



# The Presbyterian Panel

*Listening to Presbyterians*



**REPORT**

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## OVERVIEW

### ***What Is the Presbyterian Panel?***

The Presbyterian Panel consists of three nationally representative samples of groups affiliated with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.): members, elders (lay leaders) currently on session, and ordained ministers. (The session is the governing body in Presbyterian congregations.) For analysis, ministers are split into two groups based on current call: *pastors*, serving in congregations, and *specialized clergy*, serving elsewhere. New samples are drawn every three years. Panel surveys are conducted quarterly, primarily by mail, but with an online completion option.

For more information on methods used to draw the samples, see the technical appendix in the *Background Report for the 2006-2008 Presbyterian Panel* (see next page for Web availability and ordering information).

The Panel is maintained and directed by the office of Research Services of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The first Panel was created in 1973 to provide a means for informing leaders of the opinions and activities of the rank and file across the church. Survey topics and questions are usually developed at the request of, and in consultation with, staff or elected members of national church entities. However, ultimate decisions on content of Panel surveys and the disposition of Panel data are those of Research Services. Standards developed by the American Association of Public Opinion Research guide Panel surveys.

### ***Current Survey***

The current survey is the fourth completed by the 2006-2008 Panel. Questionnaires were mailed in mid-August 2006, with returns accepted through late November 2006. Most panelists received a copy by U.S. mail, but a subset (n=215, or 12%) who had signed up for the service was notified via email. Non-responders were sent a postcard reminder on September 15, 2006. All panelists could complete the survey on the Web, and the percentages of respondents who did so are: members, 13%; elders, 16%; pastors, 23%; specialized clergy, 19%. Response rates for this survey are: members, 44%; elders, 50%; ministers, 60%.

### ***Sponsor and Topic***

The survey was requested by the Office of Theology and Worship of the General Assembly Council, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Its staff was interested in learning about current usage of the Bible among Presbyterians, and in particular, noting what changes had occurred over the prior decade since a similar survey was taken through the Panel in February 1995.

### ***This Report***

The first half of this report uses text and graphics to summarize and explicate findings. A data appendix follows with comparative tables that display the percentage distribution of responses to every question for each of the four Panel groups. Results are subject to sampling and other errors. In general, differences of less than 8% are not statistically meaningful.

Some analyses in this report, including those using age and gender, rely on responses of panelists to the initial questionnaire they completed in the fall of 2005. For more information on this earlier survey and responses of panelists to these questions, see the *Religious and Demographic Profile of Presbyterians 2005: Findings from the Initial Survey of the 2006-2008 Presbyterian Panel*. This report also presents comparisons with results from the February 1995 Presbyterian Panel survey, *The Bible*. See the next page for Web availability and ordering information for both survey reports.

Size of congregation is taken from annual congregational statistics gathered by the Office of the General Assembly. Region is determined by panelists' mailing addresses.

## OVERVIEW

### **A Note on Terminology**

In this report, the term *median* refers to the middle number in an ordered distribution. For example, the median age for a group of people aged 12, 21, 28, 35, and 64 years would be 28 years. The term *mean* refers to the arithmetic average of values in a distribution; in the example, the mean age would be calculated as  $(12+21+28+35+64)/5$ , or 32 years.

### **Suggested Citation**

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### **Author Note**

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### **Additional Copies**

Additional copies of this *Report* may be purchased for \$10 from Presbyterian Distribution Services (PDS)—call 800-524-2612 and request item #02056-07297. This *Report* is also available on the Web for free download in Adobe Acrobat format; go to [www.pcusa.org/research/panel/index.htm#2006](http://www.pcusa.org/research/panel/index.htm#2006) and click on the appropriate link. Copies of a four-page *Summary* of results are available for \$2 each directly from Research Services, or for free download from the same Web site. Call for information on quantity discounts on printed copies of either this *Report* or its *Summary* (888-728-7228 ext. 2040).

### **Other Reports**

The *Religious and Demographic Profile of Presbyterians 2005: Findings from the Initial Survey of the 2006-2008 Presbyterian Panel* (item #65100-05290) and the report of the February 1995 Panel survey, *The Bible* (#65100-99259), may each be purchased for \$10 from Presbyterian Distribution Services (PDS)—call 800-524-2612. Both are also available for free download in Adobe Acrobat format (go to [www.pcusa.org/research/panel](http://www.pcusa.org/research/panel)).

### **Panel on the Web**

A catalogue of Panel topics, and *Summaries* and *Reports* of surveys since 1994, are available on-line at the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Web site: [www.pcusa.org/research/panel/index](http://www.pcusa.org/research/panel/index). A catalogue of all surveys since the first Panel was created in 1973 is available here: [www.pcusa.org/research/panel/catalog.htm](http://www.pcusa.org/research/panel/catalog.htm).

### **Interested in Learning More about *Your* Congregation?**

- ✓ **10-Year Trend Report for Congregations**—available for free: [www.pcusa.org/tenyeartrends](http://www.pcusa.org/tenyeartrends).
- ✓ Research Services can help you conduct a congregational survey to learn more about your worshipers and identify your congregation's strengths. Call 1-888-728-7228 ext. 2040 and ask about the **U.S. Congregational Life Survey** or visit: [www.USCongregations.org](http://www.USCongregations.org).

