This, the second edition of *UK Church Statistics*, seeks to give an overview of UK church life culled from a detailed denomination by denomination survey of church membership, churches and congregations, and the number of ministers. It covers the years 2008 (omitting 2009 whose figures were in the previous volume), individually from 2010 to 2013, and then gives forecasts for 2015 and 2020 for most denominations. This Introduction draws out the major trends and items of importance from this mass of data.

While it shows that church numbers across the UK continue to decline, the good news is that the *rate of decline* has lessened significantly and the membership level previously anticipated for 2020 will now most likely not be evident till 2025.

Sources of data

The data was collected by sending a form to every single denomination in the UK in the middle of 2013 where a contact address was available and asking for the detail just described, followed by a reminder letter to those who hadn't replied in November 2013. Some respondents were unable to provide all the data requested, so where necessary the missing information has been estimated. Where no data was available from a denomination, sometimes their website was used instead.

All estimated numbers are indicated by the footnote [1], sometimes placed by the date at the left hand side of a page or above a column of figures, where the footnote then refers to *all* the figures in that row or column unless indicated otherwise. Denominations were asked to give their own estimates for 2015 and 2020, and these, as with all data directly supplied by a denomination, are indicated by the footnote [3], which again will apply to all the figures in a row or column if placed by the year date. Numbers previously published which have been superceded in this volume are all indicated by the footnote [2].

There are nearly 300 different denominations in the UK, where a denomination is defined as "a Christian organisation uniting a number of local congregations", using John Adair's definition given in his book *The Becoming Church* (SPCK, 1977). For simplicity these are collated into 10 broad groups, and while some denominations cover the whole of the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland, only the Northern Ireland component of these is included. The following percentages relate to 2013 figures, and the initial number refers to the section in this volume in which details may be found:

1) **Total** of (2) to (11).

2) **Anglican:** 83% of which are Church of England, 10% Church of Ireland [in Northern Ireland], 4% Church in Wales, 2% Scottish Episcopal Church, and 1% the much smaller Traditional, Continuing, Free Anglican or other ex-Church of England groups.

3) **Baptist:** 69% of which are Baptist Union of Great Britain, 8% Independent Baptists, 4% Grace Baptist Churches, 6% Baptist Union of Wales, 6% Baptist Union of Scotland, 4% Association of Baptist Churches in Ireland [in Northern Ireland], 2% Gospel Standard Strict Baptist and 1% Old Baptist Union.

4) **Roman Catholic:** 57% of which are the Roman Catholic Church in England, 27% the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland [in Northern Ireland], 11% the Roman Catholic Church in Scotland, 3% overseas foreign national churches and 2% the Roman Catholic Church in Wales.

5) **Independent:** 28% are Christian Brethren [Open], 17% are FIEC [Fellowship of Independent Evangelical Churches], 10% the Union of Welsh Independents, 8% Christian Brethren [Exclusive], 6% are other Congregational churches, 2% Churches of Christ, and 29% other independent (often individual) churches.

6) **Methodist:** 92% of which are part of the Methodist Church of Great Britain, 5% the Methodist Church in Ireland [in Northern Ireland], 1% are Wesleyan Reform Union, 1% Independent Methodists and 1% Free Methodists.

7) **New Churches:** 15% were Newfrontiers, 6% Salt and Light Ministries, 5% are Vineyard Churches, 4% are Ground Level Network, 3% were part of Pioneer, 2% are, or were, part of the Ichthus Christian Fellowship, 2% Multiply Network, 2% International Network of Churches, 5% part of other House Church streams (individually listed), 18% part of other small House Church networks (not individually listed), and 38% other non-denominational churches. This category is kept separately from other Independent churches for comparison purposes, even though many of the former networks in this category have now dissolved [hence "were" before some names here]).

8) **Orthodox:** 51% of which are Greek Orthodox, 17% Russian Orthodox, 23% other Eastern Orthodox, 8% Oriental Orthodox and 1% other Orthodox churches. The Orthodox churches in this volume are given in three groups: Eastern, Oriental and Other.

