Welcome to the 2011 National Church Life Survey!

Greetings,
We are so pleased your church is joining thousands of churches across the country to take part in the largest and longest running survey on church life in the world. Each survey represents the voice of a church attender or leader. In 2011 we also offered the option of new surveys to hear from children, youth and people who are connected to your local church through your programs and activities.

Only 20 minutes every 5 years for local and national benefit
We appreciate that doing the NCLS takes effort. Yet, 20 years on from the first NCLS in 1991, we know how valuable it can be for local churches to reflect on their life and health. Those who intentionally integrate this ‘listening season’ into their own life, worship and mission find it most useful. The evidence base of results helps churches learn from each other. It also contributes to understanding the role of churches and their attenders in the Australian community more widely.

Results in your Church Life Pack and online
Soon after returning your completed survey forms, you will receive a Church Life Pack of resources including your Profile of results, to help inform and support your church in its ministry and mission. Copies of Profiles and additional material will also be available online.

The goal: nurturing life to the full
Churches are engaged in God’s mission in so many ways and there are many good stories to share. Our hope and prayer is that, with God’s blessing, this Church Life Survey will serve to strengthen the health and vitality of your church.

Dr Ruth Powell, Director,
and the NCLS Research team

Each church location across Australia has been given an NCLS Church Code. This should be written on the top of all your survey forms and used in any other correspondence with NCLS Research.

2011 NCLS represents a strong partnership including:
- Anglican Church
- Apostolic Churches
- Australian Christian Churches (AOG)
- Baptist Churches
- Catholic Church
- Christian Life Churches
- Christian Missionary Alliance
- C3 Churches (CCC)
- CRC Churches International
- Christian Outreach Centres
- Christian Reformed Churches
- Church of the Nazarene
- Churches of Christ
- Congregational Churches
- Foursquare Church
- Grace Communion
- Lutheran Church
- Presbyterian Church
- Salvation Army
- Seventh-day Adventist
- Uniting Church
- Vineyard Fellowship

Plus independent churches, house churches and other movements.

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P: +61 2 9701 4479
E: info@ncls.org.au
W: www.2011ncls.org.au
Contents of Your Survey Pack

Instructions Booklet (One per church location)

This Instruction booklet outlines how to run the Church Life Survey. It also contains:

• NCLS Church Code: for each church location, to be used on all forms.
• NCLS Admin Key: for use only by church administration to track survey progress and results (page 3).

Standard Church Life Survey

Attender Survey Forms (English and other languages as ordered)

There is a main Attender Survey form inside a jacket that the majority of people will complete. A small randomly selected group of attenders will also complete some extra questions. These will become part of broader research on the views of Australian attenders.

Your Survey Month: You have a month nominated for your denomination, in which to survey your attenders. You can choose the best time(s) within that month that suits you.

Most churches will select a ‘survey week’ and conduct a survey once at each church service and activity during a standard week. We suggest you avoid special events (e.g. baptisms) to give you a more regular and reliable sample of attenders. If a regular attender misses out, please feel free to give them a form to complete.

Attender Survey Forms should be completed:

• at any activity of spiritual nurture in your church (e.g. in worship service/mass, small groups, fellowships)
• by every attender aged 15 years or older
• ONCE only by each person

The Attender Survey will take approximately 15 to 20 minutes to complete.

Operations Survey (One per church location)

One Operations Survey is to be completed per church/parish by an administrator or leader with knowledge of the church’s life and activities. It provides important information as part of an ongoing national study of church vitality.

Leader Survey - Paper or online at www.2011ncls.org.au/leadersurvey

Leaders’ Surveys are to be completed by those who contribute significantly to the direction and vision of the church (e.g. clergy, staff elders, deacons, board etc). Provide each leader with a leader letter and a paper Leader Survey or direct them to the online survey. They are completely confidential. Paper surveys come with a sealable envelope.

NCLS Plus Surveys (Optional)

Children’s Survey for 8 to 14 year olds, Youth Plus Survey and Community Contacts Survey

Some churches have ordered the optional NCLS Plus Surveys. The Children’s Survey for 8 to 14 year olds is a paper survey and has its own instructions. If either of the Youth Plus Survey or Community Contacts Survey has been ordered, then an instructions sheet for these online surveys, with your church’s unique Survey Access Code, will be in your Survey Pack.

For Returning Surveys

Checklist Cover Sheet (One per church location)

One Checklist Cover Sheet is to be completed for each church location. It summarises all completed surveys being returned by your church to NCLS Research on completion.

Attender Survey Collection Envelopes (One per 50 Attender Surveys)

Leader Survey Collection Envelopes (One per Leader Survey)

Return Address Label (One only)

How to run your survey:

Before conducting the survey:

1. Select
2. Notify
3. Supply

During the collection:

4. Plan
5. Bring

After conducting the survey:

1. Display
2. Read
3. Remind
4. Collect
5. Safeguard

Your NCLS Survey Code:

The NCLS Admin Key is your church’s secure link to NCLS online.

1. Check your 2011 NCLS Survey Order
2. View your NCLS survey pack
3. Track the completion rate of surveys over the 60 days
4. Order more surveys
5. Access a range of Profiles when results are released.

Each individual church needs a unique NCLS survey code.