## HIGHLIGHTS

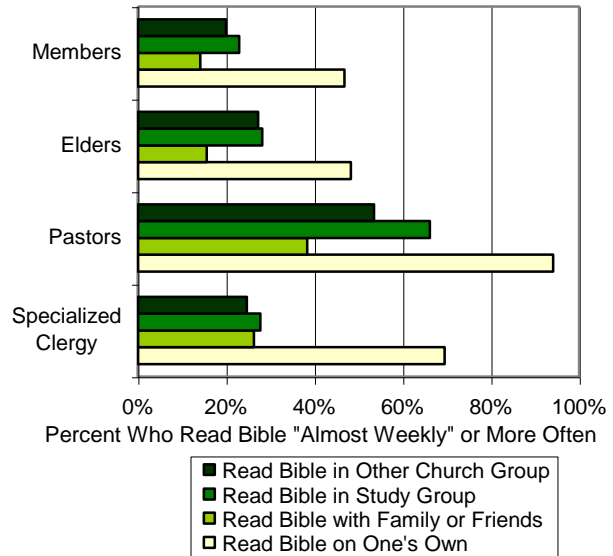
- ✓ Large majorities of panelists in every group reported reading the Bible individually at least once in the week prior to the survey. Panelists who reported that they had read the Bible either “often” or “daily” in the prior week comprised a third of laity, three in four pastors, and half of specialized clergy. (p. 1)
- ✓ For the prior year, almost all panelists reported at least some individual Bible reading, ranging from nine in ten members to all pastors. Panelists who had reported individual Bible reading “daily” or “almost daily” accounted for a quarter of laity, seven in ten pastors, and 44% of specialized clergy. (p. 1)
- ✓ Panelists reported much higher rates of individual Bible reading than Bible reading with family or friends or in Bible study groups. (p. 1)
- ✓ Most ministers prefer the New Revised Standard Version, with less than half as many (less than one in four) preferring the New International Version, followed by the Revised Standard Version and the King James/New King James Version. (p. 2)
- ✓ Most panelists read about equally from both the Old and New Testaments. (p. 2)
- ✓ The median time spent reading the Bible in a typical sitting is 30 minutes for members, pastors, and specialized clergy, and 25 minutes for elders. (p. 3)
- ✓ A resource used regularly along with Bible reading by a large majority in all Panel groups who read the Bible individually in the prior year is a study Bible. In addition, nine in ten pastors and three in four specialized clergy regularly used a Bible commentary. (p. 3)
- ✓ Relatively few panelists living in family households reported that they typically read the Bible together with other family members “at a regular time set aside for Bible reading or study.” (p. 4)
- ✓ Majorities of panelists have one or more children or grandchild 18 years of age or younger, and majorities of these panelists had read Bible passages or stories to a child or grandchild in the year prior to the survey. (p. 4)
- ✓ Most panelists in Bible study groups reported that, in the prior year, their group had chosen a book of the Bible to read in its entirety. Other common approaches were to read passages at random and read selections from a lectionary. (p. 5)
- ✓ Pastors indicate that the median number of scripture passages read during worship in their congregation is three. In most congregations, that includes a selection (read or sung) from Psalms. (p. 6)
- ✓ A majority of elders and pastors report that a lectionary is used “always” or “often” to “choose scriptures for your congregation’s worship.” More small- than large-membership congregations frequently use the lectionary to choose Bible readings. (p. 6)
- ✓ Compared with a 1995 survey, a higher percentage of members reported reading the Bible in both the week and the year prior to the survey. (p. 7)
- ✓ Personal preferences for English translations of the Bible reversed between 1995 and 2006 among members, who now prefer the New International Version over the King James /New King James Version. More than half of the pastors reported a preference for the New Revised Standard Version in both years. (p. 7)
- ✓ More members used a lectionary to choose passages for individual study in 2006 than in 1995; more pastors read a particular book of the Bible from end to end. (p. 8)
- ✓ Among those in Bible study groups, in 2006 fewer members were in groups that chose selections from *Daily Prayer* or the *Mission Yearbook* than in 1995; more pastors were in groups that listened to radio programs, audio recordings, or other media on which the Bible is read. (p. 9)

## FREQUENCY OF BIBLE READING

### Personal Bible Reading

- ✓ Almost all panelists reported having read the Bible on their own during the year prior to the survey (members, 91%; elders, 96%; pastors, 100%; specialized clergy, 98%). Fewer reported having done so in the prior week (67%; 70%; 99%; 87%).
- ✓ Most pastors and specialized clergy read the Bible on their own “daily/ almost daily” (70%; 44%) or “weekly/almost weekly” (24%; 26%) during the prior year (Figure 1). Fewer had done so daily or almost daily during the prior week (“at least daily,” 39% and 25%, “often, but not daily,” 35% and 24%).
- ✓ Almost half of laity report reading the Bible on their own either “daily/almost daily” (members, 26%; elders, 28%) or “weekly/almost weekly” (21%; 20%) during the prior year. Fewer report having done so “at least daily” (members, 18%; elders, 17%) or “often, but not daily” (16%; 17%) during the prior week.
- ✓ Among members, more women than men read the Bible frequently in the prior year:
  - 28% of women, compared to 22% of men, read the Bible “daily/almost daily.”
  - 24% of women, compared to 15% of men, read the Bible “weekly/almost weekly.”
  - 7% of women, compared to 4% of men, read the Bible “once every 2-3 weeks.”
 However, there are no significant differences in Bible reading frequency by gender among elders.
- ✓ The average age of laity who read the Bible “daily/almost daily” during the past year (members, 63 years; elders, 61 years) was significantly older than the average age of the lay panelists who did not read the Bible “daily/almost daily” during the past year (58 years; 59 years).

**Figure 1. Frequency of Bible Reading in the Past Year**



### Bible Reading with Family

- ✓ Sizable majorities of members (62%), elders (66%), pastors (91%), and specialized clergy (78%) reported reading the Bible “with family or friends” in the prior year. Very few had done so “daily/almost daily” (3%; 3%; 6%; 5%) or even “weekly/almost weekly” (11%; 13%; 32%; 22%).
- ✓ Frequencies of reading the Bible with family in the prior week are lower (totals having read it “at least daily” or “often, but not daily” are: members, 4%; elders, 5%; pastors, 13%; and specialized clergy, 9%).

### Bible Reading in Groups

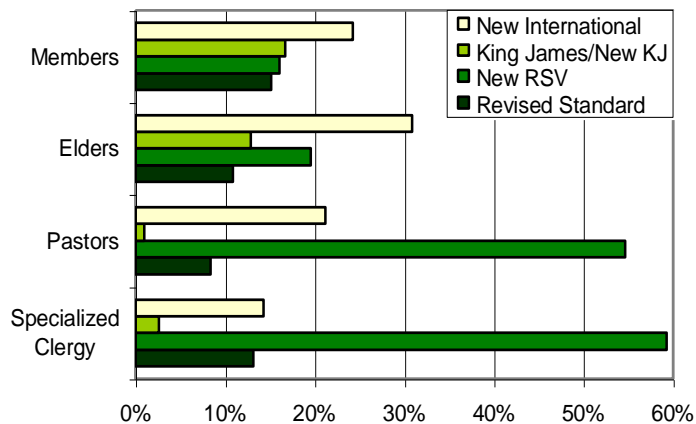
- ✓ In the last year, one in four laity (members, 22%; elders, 28%) and specialized clergy (26%) have read the Bible “weekly/almost weekly” as part of a Bible study group, as have two in three pastors (65%).
- ✓ Most pastors but fewer other panelists report reading the Bible “in connection with a group devoted specifically to Bible study” in the last week (members, 27%; elders, 31%; pastors, 62%; specialized clergy, 30%), although majorities of all four groups have done so in the past year (59%; 65%; 96%; 70%).
- ✓ Most panelists have read the Bible in other sorts of church groups in the past year, but except for pastors, relatively few have done so as often as “weekly/almost weekly” (members, 19%; elders, 27%; pastors, 52%; specialized clergy, 24%).