9) **Pentecostal:** 24% Redeemed Christian Church of God, 15% known African and West Indian Churches, 15% Elim Pentecostal Churches, 13% Assemblies of God, 7% New Testament Church of God, 4% Oneness Churches, 2% Kingsway International Christian Centre, 2% United Pentecostal Church of Great Britain, 1% Church of Pentecost, 1% Apostolic Church, 1% Mountain of Fire Ministries, 1% Deeper Life Bible Church, 1% Church of God of Prophecy, 1% Holiness Churches, and 12% numerous other smaller denominations.

10) **Presbyterian:** 52% Church of Scotland, 28% Presbyterian Church in Ireland [in Northern Ireland], 9% United Reformed Church [URC], 4% Presbyterian Church of Wales, 3% Free Presbyterian Church of Ulster, 2% Free Church of Scotland and 2% other smaller Presbyterian denominations.

11) **Smaller** (or other) **Denominations:** 19% Salvation Army, 18% overseas national [immigrant] churches, 13% Seventh-Day Adventists, 13% Lutheran churches, 6% Religious Society of Friends [Quakers], 1% Church of the Nazarene, 1% Moravian Churches, 1% Worldwide Church of God Churches and 28% Fresh Expressions or "Messy Church" and other like synonyms.

These 10 broad denominational groups have been used for reporting church data over the last 35 years, in publications like the *UK Christian Handbook*, or, since 1998, in the seven volumes of *Religious Trends.*

***Changes from the previous edition of* Church Statistics**

Since the first edition was published in 2011, two changes have taken place important in identifying current church trends:

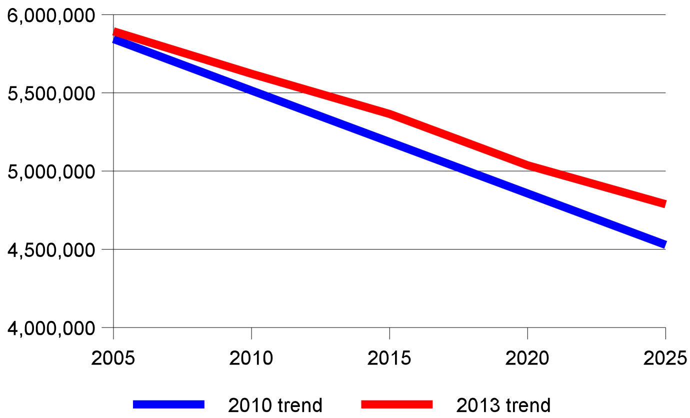
a) The 2011 ***Population Census*** results have been published across all four countries of the UK. As this included a question on religion, an analysis of this data may be made and is shown in Section 13. However, it also included a question on ethnicity and another on immigration. Since many of the immigrants have come from "Christian" countries the flow of new people into existing congregations has been notable, resulting in the formation of literally hundreds of new churches. The Black Majority Churches' [BMCs] "explosion" has been significant, especially in Greater London where of the 700 new churches which began between 2005 and 2012, at least 400 were BMCs. The Redeemed Christian Church of God [RCCOG] alone has started 296 new churches in the UK in the last 5 years, the largest number for any single denomination.

b) The phenomenal growth of ***Fresh Expressions*** has been noted and analysed in some details especially by Dr George Lings of the Church Army. This movement, while formally launched by the Church of England in 2005, has been applied (as a name) retrospectively to previous congregational starts and is now a collective force, difficult to quantify precisely, but without doubt drawing many new people into the churches. For simplicity, although there are Fresh Expressions in many main-line denominations, these are collectively grouped together into a single Other Churches' category (see Page 11.6).

Both of these have been explored at some length, and because the impact of both has been to increase congregational attendance and membership, the previous rate of decline, while continuing, has slowed. In the first volume the total UK church membership for 2015 was estimated as 5,190,000 and 2020 as 4,860,000. In this second volume these figures are estimated (in Table 1.1.1) respectively as 5,370,000 and 5,040,000 with a 2025 forecast of 4,790,000, these being increases of nearly 4% on the 2015 and 2020 figures.

