

What do we know about church growth? Is the church growing? Where is there particular growth? What do we know about why some churches grow and some decline? What factors are likely to be present in growing churches and declining churches? What strategies appear to make no difference at all?



Commissioned by a Task Group which reported to the Archbishops' Council and the Board of the Church Commissioners, the Church Growth Research Programme addressed some of these questions along with many others in a comprehensive study of the factors relating to numerical church growth.

The programme, which ran for 18 months between 2011 and 2013, sought to investigate the factors influencing church growth within the context of the Church of England. It explored three strands and focussed on finding areas of ministry which are showing numerical growth – and finding out why.

The findings of the research provide rich and wide-ranging insights into church growth. Although they haven't provided full answers to every question, the research teams have provided a substantial body of evidence and have not only made a significant contribution to the field of church growth research but also provided a firm foundation for researching further some of the associations found. Our hope is that the findings continue to stimulate on-going discussion and that these will enable us, together, to take more steps forward on the journey towards evidence-based decision making in the Church of England.

What is mission and growth?

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