## BIBLE READING PRACTICES

### Preferred Translation

- ✓ Personal preferences for English translations of the Bible vary among the laity and clergy (see Figure 2). The New International Version was most preferred by laity and the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) was the translation most preferred by clergy for personal use.
- ✓ Laity personally preferred the New International Version (members, 24%; elders, 31%) to the New Revised Standard Version (16%; 20%), the King James/New King James Version (17%; 13%), and the Revised Standard Version (15%; 11%).
- ✓ Ministers expressed a strong personal preference for the New Revised Standard Version (pastors, 55%; specialized clergy, 59%), followed by the New International Version (21%; 14%), and the Revised Standard Version (8%; 13%). Very few clergy indicated a preference for the King James/New King James Version (1%; 3%).
- ✓ Among all groups, the English translation of the Bible reported used more often than any other during worship was the New Revised Standard Version (members, 28%; elders, 32%; pastors, 58%; specialized clergy, 63%). Panelists differed on the next most frequently used translation: lay panelists indicated the Revised Standard Version (members, 20%; elders, 25%) and pastors reported the New International Version (26%).

Figure 2. Most Preferred Translations



### Making a Selection

- ✓ Panelists who had undertaken “Bible study or reading on your own” in the year prior to the survey used a variety of approaches to select what passages to read.
- ✓ Laity most often: read passages at random (members, 77%; elders 77%), read selections from a devotional magazine like *Upper Room* or *These Days* (60%; 58%), or read a particular book from beginning to end (59%; 58%).
- ✓ In contrast, pastors most often read selections from the lectionary (75%) or read a particular book from beginning to end (73%). Specialized clergy most often read selections from the lectionary (79%) or read passages at random (65%).
- ✓ Reading selections from *Daily Prayer* or *The Mission Yearbook of Prayer and Study* was the approach used least frequently by all groups (members, 27%; elders, 25%; pastors, 29%; specialized clergy, 25%).

### What Was Read

- ✓ Most panelists who engaged in personal Bible reading in the prior year read “about equally from both the Old and New Testaments” (members, 61%; elders, 64%; pastors, 73%; specialized clergy, 75%).
- ✓ Most of the rest read “mostly” or “entirely from the New Testament” (29%; 32%; 24%; 19%). Very few read “mostly” or “entirely” from the Old Testament (10% or less in each group).

## BIBLE READING PRACTICES

### ***Reasons for Reading***

- ✓ Most panelists who read the Bible on their own in the prior year indicated that they “very often” or “often” read or studied the Bible to meet their “own individual needs or wants” (members, 76%; elders, 75%; pastors, 71%; specialized clergy, 70%).
- ✓ For the majority of the pastors (88%), their individual reading and study of the Bible during the past year was “often” or “very often” part of their sermon preparation.
- ✓ Large majorities reported that they “always” or “often” read the Bible—individually or in a group—looking for:
  - Inspiration (members, 76%; elders, 75%; pastors, 91%; specialized clergy, 83%)
  - Guidance (68%; 66%; 73%; 63%)
  - Information (67%; 64%; 76%; 65%)
- ✓ Fewer reported reading the Bible to find:
  - Comfort (members, 52%; elders, 47%; pastors, 44%; specialized clergy, 38%)
  - Entertainment (5%; 4%; 5%; 5%)

### ***Time Spent Reading***

- ✓ The median time spent reading the Bible individually in a typical sitting was 30 minutes for members, pastors, and specialized clergy, and 25 minutes for elders.
- ✓ All but a very few panelists reported reading the Bible for 10 or more minutes at a time, typically, with most doing so for more than 15 minutes (members, 72%; elders, 71%; pastors, 78%; specialized clergy, 79%). At the other extreme, very few reported reading for more than an hour at a time (2%; 2%; 4%; 2%).

### ***Where Reading Occurs***

- ✓ Almost all panelists did their individual Bible reading “at home” at least occasionally, with large majorities doing so “very often” or “often” (members, 81%; elders, 79%; pastors, 67%; specialized clergy, 82%).
- ✓ Relatively few laity but most ministers reported reading the Bible “very often” or “often” in the prior year at “my office/place of work” (members, 8%; elders, 10%; pastors, 87%; and specialized clergy, 54%). Very few panelists had read or studied the Bible while using public transportation (“often” or “very often”: members, 8%; elders, 8%; pastors, 5%; and specialized clergy, 4%).

### ***Study Aids***

- ✓ Resources that 10% or more in each group reported using “regularly as part of your Bible reading and study,” individually or in a group, are:
  - A study Bible (members, 64%; elders, 67%; pastors, 82%; specialized clergy, 70%)
  - A Bible commentary (38%; 44%; 92%; 76%)
  - A PC(USA) study curriculum (28%; 28%; 22%; 16%)
  - A Bible study from the Web (14%; 13%; 20%; 21%)
  - Company of Pastors or Order of Elders materials (12%; 15%; 10%; 11%)<sup>1</sup>
- ✓ Less commonly used resources include:
  - Kerygma (members, 3%; elders, 4%; pastors, 12%; specialized clergy, 5%)
  - Disciple Bible Study (3%; 4%; 6%; 2%)
  - Bethel Bible Study (2%; 2%; 2%; <1%)

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<sup>1</sup> That so many lay panelists reported using Order of Elders materials is problematic because membership in The Order is tiny—no more than 300 to 400 at the time of the survey (less than 0.02% of all members and 0.5% of all active elders.) What most of these members and elders instead had in mind when they so responded is impossible to know after the fact.