While these increases are not sufficient to bring overall growth, these two key movements have, however, in effect, pushed the previous rate of decline back by about 5 years. The rates of change are illustrated in Figure 1:

Figure 1: Rate of change in total membership



Multi-multi Britain

In 2011, English people were 80% white-British (Table 14.2.2), which means that 20% came from other backgrounds. They also came from a multi-cultural, multi-linguistic and multi-religious background. In 2001, English people were 88% white-British, which means that the number of white-British people in England has actually decreased by 3.3 million people in the inter-censal decade, while the population as a whole has increased by 1.0 million, giving an extra 4.3 million people in England in 2011 who were not white-British, in addition to the 6.5 million already living here, and giving a grand total of 10.8 million people, or 20%, of the entire population. In other words the non-white-British contingent in our population increased by two-thirds, 65%, in the 10 years 2001 to 2011.

That gives something of the scale of the immigration which has occurred, and because some, or many, of these immigrants are "Christian" people, or come from countries notionally Christian, an indication of the impact they have had on our church life. The main denominations affected by this influx of immigrants are the Roman Catholics, the Orthodox, the Pentecostals and the many "Overseas Protestant" churches as they are called in this volume, and included in the "Smaller Denominations" section. Between them these four major groups have more than 50 denominations dedicated to those from overseas countries, some countries having immigrant churches from multiple denominations (like Polish Catholics and Polish Lutherans, or Romanian Orthodox and Romanian Catholics).

Philip Hughes, writing about ethnicity in Australia, says, "Ethnicity may well have been heightened by the high level of multi-culturalism in Australia. For many people, one of the associations with ethnicity is religion. Hence, religious identification can be a significant carrier for belonging to a particular ethnic group within a multi-ethnic society."[1] This is very likely to be true in the UK also.

The precise ethnic background of British church members is not known, so guestimates can only be made when specific information is lacking, which it is with many groups. We are also interested not in overall numbers of non-white-British who are church members but rather the number of new people *added* to church membership because of the huge immigration in the last 10 years. Church membership has been significantly impacted by immigration for much longer than this past decade, but the data to measure it almost certainly doesn't exist.

Taking the total church membership for the 50+ overseas countries represented across these denominations[2] gives a total of about 368,000, which is 5.7% of the 6.5 million non-white-British living in England in 2001, that is, nearly 6% of non-white-British people are assumed to be church members, a smaller percentage of the population than for white-British people (9%), but a similar order of magnitude. These are not notional members but are included as active members of the denomination in question.

Using the 2011 Population Census figures and the latest membership figures gives a 2011 percentage of immigrants who have become church members of 5.2%, which is slightly less than the non-white-British people already here, but it probably takes some while for new immigrants to become sufficiently familiar with the UK to join a church. These percentages include children where relevant.

An alternative way of assessing the number of new church members from immigrants is to take the number of non-British born people in England and Wales (7.5 million from the 2011 Census) and the proportion of them who arrived between 2001 and 2011 (50% or 3.8 million). A survey in 2000 found 31% of new immigrants were "Christian" which, if applied to the 3.8 million would be 1.2 million, and if the same proportion of actual church members as of those saying they were "Christian" applied (7%), then in 2008 that would mean 82,000 have become actual church members. However, many of these people have been specifically targeted and welcomed by Christian churches so the actual number is likely to be greater, say half as many again, which is the number used in Table 2 for 2008.

Recent Denominational Membership

In 2013 there were 5.4 million church members in the UK, 10.3% of the adult population[3], 0.3 million fewer than 5 years previously in 2008 when the percentage was 11.8%. It is likely to continue to decline at about the same rate for the next few years, becoming 10.0% of the population by 2015, 9.2% by 2020 and 8.4% by 2025 if present trends continue. Table 1 on the next page breaks these figures down by denomination.

The denominational groups fall into two broad groups – five are growing and five are declining. While the second percentage is across 7 years (2013 to 2020) and the first across 5 years, these fall into different categories:

- Those which declined between 2008 and 2013 and are likely to decline *more* between 2013 and 2020 – the Anglicans, Catholics, Methodists and Presbyterians.
- Those which declined between 2008 and 2013 and are likely to decline *less* between 2013 and 2020 – the Baptists.

