

Welcome

Bowling, Canoeing the Rockies,  
Change

(What Every Church  
Ought to Know)

We Are a Good Church!

God Is with Us!

But . . . . Change Is Real.

## Church Trends

An annual Gallup survey showed that **in 2021, 47% of Americans belong to a church, synagogue or mosque.** When the survey was first done **in 1937, 73% of Americans belonged to a house of worship.**

National PCUSA 5-year trends, 2013-2017.

Attendance Decline = 24.5%

Contribution Decline = 15%

Synod 5-year trends, 2013 – 2017.

Attendance Decline = 25%

Contribution Decline = 36.5%



## **9 Reasons Even Committed Christians Are Attending Church Less Often**

(Adapted from Carey Nieuwhof)

- 1. Greater Affluence.** Money means more options.
- 2. Higher Focus on Youth Activities.** More kids play sports and parents want to be there!
- 3. More Travel.** Everyone's doing it for longer.
- 4. Blended & Single-Parent Families.** Children may be attending at least two churches, or none.
- 5. Online Options.** It's not just for youth anymore.
- 6. No one feels guilty anymore.** Probably a good thing, but it cuts down on attendance.
- 7. Self-directed spirituality.** There's an app for it, a google sight, and an e-book that's free online.
- 8. Failure to see a direct benefit.** I went twice and it didn't change my life. Why go back?
- 9. Valuing attendance over engagement.** Which matters more, butts in the pews or butts on a mission?

**Ch-ch-ch-changes!**

## **Technical vs. Adaptive**

Heifetz: Leadership Without Easy Answers



Illustration by William Warren



Bolsinger: Canoeing the Mountains



## **What Is a Faithful Church?**

Book of Order: F-1.0303

Proclaims and hears the Word of God,

Administers and receives the Sacraments,

Nurtures a covenant community of disciples of Christ.

Anything about growth?

Vibrant youth activities?

Large number of small groups?

Excellent choir?

Dazzling technical abilities?



# **What Can We Do?**

**Demographics**

**Technology**

**Volunteers**

**Grow in Faith**

**Make Time to Listen to God**

**But – we still matter!**

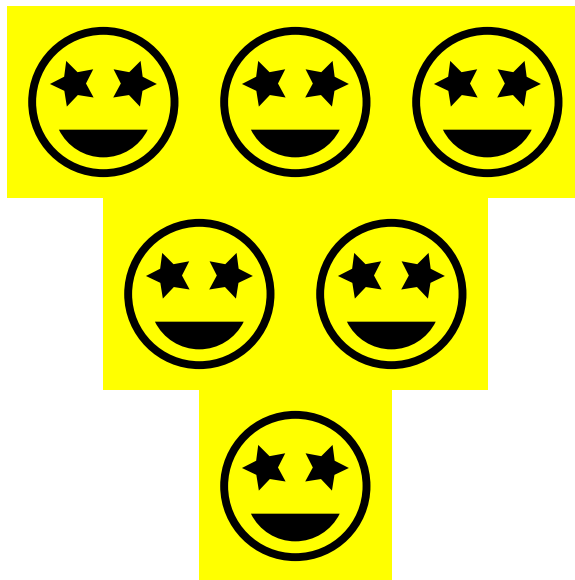


**People still want to hear about God's love!**

**People still want to connect!**

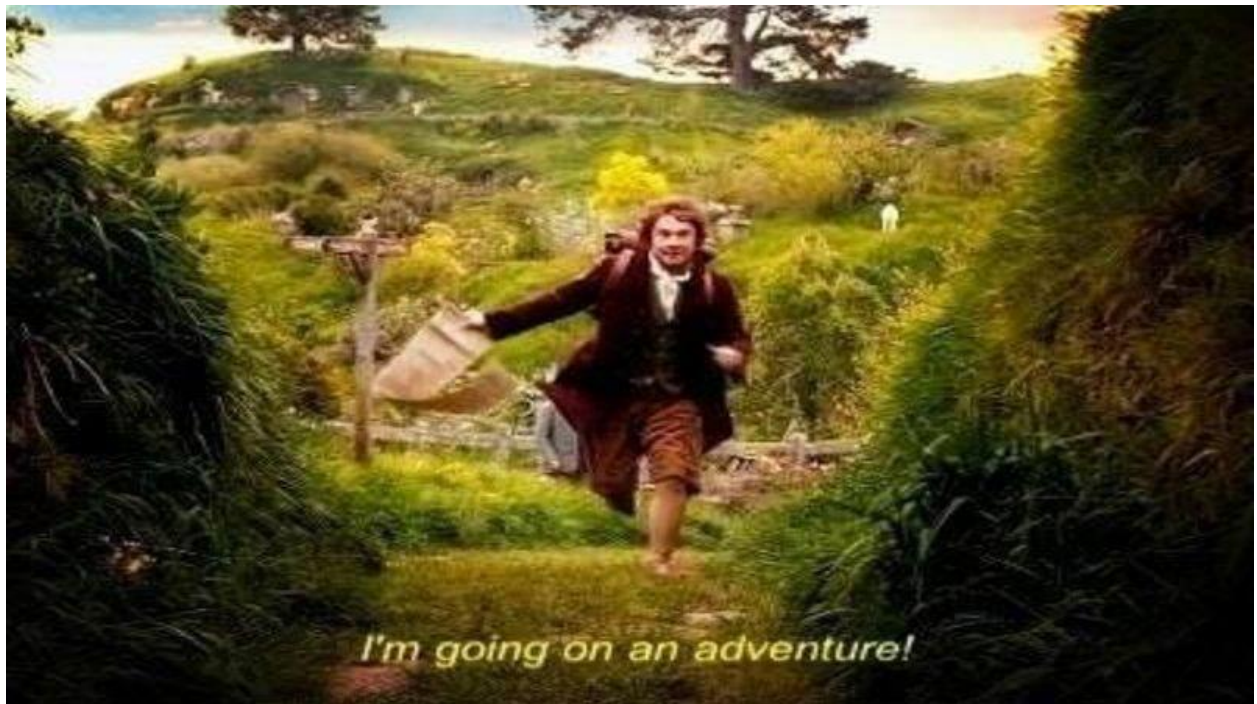
**People still want a sense of stability!**

**We Can Do That!**











## **Where Have We Been?**

We are a Good Church!

God is with Us!

Society & Churches are Changing

We're Bowling Alone

Attending Worship Less

Technical vs. Adaptive Change

Canoes & Walking Sticks

Sacagawea

What Is a Church?

Blue Sky

Adventure

Intentional Community

We are a Good Church!

God is with us!

Amen.