## READING THE BIBLE WITH OTHERS

### ***Frequency of Reading with Family or Friends***

- ✓ As previously noted (p. 1), majorities in all Panel groups reported reading the Bible “with family or friends” in the prior year. But many had done so infrequently; the percentages reporting that they read the Bible with family or friends at least “once every 2-3 weeks” in the last year are: members, 20%; elders, 22%; pastors, 52%; and specialized clergy, 36%.

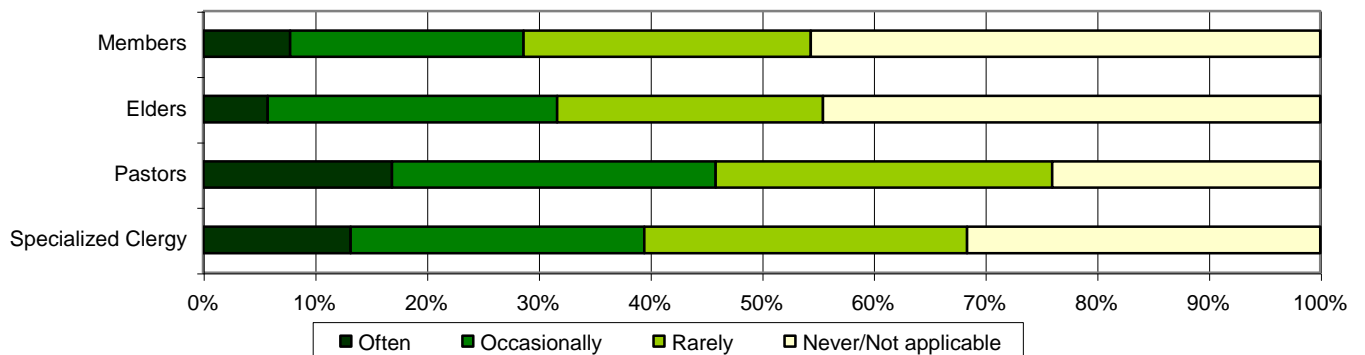
### ***Times and Seasons of Family Bible Reading***

- ✓ Large majorities of panelists share a household with one or more relatives: members, 74%; elders, 78%; pastors, 85%; and specialized clergy, 78%. Panelists in these households were asked additional questions about Bible reading with family members.
- ✓ In very few of these family households did panelists typically read the Bible “at meals on a daily basis” (members, 4%; elders, 4%; pastors, 5%; specialized clergy, 2%). Somewhat more did so “at meals on an occasional basis” (17%; 17%; 23%; 23%).
- ✓ Similarly, relatively few family households read the Bible together “at a regular time set aside for Bible reading or study” (members, 12%; elders, 13%; pastors, 22%; specialized clergy, 18%).
- ✓ At major Christian celebrations, such as Christmas and Easter, “family members typically read the Bible together” in some lay (members, 45%; elders, 43%) and most ministerial (pastors, 65%; specialized clergy, 64%) households.
- ✓ However, very few typically read the Bible together with family members on “birthdays or anniversaries” (members, 5%; elders, 6%; pastors, 7%; specialized clergy, 6%).

### ***Reading to Children and Grandchildren***

- ✓ Most panelists reported that they have a child or grandchild who is 18 years of age or younger (members, 65%; elders, 62%; pastors, 63%; specialized clergy, 56%).
- ✓ Among these panelists, majorities had read “Bible passages or stories at home to a child or grandchild” in the prior year (members, 54%; elders, 56%; pastors, 76%; and specialized clergy, 68%). (See Figure 3.)
- ✓ Panelists who had read the Bible or Bible stories to a child or grandchild “often” or “occasionally” ranged from 29% of members and 32% of elders to 46% of pastors and 39% of specialized clergy.

**Figure 3. Frequency of Bible Reading to Children and Grandchildren\***



\*Percentages are of those who report having one or more children or grandchildren 18 years of age or younger

