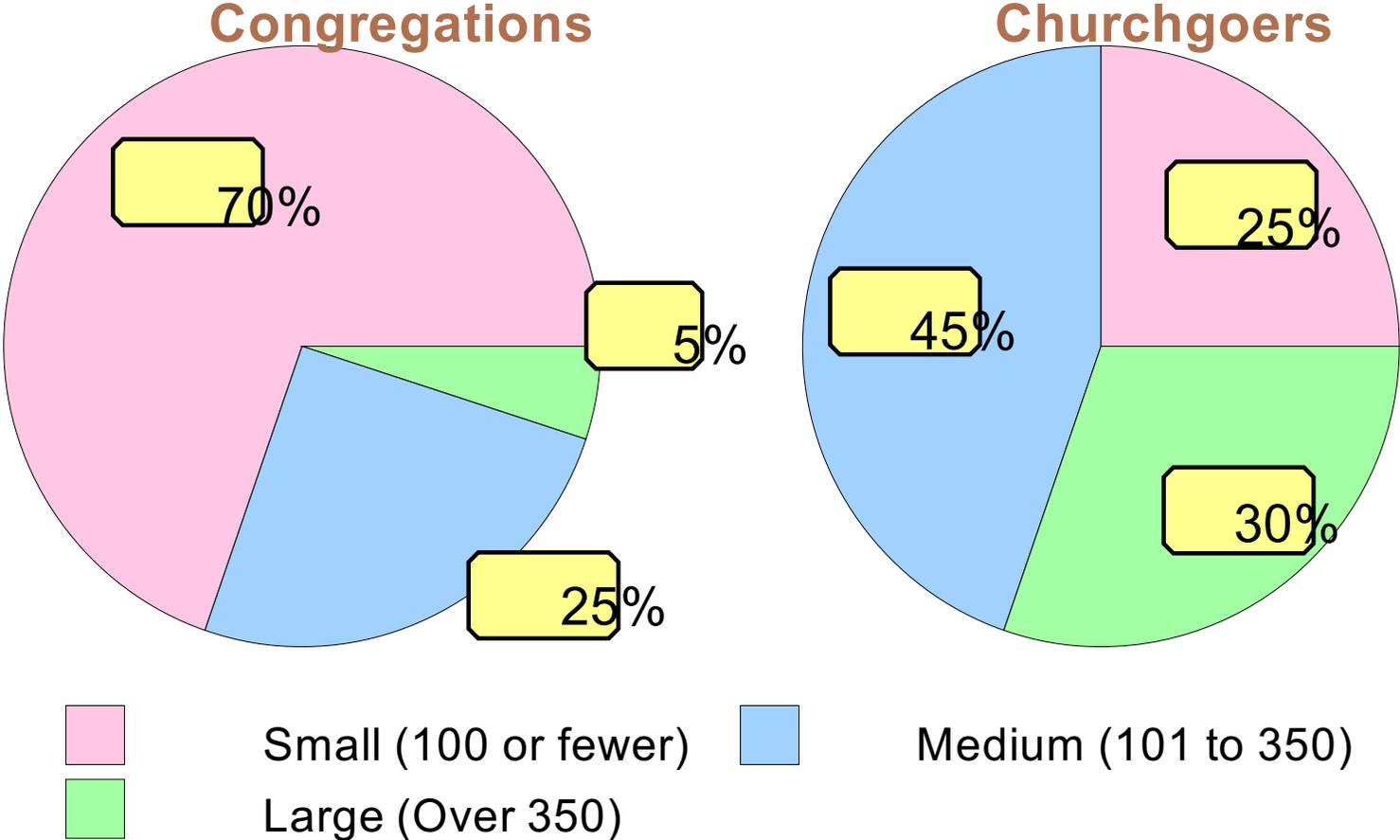
## 4th Strength: The increasing importance of larger churches