[1] Article "What do people mean when they call themselves Christians?" by Rev Dr Philip Hughes, Director, Christian Research Association, Australia in *Pointers*, CRA, Vol 24 No 1, March 2014, Page 5.

[2] Details are mainly given in Table 4.2.2 for the Roman Catholics (from Albania, Brazil, the Caribbean, China, Congo, Croatia, France, Germany, Ghana, Goa, Gypsies, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Korea, Latvia, Lithuania, Malaysia, Malta, Nigeria, the Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Ukraine, Vietnam, Zambia and Zimbabwe), in Section 8 for the Orthodox (Armenia, Bulgaria, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Greece, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Syria and the Ukraine), on Pages 11.2 and 11.3 for Protestants (Asia, China, Greece, Hungary, Iran, Italy, Japan, Jews, Korea, the Netherlands, the Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Swahili, Switzerland, Syria, Tamils [India] and Turkey), and on Pages 11.4 and 11.5 for the Lutherans (China, Denmark, Eritrea, Estonia, Finland, Hungary, Iceland, Latvia, Norway, Poland, Swahili and Sweden).

[3] Taken in this context as those 15 and over.

Table 1: UK Church Membership by Denomination, 2008 to 2020

Denomination	2008 Membership	% change 2008-2013	2013 Membership	% change 2013-2020	2020 Est Membership
Anglican	1,436,329	*-5%*	1,362,855	*-9%*	1,241,695
Baptist	208,488	*-9%*	189,152	*-8%*	174,873
Catholic	1,611,954	*-13%*	1,399,942	*-19%*	1,128,800
Independent	232,281	*+3%*	239,709	*+4%*	249,273
Methodist	270,832	*-15%*	231,357	*-24%*	176,160
New Churches	195,993	*+9%*	212,911	*+10%*	234,155
Orthodox	390,659	*+19%*	464,194	*+11%*	514,585
Pentecostal	358,370	*+21%*	432,687	*+25%*	541,954
Presbyterian	814,669	*-20%*	649,067	*-30%*	455,367
Smaller Denoms. *excluding* Fresh Expressions	155,425	*+18%*	182,723	*+16%*	211,883
Fresh Expressions	19,300	*+273%*	71,900	*+50%*	108,200
ALL Churches	**5,694,300**	***-5%***	**5,436,497**	***-7%***	**5,036,945**

- Those which grew between 2008 and 2013 and are likely to grow *less* between 2013 and 2020 – the Orthodox and Smaller Denominations (both because the impact of immigrants in their churches is likely to be less in the coming 7 years than in the past 5 years). Fresh Expressions is also in this category but their huge percentage expansion between 2008 and 2013 was partly because they started from a relatively small base.
- Those which grew between 2008 and 2013 and are likely to grow *at about the same rate* between 2013 and 2020 – the Independents, New Churches and Pentecostals (all of which are growing primarily because each is continuing to plant new churches).

Generally the size of the Institutional Churches, declining in the main, outweighs the Free Churches, so that the overall result is a decline of about 1% per year which has characterised the last 5 years and is likely to continue to 2020. This is slightly lower than the figures in the previous edition of *UK Church Statistics*, primarily because of the impetus of immigrants and Fresh Expressions.

Table 2 illustrates what church membership would be if Fresh Expressions and Immigrants were taken out of the total.

Table 2: Church membership, Immigrants and Fresh Expressions

Membership	2008 Membership	% change 2008-2013	2013 Membership	% change 2013-2020	2020 Est Membership
Total membership	5,694,300	*-5%*	5,436,497	*-7%*	5,036,945
less Fresh Expressions	19,300	*+273%*	71,900	*+50%*	108,200
less Immigrants	123,000	*-13%*	106,400	*-13%*	92,800
Remainder	**5,552,000**	***-5%***	**5,258,197**	***-8%***	**4,835,945**

The immigrants are taken as 5.7% of the total membership of the Roman Catholics, Orthodox and Smaller Denominations excluding Fresh Expressions in 2008, 5.2% in 2013 and 5.0% in 2020.