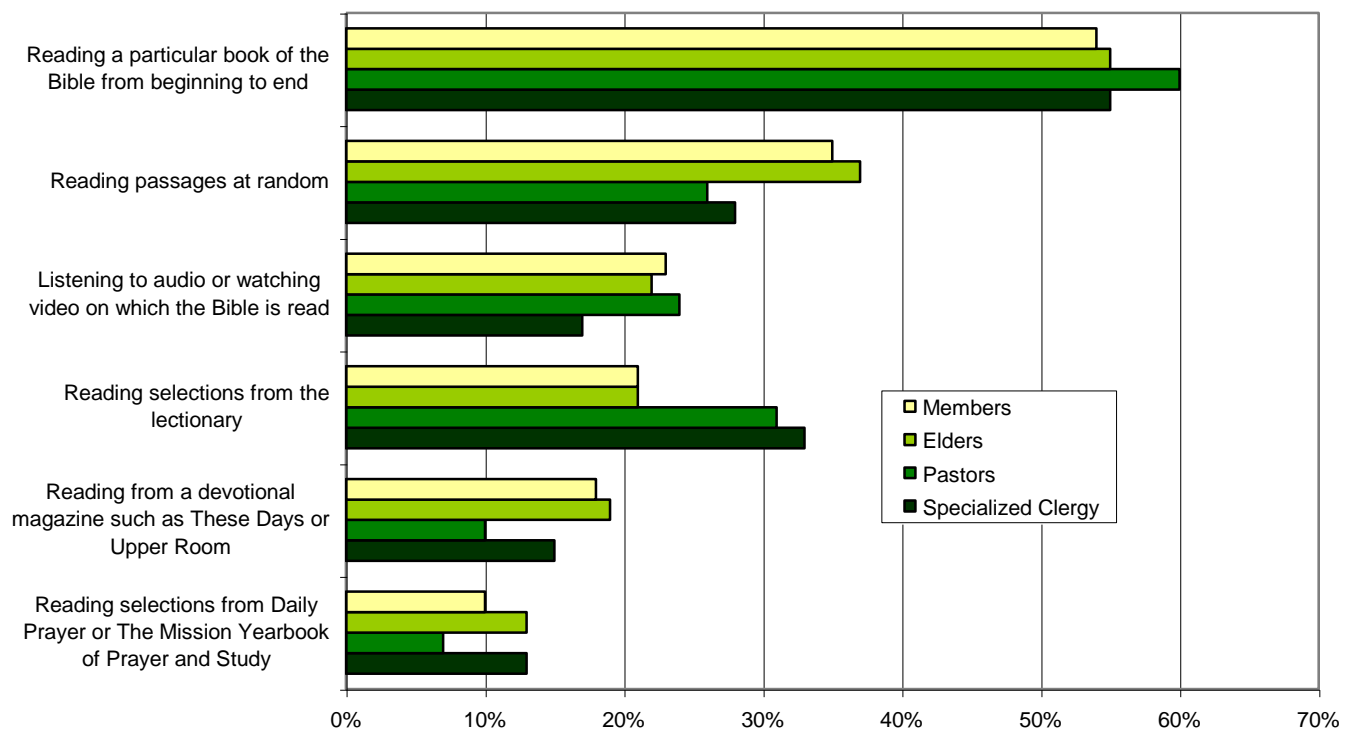


## READING THE BIBLE WITH OTHERS

### Participation in Bible Study Groups

- ✓ As previously noted (p. 1), majorities reported having read the Bible in the previous year “in connection with a group devoted specifically to Bible study” (members, 59%; elders, 65%; pastors, 96%; specialized clergy, 70%). Somewhat fewer reported participation at least monthly in a Bible study group in the previous year (members, 41%; elders, 49%; pastors, 80%; specialized clergy, 38%).
- ✓ Some had read the Bible individually “very often” or “often” in the previous year as “preparation for attending a Bible study group” (members, 39%; elders, 35%; pastors, 38%; specialized clergy, 22%), while an overlapping number had done so in “preparation for teaching or leading a Bible study” (18%; 27%; 83%; 51%).
- ✓ Panelists in Bible study groups reported using a variety of “methods or formats” to guide their group study. The frequency with which panelists reported using particular methods or formats is similar across the four Panel groups (see also Figure 4):<sup>2</sup>
  - Reading a particular book of the Bible from beginning to end (members, 54%; elders, 55%; pastors, 60%; specialized clergy, 56%)
  - Reading passages at random (35%; 37%; 26%; 28%)
  - Listening to radio programs or audio recordings, or watching television programs or video tapes/DVDs on which the Bible is read (23%; 22%; 24%; 17%)
  - Reading selections from the lectionary (21%; 21%; 31%; 33%)
  - Reading from a devotional magazine such as *These Days* or *Upper Room* (18%; 19%; 10%; 15%)
  - Reading selections from *Daily Prayer* or *The Mission Yearbook of Prayer and Study* (10%; 13%; 7%; 13%)

**Figure 4. Methods Used to Guide Bible Study Groups<sup>2</sup>**



<sup>2</sup> Percentages are calculated with non-responses (i.e., response left blank) included in the denominator (treated, in effect, as if they were “no” responses). Previous research has shown higher rates of non-response to questions of this type, suggesting that some respondents check “yes” when it applies but fail to check “no” when it applies. Hence, the percentages here differ from those in the data appendix.

## BIBLE READING IN WORSHIP SERVICES

### Number and Types of Readings

- ✓ Almost half of elders (48%) and a majority of pastors (58%) recall the reading of a Psalm at the most recent worship service they attended. An overlapping 20% and 22%, respectively, recall the singing of a Psalm.
- ✓ Besides a sung or read Psalm, large majorities also recall that at least one other passage of scripture was read aloud at the most recent service they attended. Most of these panelists indicate that two other passages were read. The responses of pastors are: one other passage, 31%; two other passages, 52%; three other passages, 16%.
- ✓ Combining Psalms with other passages yields a median of three Bible passages read in the most recent worship service, according to pastors. Overall, 14% report one reading; 34%, two; 40%, three; and 13%, four.

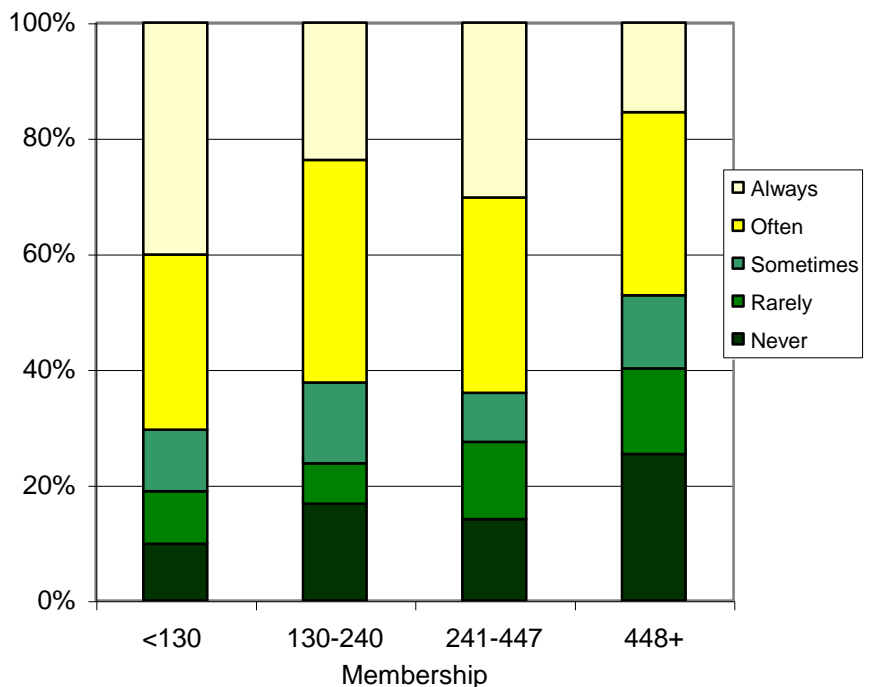
### Introducing Passages

- ✓ When the Bible was read during the most recent worship service that panelists attended, also included were, with varying frequency:
  - An announcement of the book and chapter of the passage or passages (99% of elders and 98% of pastors so report)
  - An invitation to worshipers to follow along in their own or a pew Bible (86%; 73%)
  - A brief historical or contextual introduction (59%; 58%)
  - A brief introduction to the meaning of the text (59%; 51%)

### Use of the Lectionary

- ✓ A majority of elders (57%) and pastors (62%) report that a lectionary is used “always” or “often” to “choose scriptures for your congregation’s worship.” Few report that it is “never” used (6%; 16%), although 26% of elders respond “don’t know.”
- ✓ Similarly, 60% of elders and 62% of pastors report that the sermons in their congregations are either “always” or “often” based on “the lectionary reading for that Sunday.”
- ✓ Sermons are based less often on “preaching through a book of the Bible” (30% of elders and 18% of pastors indicate that is the case “always” or “often”) or “themes or topical issues” (34%; 29%).
- ✓ Use of lectionary readings as the basis for sermons is more common in smaller than in larger membership congregations (Figure 5), and in congregations located in the South.