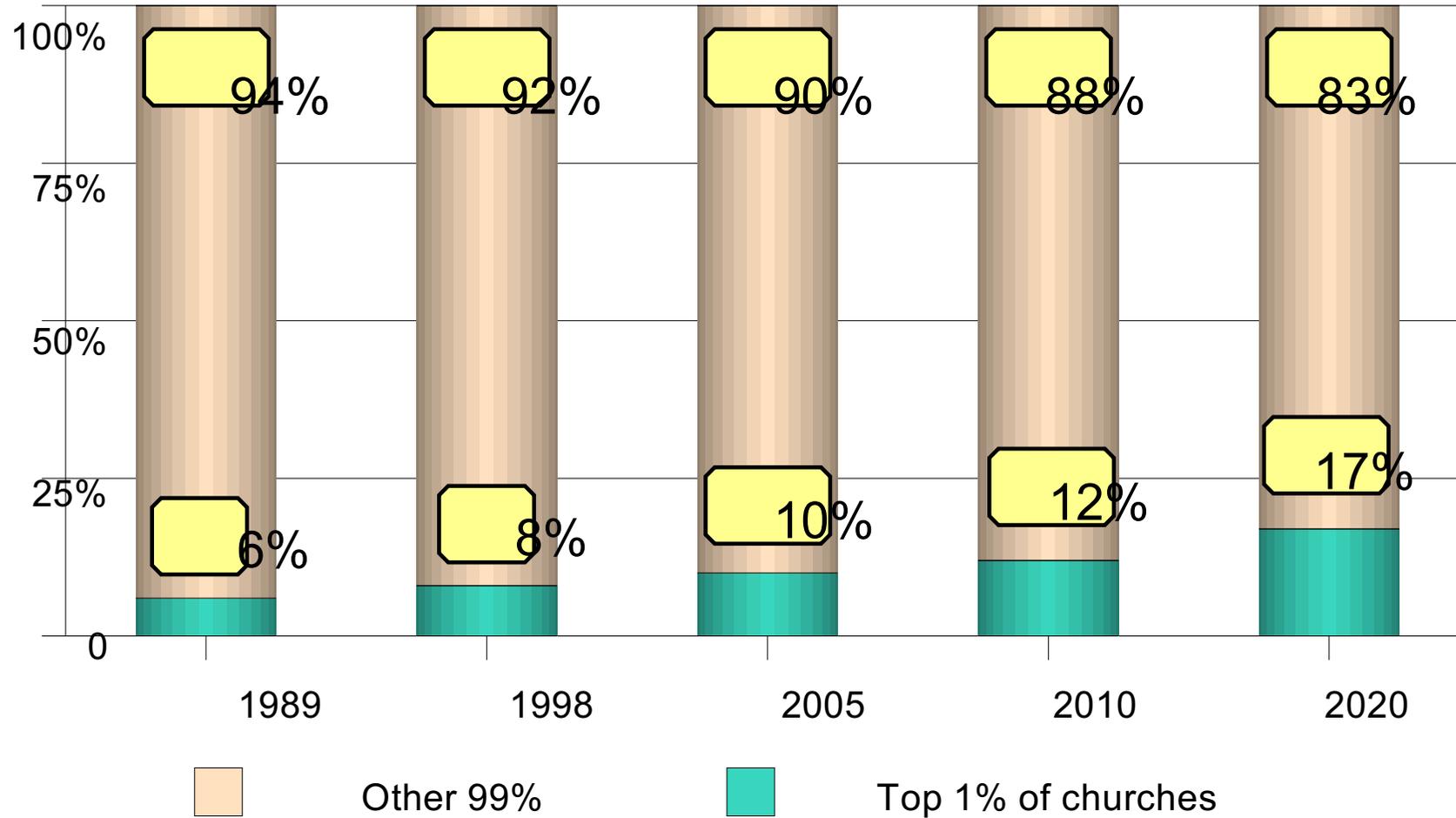
Those with over  
350 regular Sunday  
attendance:

160 Church of England  
80 Baptist  
30 Independent  
140 New Churches  
200 Pentecostal  
1,250 Roman Catholic

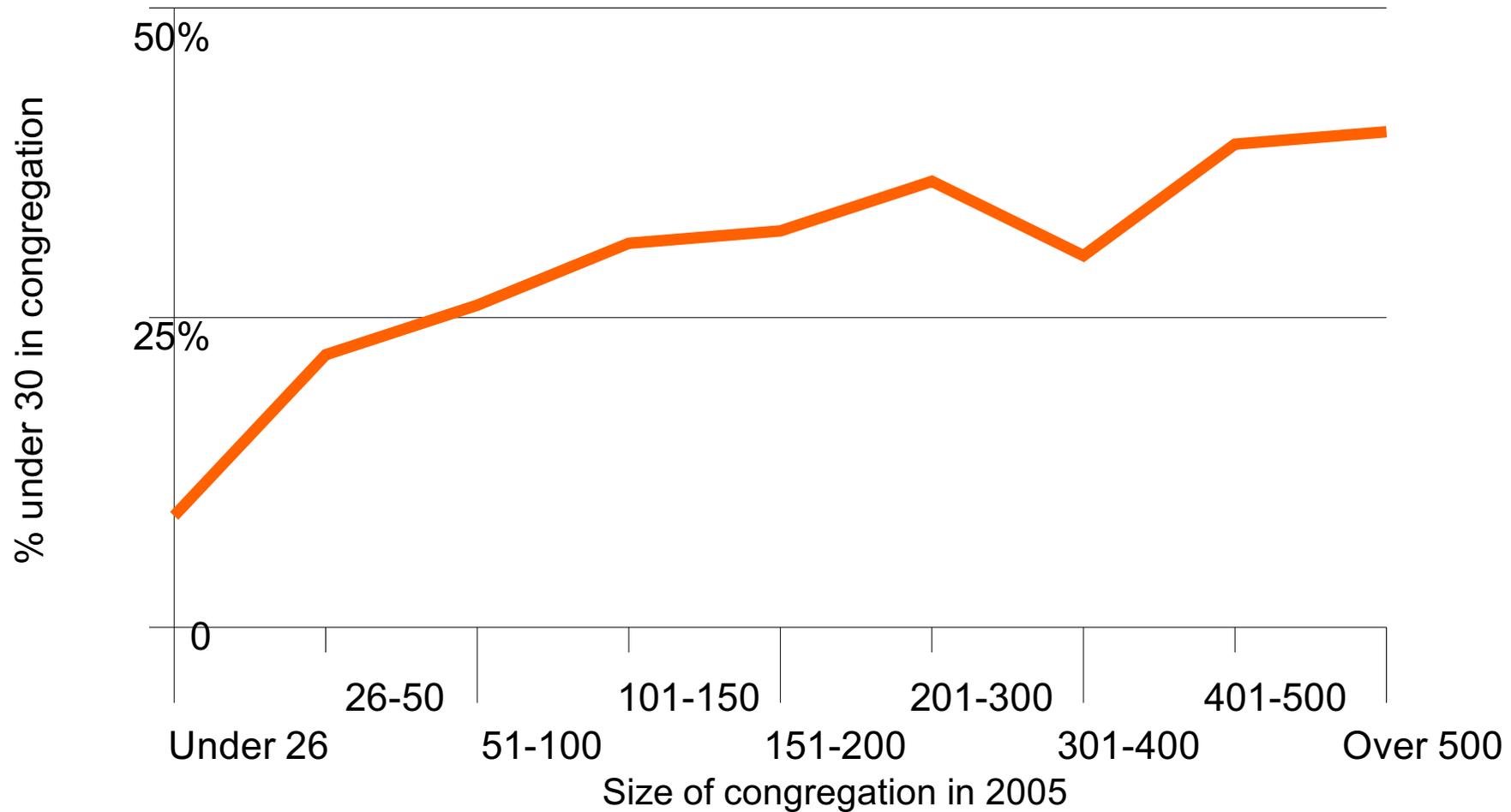
# Congregations and Churchgoers, 2005



# Total Sunday attendance in 1% of the largest C of E churches

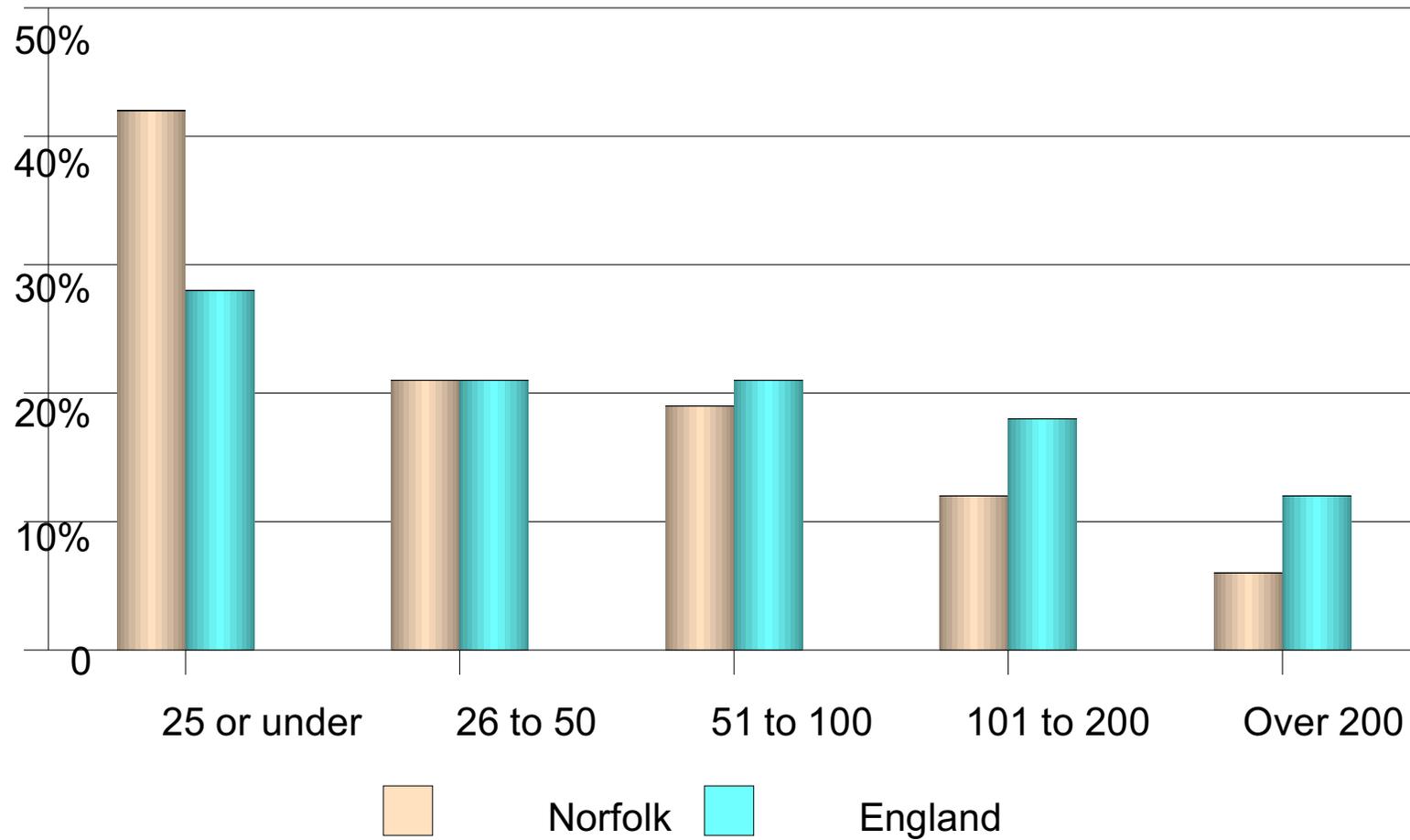


# Younger people are more likely to go to larger churches



**This is  
because these  
churches have  
a wider range  
of more  
appropriate  
activities**

# Size of churches in Norfolk





## The challenge of smaller churches

Have a greater proportion  
of older people

Often very committed  
financial support

Some growing as "internet"  
families move in

Praying for grandchildren  
often important



## Grandparents: their faith and their church

For 12% of Protestant churchgoers,  
grandparents were the most  
significant people in showing what  
faith is about

3% of children coming to Sunday  
School are brought by their  
grandparents

If grandparents go to church, 60%  
of their grandchildren will also



# Three Challenges for Norfolk churches

# Challenge 1: The churches have to combat declining numbers to survive

So how could churches try to  
increase...

The energy

The enthusiasm

The effort

The excitement

... in their congregation?