It can be seen that without the two groups of Fresh Expressions and Immigrants, church membership would decline faster in the coming years – instead of -7% as predicted now, it would be -8%. The number of new immigrant church members is decreasing primarily because the total out of which the percentage is taken is diminishing, and the number of new immigrants is also expected to decrease. The total of Fresh Expressions and Immigrants is 2.5% of the 2008 total, 3.3% in 2013 and 4.0% in 2020.

Which denominations are changing most?

If the overall change is -5% in 5 years, it is worth asking which denominations have especially declined or grown. Taking those with more than 10,000 members in 2008, which have decreased between 2008 and 2013 by, say, at least -15% or increased by at least +15% gives the following results:

Declined

The Church in Wales (66,000 members in 2008; declined -17% between 2008 and 2013)
The Scottish Episcopal Church (38,000 members; -16%)
The Baptist Union of Wales (15,000; -16%)
The Roman Catholic Church in Scotland (186,000; -18%)
The Roman Catholic Church in N Ireland (478,000; -20%)
The Union of Welsh Independents (30,000; -23%)
The Methodist Church of Great Britain (252,000; -15%)
Kingsway International Christian Centre (12,000; -25%) [dispersal because land used for Olympic Park]
The Presbyterian Church of Wales (29,000; -18%)
The Church of Scotland (475,000; -29%)

Increased

Newfrontiers International (29,000; +15%)
The Patriarchate of Romania (18,000; +233%) [helped by immigrants]
The Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia (15,000; +27%)
The Armenian Orthodox Church (16,000; + 44%) [helped by immigrants]
The Redeemed Christian Church of God (62,000; +64%)
Smaller African and Caribbean Churches (20,000; +19%)
Other smaller Pentecostal Churches (26,000; +27%)
The Seventh-Day Adventists (28,000; +21%) [helped by immigrants]
Lutheran Churches in total (27,000; +24%) [helped by immigrants]
Fresh Expressions (19,000; +273%)

Three denominations have changed since the last edition of *Church Statistics.* The Russian Orthodox Church and the Free Church of Scotland are both now growing instead of declining, and Kingsway International Christian Centre [KICC] is shown as declining from previous growth, owing to its forced closure when the Olympic Park was built, and subsequent dispersal to different locations in London. However, now that it has acquired (after several years of searching) a large site in Chatham, Kent, it is expected to start growing again towards its former 12,000-size congregation.

The lists are interesting. Of the denominations which have declined most, all are located in Wales, Scotland and N Ireland except the Methodists and KICC, whereas the majority of the members of the growing denominations are all located in England.

Church Membership by Country

Table 3 shows the membership changes by each of the 4 constituent countries in the UK.

Table 3: Church Membership in the UK, by Country, 2008-2020

Country	2008 Membership	% change 2008-2013	2013 Membership	% change 2013-2020	2020 Est Membership
England	3,709,257	*0%*	3,723,327	*-1%*	3,682,424
Wales	229,625	*-8%*	210,404	*-14%*	180,037
Scotland	851,484	*-17%*	704,270	*-27%*	513,751
N Ireland	903,934	*-12%*	798,496	*-17%*	660,733
Total UK	**5,694,300**	***-5%***	**5,436,497**	***-7%***	**5,036,945**

Overall, church membership in England is holding its own, increases offsetting decreases. Membership decline in the other three countries of the UK is much greater. If the major declining denominations in Wales (Union of Welsh Independents), Scotland (Church of Scotland) and N Ireland (Roman Catholics) are taken out, the declines in these three countries would be considerably less.

What is this saying?

These figures show that church membership in the UK declined -5% between 2008 and 2013, slightly less than the previous rate of decline partly because of the impact of immigration and Fresh Expressions. A broadly similar rate of decline is expected between 2013 and 2020, and thus continues the general trend over the last 60 years.