**Figure 5. Lectionary Use by Size of Church, Pastors’ Responses**



## COMPARISONS WITH A 1995 SURVEY

### Comparing Bible-Related Practices and Opinions between 1995 and 2006

The February 1995 Presbyterian Panel survey had asked several questions identical to those on the current survey, all concerning opinions about the Bible. Overall, the responses were broadly similar over the ten-year period. The following items highlight similarities and differences in the responses by members and pastors between 1995 and 2006. All differences are statistically significant based on a chi-square test,  $p < .05$ , except as noted. Refer to Table 1 (pp. 8-9) as indicated.

- ✓ More members but fewer pastors reported reading the Bible in the week prior to the 2006 survey than was true in 1995 (Table 1). However, the proportion of members who had read the Bible “often” or “daily” did not change, and the decline in the proportion of pastors who had read the Bible in the prior week was small, from 98% to 95%.
- ✓ The frequency of personal Bible reading in the previous twelve months was consistent for pastors between 1995 and 2006, but showed some change among members (Table 1). Fewer of them responded “never” or “rarely” in 2006, and more responded “daily/almost daily/at least daily” (1995, 21%; 2006, 26%).
- ✓ Personal preferences for English translations of the Bible changed among members but not pastors (Table 1). Preferences for the New International Version increased (1995, 16%; 2006, 24%), replacing the King James /New King James Version (24%; 17%) as the most preferred translation; preference for the New Revised Standard Version also increased (10%; 16%). More than half of the pastors (51%; 55%) continue to prefer the New Revised Standard Version (this change is not significant.) Their preference for the Revised Standard Version declined (15%; 8%).
- ✓ Members and pastors continue to use a variety of means for choosing passages for their *individual* Bible study and reading (Table 1). The only change among members is an increase in the percentage reading selections from the lectionary (1995, 26%; 2006, 34%). Among pastors, more read a book of the Bible from beginning to end (64%; 73%), but fewer read selections from *Daily Prayer* or the *Mission Yearbook* (40%; 29%).
- ✓ The only significant change reported by members in selection methods used in Bible study groups (Table 1) is a decrease in the percentage reading selections from *Daily Prayer* or the *Mission Yearbook* (1995, 23%; 2006, 13%).
- ✓ The frequency with which members and pastors read the Bible for different purposes remained consistent (Table 1), with these exceptions: more members and pastors read the Bible to “meet their individual needs or wants” (for members, “very often” increased from 41% in 1995 to 52% in 2006, and for pastors, “rarely” and “never” combined decreased from 6% to 2%), fewer pastors read the Bible for comfort “rarely” (12%; 8%), fewer pastors read the Bible for “information” “always” (28%; 22%), and more pastors read it “often” (48%, 54%) for the same reason.
- ✓ Reading the Bible weekly “with family or friends” during the prior year increased among members (“almost weekly” or more often: 1995; 18%; 2006, 23%) and pastors (“almost weekly” or more often: 1995, 34%; 2006, 38%).
- ✓ Reading the Bible in conjunction with a group specifically devoted to Bible study in the prior year increased among both members (33% reported having done so in 1995; 41% in 2006) and pastors (73%; 80%).
- ✓ Among pastors, Bible study participation in the week prior to the survey was much higher in 1995 (73%) than in 2006 (52%), probably because the former survey was taken in mid-winter (with many responding during Lent) and the latter in mid-summer.

## COMPARISONS WITH A 1995 SURVEY

### Comparing Bible-Related Practices and Opinions between 1995 and 2006 (cont.)

- ✓ The average time spent reading the Bible remained constant (or nearly so) between 1995 (members, 28 minutes; pastors, 33 minutes) and 2006 (members, 29 minutes; pastors, 33 minutes).
- ✓ The use of study Bibles among members increased (1995, 51%; 2006, 64%), but use of several other types of resources asked about on both surveys did not change (i.e., a Bible commentary, a PC(USA) study curriculum, Kerygma, Bethel Bible study).

**Table 1. Comparing Responses to Selected Questions about the Bible, 1995 and 2006**

	Members		Pastors	
	1995	2006	1995	2006
Please take a few minutes to think back over <i>the last week</i> . In that period . . . how often did you read the Bible or hear the Bible read ( <i>excluding</i> worship services) on your own?				
Never .....	42%	33% <sup>a</sup>	2%	1%
Once or twice .....	24%	22%	9%	10%
A few times.....	7%	12% <sup>a</sup>	17%	15%
Often, but not daily .....	13%	16%	38%	35%
At least daily .....	14%	18%	34%	39% <sup>b</sup>
In general, how often during the <i>past 12 months</i> did you read the Bible or hear the Bible read (excluding worship services) on your own?				
Never .....	12%	9% <sup>b</sup>	—	—
Rarely, but no regular pattern .....	19%	14% <sup>b</sup>	1%	*
At times, but no regular pattern.....	23%	20%	5%	4%
Once a month or less .....	3%	5%	1%	*
Once every 2-3 weeks .....	5%	6%	2%	1%
Weekly/almost weekly .....	17%	21%	27%	24%
Daily/almost daily .....	21%	26% <sup>b</sup>	65%	70%
Which translation do you personally most prefer?				
New International Version .....	19%	24% <sup>a</sup>	18%	21%
King James/New King James .....	29%	17% <sup>a</sup>	1%	1%
New Revised Standard Version .....	10%	16% <sup>a</sup>	51%	55%
Revised Standard Version .....	14%	15%	15%	8% <sup>a</sup>
Other/No preference .....	28%	28%	14%	15%
When you engaged in <i>individual</i> Bible reading or study over the past year, did you use any of the following methods or formats to guide your reading?				
Reading passages at random .....	80%	77%	64%	69%
Reading a particular book from beginning to end .....	52%	59%	64%	73% <sup>a</sup>
Reading selections from the lectionary .....	26%	34% <sup>b</sup>	76%	75%
Reading selections from a devotional magazine like <i>Upper Room</i> .....	55%	60%	40%	37%
Reading selections from <i>Daily Prayer</i> or <i>The Mission Yearbook</i> .....	28%	27%	40%	29% <sup>a</sup>
Listening to radio programs, etc., on which the Bible is read .....	43%	48%	35%	35%