**Could  
you  
double  
your  
congreg-  
ation in  
5 years?**

# Challenge 2: Encourage more mid-week activity!

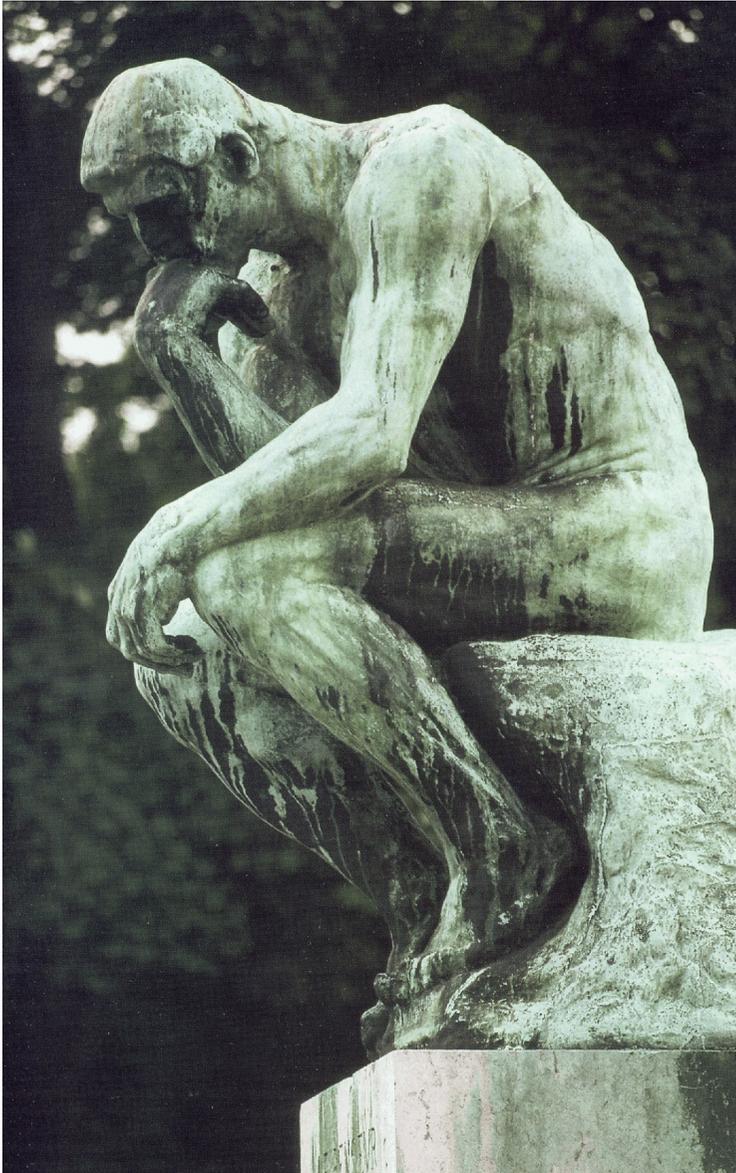




## Mid-week activities:

Eg Holiday Club, After School Club,  
Luncheon Club, Day Centre

- Are often successful in bringing people in if held with this purpose
- Help grow the church's "fringe"
- Can use "Third Agers" (those aged 65-74) with energy and vision for change
- Are especially important for young people aged 11 to 14



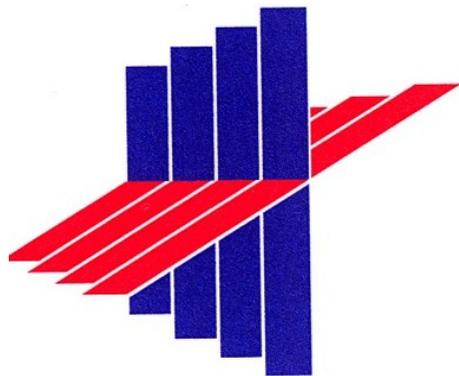
**Challenge 3:**  
**We have to**  
**think, plan,**  
**pray and**  
**work more**  
**strategically**



En route to  
Gethsemane,  
betrayal, trial,  
crucifixion, death and  
resurrection, Jesus  
said to his disciples,

"After I am raised  
up, I will go ahead  
of you to Galilee."

Thank you for  
listening!



**CHRISTIAN RESEARCH**

Dr Peter Brierley,  
Executive Director