In this period, however, the London Church Census took place (in 2012) and while this is a prime measure of attendance not membership, nevertheless the huge growth in the capital presumably is bound to be reflected in the English membership statistics, especially for the Pentecostals and Catholics which especially grew between 2005 and 2012.

In summary therefore,

- English church membership is static, with increases offsetting decreases.
- The key denominations responsible for the increases in England are the New Churches (evangelical and charismatic), the Orthodox, the Pentecostal Churches (mostly black, evangelical and charismatic), and the Smaller Denominations, seen in both the Lutheran Churches, the other overseas national churches, and Fresh Expressions (which is included here for convenience).

- The Methodist Church of Great Britain continues to be the fastest declining denomination in England.
- The major decline in the other three countries of the UK is due to key large denominations within each.
- The estimate previously made for 2010 was within 2% of the actual, so it is naturally hoped that the new 2015 and 2020 estimates will prove the same.

Number of Churches

Church Statistics also gives the number of churches or congregations (where churches meet outside normal church buildings) by country, shown in Table 4. The average church in 2013 had 107 members.

Table 4: Number of churches in the UK, by country, 2008-2020

Country	2008 churches	% change 2008-2013	2013 churches	% change 2013-2020	2020 Est churches
England	38,915	*+2%*	39,777	*+1%*	40,080
Wales	4,322	*-3%*	4,182	*-2%*	4,116
Scotland	4,287	*+3%*	4,412	*+5%*	4,645
N Ireland	2,203	*+4%*	2,289	*+6%*	2,434
Total UK	**49,727**	***+2%***	**50,660**	***+1%***	**51,275**

While the overall numbers are only changing slowly, the actual number of churches increased between 2008 and 2013 and is expected to continue between 2013 and 2020. Why is this? The answer comes in two broad ways. There are 600 more Pentecostal churches in the UK than 5 years ago, the large majority being new black churches, of which the RCCOG is the largest denomination.

The next largest is the Asian Christian Fellowship with 51 new congregations, Potters House Christian Fellowship with 50 and Newfrontiers International with 39. These exclude Fresh Expressions which has seen nearly 1,800 new groups started between 2008 and 2013, details of which are given on Page 11.6.

Other groups are also starting new congregations. The Fellowship of Independent Evangelical Churches, several New Church streams (like Ichthus, Ground Level Network, Lifeline International, Pioneer Partnership, and Vineyard Churches UK), the Romanian Orthodox, Deeper Life Bible Church, the United Pentecostal Church and the Latvian Evangelical Lutheran Church have all seen many new congregations added since 2008.

Alongside growth, however, decline is also occurring. Overall in the 5 year period, 2008 to 2013, 3,000 churches opened, including Fresh Expressions (Table 1.1.2), and 2,100 closed. This is a net increase of 900 churches. If the Fresh Expression churches were omitted, however, the number of churches opening would have been only 1,200 which would have meant a decline of 900 churches. This means that, Fresh Expressions apart, the rate of church planting collectively is insufficient to match the closures, which were over 100 a year by both the Roman Catholics and Methodists.

Number of denominations

It is estimated that there are 292 denominations in the UK, up from 275 when counted in 2006, but a downward revision from previous estimates because of the difficulty of assessing the number of Pentecostal "denominations". Taking the John Adair definition that a denomination is a "Christian organisation uniting a number of local congregations" the number of black Pentecostal groups would not appear to be as many as previously thought, being simply independent individual churches rather than groups of churches.

The total number of denominations is therefore difficult to estimate. About half are recognised denominations whose names are more or less well known and are either Anglican, Baptist, Catholic, Independent, Methodist, a New Church stream, Orthodox, Presbyterian or one of the smaller denominations like the Salvation Army or the Quakers. The other half include some well known names like the Assemblies of God [AOG] or Elim or the New Testament Church of God, but they include many much newer Pentecostal churches such as Glory House, Cherubim and Seraphim Church, Bethel United Church of Jesus Christ and dozens and dozens more, or the many (often non-charismatic) churches of a particular nationality, like the French, Greek, Iranian, Italian, Japanese, or Tamil-speaking congregations.