Table 1 continues on the next page

Note: Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Gray-shaded comparisons are statistically significant

<sup>a</sup> Differences between years significant at  $p < .01$  (based on a chi-square test)

<sup>b</sup> Differences between years significant at  $.01 \leq p < .05$  (based on a chi-square test)

\* less than 0.05%; rounds to zero

— zero (0.0); no cases in this cell

## COMPARISONS WITH A 1995 SURVEY

### Comparing Bible-Related Practices and Opinions between 1995 and 2006 (cont.)

**Table 1. Comparing Responses to Selected Questions about the Bible, 1995 and 2006 (cont.)**

	Members		Pastors	
	1995	2006	1995	2006
[If in a Bible study group, did it] use any of the following methods or formats to guide its reading?				
Reading passages at random .....	45%	42%	34%	30%
Reading a particular book from beginning to end .....	66%	62%	67%	64%
Reading selections from the lectionary .....	22%	26%	32%	35%
Reading selections from a devotional magazine like <i>Upper Room</i> .....	21%	22%	9%	12%
Reading selections from <i>Daily Prayer</i> or <i>Mission Yearbook</i> .....	23%	13% <sup>b</sup>	8%	8%
Listening to radio programs, etc., on which the Bible is read .....	26%	29%	18%	27% <sup>a</sup>
When you read the Bible—whether on your own or as part of a group—to what extent do you read it for . . .				
Comfort				
Always .....	20%	22%	9%	9%
Often .....	32%	30%	34%	35%
Sometimes.....	34%	34%	44%	46%
Rarely .....	9%	10%	12%	8% <sup>b</sup>
Never .....	5%	6%	1%	1%
Guidance				
Always .....	26%	34% <sup>b</sup>	26%	25%
Often .....	38%	34%	49%	48%
Sometimes.....	24%	24%	21%	23%
Rarely .....	6%	5%	3%	3%
Never .....	4%	4%	1%	1%
Information				
Always .....	26%	27%	28%	22% <sup>b</sup>
Often .....	38%	40%	48%	54% <sup>b</sup>
Sometimes.....	25%	27%	21%	20%
Rarely .....	7%	4%	2%	3%
Never .....	5%	3%	1%	1%
Continue to recall your <i>individual</i> Bible reading or study over the past year.				
To what extent was that reading and study part of:				
Your own individual needs or wants?				
Very often .....	41%	52% <sup>a</sup>	35%	36%
Often .....	29%	24%	32%	35%
Sometimes.....	23%	18%	26%	29%
Rarely or never .....	8%	6%	6%	2% <sup>a</sup>

Note: Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Gray-shaded comparisons are statistically significant

<sup>a</sup> Differences between years significant at  $p < .01$  (based on a chi-square test)

<sup>b</sup> Differences between years significant at  $.01 \leq p < .05$  (based on a chi-square test)

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**THE BIBLE**  
**THE AUGUST 2006 PRESBYTERIAN PANEL SURVEY**

**DATA APPENDIX**

	Members	Elders	Ministers
Number of questionnaires mailed.....	1,064	1,149	1,456
Number of questionnaires returned .....	474	585	886‡
Percent returned.....	44%	50%	60%
‡ 610 pastors; 276 specialized clergy			

Q-1. Please take a few moments to think back over *the last week*. In that period of seven days—*and that period only*—how often did you read the Bible or hear the Bible read (*excluding* during worship services) . . .

	Members	Elders	Pastors	Specialized Clergy
a. On your own?				
Never.....	33%	30%	1%	13%
Once or twice .....	22%	26%	10%	20%
A few times .....	12%	10%	15%	18%
Often, but not daily .....	16%	17%	35%	24%
At least daily .....	18%	17%	39%	25%
b. With family?				
Never.....	74%	72%	49%	61%
Once or twice .....	14%	17%	28%	20%
A few times .....	7%	6%	10%	10%
Often, but not daily .....	2%	4%	8%	6%
At least daily .....	2%	1%	4%	3%
c. In connection with a group devoted specifically to Bible study?				
Never.....	73%	69%	38%	70%
Once or twice .....	18%	21%	44%	24%
A few times .....	4%	4%	11%	2%
Often, but not daily .....	5%	5%	6%	3%
At least daily .....	1%	1%	1%	1%
d. In connection with another church-based class or group (e.g., prayer group, church school class, women's circle, session meeting, etc.)?				
Never.....	66%	54%	30%	64%
Once or twice .....	24%	33%	48%	27%
A few times .....	5%	7%	16%	6%
Often, but not daily .....	4%	6%	6%	2%
At least daily .....	1%	*	1%	1%

Note: Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding

\* = less than 0.5%; rounds to zero

— = zero (0.0); no cases in this category

+ = nonresponses of 10% or more on this question (reported percentages for all questions omit nonresponses)

n = number of potential respondents when only a subset are eligible to answer

◆ = percentages add to more than 100 because respondents could make more than one response