First, go to www.2011ncls.org.au

Then, click on ‘Log in’ or Create Account

Keep your NCLS Admin Key in a safe place.

Note: For NCLS Research Purposes:

• from attenders
• from children, youth and community contacts

A Church Life Survey

Simplicity Funerals

NCLS Research: Locked Bag 2002 Strathfield NSW 2135  P: +61 2 9701 4479  E: info@ncls.org.au
How to run the Survey

Before conducting the survey:
1. Select the best time in your Survey month for your church.
2. Notify the church at least one week in advance.
3. Supply those leading the services/activities with Attender Survey forms, a copy of the Instructions and NCLS Church Code for each church location (see page 1).
4. Plan to allow sufficient time for completion of the survey at each church service or activity, approximately 20 minutes.
5. Bring sufficient blue or black pens or lead pencils for all attenders.

During the survey:
1. Display the Church Code in a prominent place, so that the attenders can include this on the top right hand corner of their survey forms (see page 1). Display PowerPoint slide of the Church Code (available for download at www.2011ncls.org.au/localchurches).
2. Read out Survey Instructions (see page 4).
3. Remind attenders to complete the front of the survey jacket if they would like further information from NCLS Research or survey sponsors. Attendees should separate their survey jacket from the survey form and hand them both in.
4. Collect all completed Attender Survey forms in the Confidential Collection Envelopes.
5. Safeguard confidentiality by sealing the Collection Envelopes and not reading attendee responses.

After conducting the survey:
1. Complete the Checklist Cover Sheet.
2. Place the Confidential Collection Envelopes containing completed Attender forms, Leader Surveys, Operations Survey and Checklist Cover Sheet into the postpack in which they came.
3. Stick the return address label to NCLS Research on the postpack over the top of the original label.
4. Post the package back as soon as possible to NCLS Research at PO Box 6080, Sydney Parcels BMLC, Chullora, NSW, 2190

Your NCLS Admin Key

The NCLS Admin Key is your church’s secure link to NCLS online.
It is for use by church administrators and leaders to:
1. Check your church’s contact details are correct
2. View your 2011 NCLS survey order
3. Track the completion of online surveys over the survey period
4. Order more surveys (paper or online)
5. Access a range of Profiles when results are released.

Each individual who uses the Admin Key needs to be registered. They need their own Username and Password on the NCLS website.

First, go to www.2011ncls.org.au to ‘Log in’ (or Create a Log In). Then, click on ‘Administer your Church’, and type in your Admin Key.

Keep your NCLS Admin Key secure.

Note: For NCLS Research to provide confidential and credible results we require a minimum return of 10 survey forms:
• from attenders or
• from children, youth or community contacts (if you used these optional surveys).

A Church Life Profile or other Profiles cannot be produced for churches that return less than 10 forms.
Read Aloud Instructions

(To be read out loud to attenders completing the adult Attender Survey Form)

These survey instructions are to be read out in all appropriate languages at all church service/activities where the survey is to be completed.

1. Read aloud from here:
   “Thank you for participating in the 2011 National Church Life Survey.
   Hundreds of thousands of people in churches throughout Australia will be completing this survey.
   This Church Life Survey is a chance to review our church’s qualities and strengths, and build our vision and direction for the future. After completion, our church will receive a Profile report of results based on our survey responses.
   There are many research issues about Australian churches being covered by this survey, so not all survey forms are exactly alike. Please attempt all questions. Your answers are strictly confidential. Please keep in mind that each survey form will be electronically scanned so follow the instructions carefully while filling in your answers.
   If you have already completed a survey form, do not fill in another one.
   Please note: Survey forms must not be taken home.

To complete the survey:
   a) Please use a BLUE or BLACK PEN or a LEAD PENCIL. Press firmly.
   b) Please fill in the church code at the top right hand corner of the survey form.
      (Provide attenders with the Church Code on page 1 of these instructions).
   c) Complete the survey by FILLING IN or CROSSING THE WHOLE SQUARE next to the category that best describes your response.
   d) Fill in or cross one square per question (unless otherwise specified).
   e) If you would like to personally receive future communication from NCLS Research about research results, please provide your contact details on the Survey Jacket.
   f) The support and financial assistance of sponsors has made this survey possible and is greatly appreciated.

2. Allow attenders time to complete the survey, then read the following:
   “When you have finished, please separate your survey jacket and form and hand in both to be placed into the Confidential Collection Envelopes.”

Returning the Surveys

Please return your completed surveys to NCLS Research, within two weeks following your survey month.

Please ensure you include in your post pack or box:

☐ Checklist Cover Sheet, ☐ Leader Survey letters
☐ Attender Surveys in Confidential Collection envelopes, (separated from the survey forms),
☐ Attender Survey jackets (separated from the survey forms),
☐ Leader Surveys in Confidential Leader Survey Collection envelopes,
☐ Operations Survey.
And if you ordered Children’s Surveys...
☐ Completed Children’s Survey forms

Your Survey Results

Each local church will receive a Church Life Pack. It will contain a Church Life Profile for each church location, as well as practical planning resources. Additional Profiles and resources will be available online, using your NCLS Admin Key.

The NCLS Research team will aim to have the results for all churches processed and returned by Easter 2012.

However this relies on all churches returning their surveys promptly.

Thanks again for your participation.