Number of ministers

The number of ministers in the UK are also given in *UK Church Statistics.* Numbers for the four countries are shown in Table 5. Not all ministers are ordained; not all are full-time; not all are paid. The average minister was responsible for 1.3 churches in 2013.

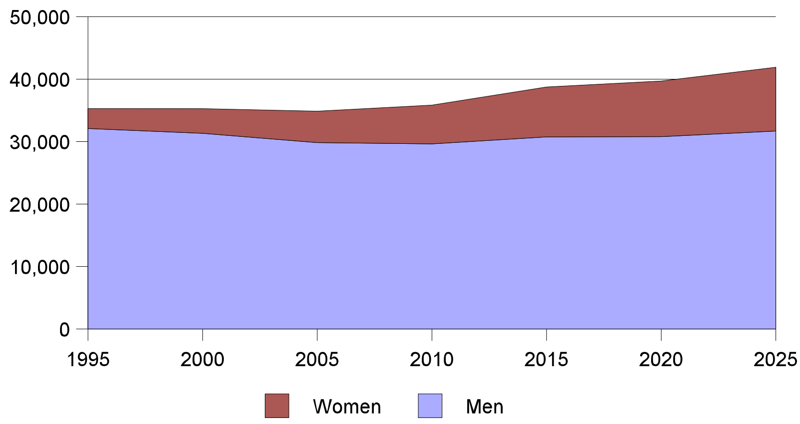
Table 5: Number of ministers in the UK by country, 2008 to 2020

Country	2008 ministers	% change 2008-2013	2013 ministers	% change 2013-2020	2020 Est ministers
England	28,701	*+6%*	30,482	*+5%*	32,104
Wales	1,632	*+4%*	1,697	*+5%*	1,790
Scotland	3,599	*+9%*	3,920	*+4%*	4,096
N Ireland	1,574	*+3%*	1,618	*+5%*	1,702
Total UK	**35,506**	***+6%***	**37,717**	***+5%***	**39,692**

The variations in the number of ministers by country is similar to the variations already seen in the number of churches. Growing denominations plant more churches and need more ministers; declining denominations normally see a reduction in both.

Church ministers were analysed by gender, and Figure 2 shows the overall trend in which the proportion of ministers who are female rises from 9% in 1995 (it was first measured in 1992) to 24% by 2025 if present trends continue.

Figure 2: Number of UK ministers, by gender, 1995 to 2020



Women are especially prevalent among Fresh Expressions (79% in 2013), the Salvation Army (50%), Methodist (37%) and Anglican (24%) leadership, but are also present in Presbyterian (19%), Pentecostal (14%), Baptist and New Churches (12% each), other Small Denominations (7%) and Independent Churches (4%).

So what of the future?

The mostly firm figures for 2008 to 2013 and the projections to 2020 show a declining number of church members across the UK, and especially in Wales, Scotland and N Ireland. The English membership figures show especial growth for three denominations not strongly present in Wales, Scotland or N Ireland – the New Churches, the Orthodox and the Pentecostal churches, especially the black church component of the last. Growth in these three groups, and Fresh Expressions which is strong in Scotland, is high, resulting in and from their planting of new churches.

The analysis shows the importance of evangelicalism in the New and Pentecostal Churches and the consequential drive for mission and starting new groups of worshippers. Orthodoxy is not part of the evangelical scene but equally shares a passion for mission, undertaken by ordaining new priests and encouraging them to start new congregations.

A heart for mission and a willingness to try the new are the key elements here, along with a denominational structure which allows such experimentation and in effect gives its new initiatives permission to fail as well as to succeed.

In the main, the declining denominations simply do not share these features – little desire for outreach or with a structure insufficiently flexible or with people unable to make it work. It would be unfair to say that some are not trying hard – the Methodist Church, for example, had nearly 900 Fresh Expression worship units in 2009 , but these have not yet turned their basic numbers around. Nor has the considerable investment in Fresh Expressions by the Church of England, but maybe it will over the next few years. It is obvious that the UK churches are not fossilising and in many instances are still vigorously active!