	Members	Elders	Pastors	Specialized Clergy
Q-2. Please think back over <i>the past twelve months</i> . In general, about how often over this year did you read the Bible or hear the Bible read ( <i>excluding</i> during worship services) . . .				
a. On your own?				
Never.....	9%	4%	—	2%
Rarely, but no regular pattern .....	14%	13%	*	3%
At times, but no regular pattern .....	20%	23%	4%	16%
Once a month or less.....	5%	5%	*	3%
Once every 2-3 weeks .....	6%	7%	1%	6%
Weekly/almost weekly.....	21%	20%	24%	26%
Daily/almost daily.....	26%	28%	70%	44%
b. With family or friends?				
Never.....	38%	34%	9%	22%
Rarely, but no regular pattern .....	18%	19%	20%	20%
At times, but no regular pattern .....	17%	16%	13%	15%
Once a month or less.....	7%	9%	7%	8%
Once every 2-3 weeks .....	6%	6%	13%	9%
Weekly/almost weekly.....	11%	13%	32%	22%
Daily/almost daily.....	3%	3%	6%	5%
c. In connection with a group devoted specifically to Bible study?				
Never.....	41%	35%	4%	30%
Rarely, but no regular pattern .....	9%	10%	4%	14%
At times, but no regular pattern .....	9%	12%	7%	11%
Once a month or less.....	12%	9%	8%	10%
Once every 2-3 weeks .....	6%	6%	11%	7%
Weekly/almost weekly.....	22%	28%	65%	26%
Daily/almost daily.....	1%	*	2%	2%
d. In connection with another church-based class or group (e.g., prayer group, church school class, women's circle, session meeting, etc.)?				
Never.....	33%	21%	3%	26%
Rarely, but no regular pattern .....	9%	8%	4%	13%
At times, but no regular pattern .....	12%	11%	9%	14%
Once a month or less.....	18%	20%	13%	12%
Once every 2-3 weeks .....	8%	12%	17%	10%
Weekly/almost weekly.....	19%	27%	52%	24%
Daily/almost daily.....	1%	1%	1%	1%

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	Members	Elders	Pastors	Specialized Clergy
Q-3. Which English translation of the Bible . . . (✓ <i>only one</i> □ in each column.)				
a. Do you personally most prefer?				
Revised Standard Version (RSV) .....	15%	11%	8%	13%
New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) .....	16%	20%	55%	59%
King James Version/New King James Version (KJV/NKJV) .....	17%	13%	1%	3%
New International Version (NIV) .....	24%	31%	21%	14%
Today's English Version (Good News Bible) .....	6%	7%	2%	2%
Living Bible .....	8%	6%	2%	*
American Standard Bible/New American Standard Bible .....	3%	3%	2%	2%
Other (please specify): _____ .....	4%	4%	8%	6%
No preference/don't know .....	7%	6%	1%	1%
Other English translations (specified):	n=20	n=22	n=49	n=17
Amplified Bible .....	—	5%	2%	—
Berkeley/New Berkeley Version in Modern English/ Modern Language Bible .....	—	—	—	6%
English Standard Version .....	10%	—	27%	6%
Las Biblia De Las Americas .....	—	—	2%	—
The Message, Eugene Peterson's translation .....	26%	48%	42%	53%
New Century Version/Max Lucado/ Inspirational Study Bible .....	16%	5%	2%	—
New English Bible (NEB)/New English Version (NEV)/ Revised English Bible (REB)/Revised English Version (REV) .....	26%	24%	10%	12%
New Jerusalem Bible/Jerusalem Bible .....	10%	10%	4%	24%
Phillips translation .....	—	—	—	—
Word in Life/Word in Life Study Bible .....	5%	—	—	—
Inclusive Language Bible .....	—	—	2%	—
Own version .....	—	—	2%	—
Response not interpretable, illegible, or non-specific ("It varies") .....	5%	10%	6%	—
b. Is used most often in worship in your congregation				
Revised Standard Version (RSV) .....	20%	25%	10%	14%
New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) .....	28%	32%	58%	63%
King James Version/New King James Version (KJV/NKJV) .....	11%	7%	1%	2%
New International Version (NIV) .....	16%	20%	26%	15%
Today's English Version (Good News Bible) .....	5%	4%	2%	*
Living Bible .....	1%	1%	*	*
American Standard Bible/New American Standard Bible .....	1%	1%	1%	—
Other (please specify) : _____ .....	2%	1%	2%	3%
No preference/don't know .....	16%	10%	1%	3%

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	Members	Elders	Pastors	Specialized Clergy
Q-3. Which English translation of the Bible . . . (✓ <i>only one</i> □ in each column.) (Cont.)				
b. Is used most often in worship in your congregation (Cont.)				
Other English translations (specified):	n=8	n=3	n=12	n=7
English Standard Version.....	—	—	33%	—
Las Biblia De Las Americas.....	—	—	8%	—
The Message, Eugene Peterson’s translation .....	20%	33%	25%	50%
New English Bible (NEB)/New English Version (NEV)/ Revised English Bible (REB)/Revised English Version (REV).....	—	—	8%	—
Phillips translation.....	—	—	—	17%
Inclusive Language Bible.....	—	—	8%	—
Own version .....	—	—	8%	33%
Response not interpretable, illegible, or non-specific ("It varies").....	80%	68%	8%	—
Q-4. At any time <i>over the past year</i> have you engaged in <i>individual reading or study of the Bible</i> , that is, have you undertaken Bible study or reading on your own?				
Yes.....	64%	67%	93%	88%
No → Skip to Q-10.....	36%	33%	7%	12%
Q-5. When you engaged in <i>individual</i> Bible reading or study <i>over the past year</i> , did you use any of the following methods or formats to guide your reading? (Please ✓ <i>one</i> □ in <i>every</i> row.)				
	n=293	n=384	n=562	n=239
a. Reading a particular book of the Bible from beginning to end	+	+		
Yes .....	59%	58%	73%	58%
No.....	41%	42%	27%	42%
b. Reading selections from the lectionary	+	+		
Yes .....	34%	44%	75%	79%
No.....	66%	56%	25%	21%
c. Reading selections from <i>Daily Prayer</i> or <i>The Mission Yearbook of Prayer and Study</i>	+	+		+
Yes .....	27%	25%	29%	25%
No.....	73%	75%	71%	75%
d. Reading selections from a devotional magazine like <i>Upper Room</i> or <i>These Days</i>	+	+		+
Yes .....	60%	58%	37%	41%
No.....	40%	42%	63%	59%
e. Reading passages at random	+	+		
Yes .....	77%	77%	69%	65%
No.....	23%	23%	31%	35%

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		Members	Elders	Pastors	Specialized Clergy
Q-5.	When you engaged in <i>individual</i> Bible reading or study <i>over the past year</i> , did you use any of the following methods or formats to guide your reading? (Please <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>one</i> <input type="checkbox"/> in <i>every</i> row.)				
(Cont.)		n=293	n=384	n=562	n=239
f.	Listening to radio programs or audio recordings, or watching television programs or video tapes/DVDs, on which the Bible is read				
	Yes .....	+	+		+
	No.....	48%	42%	35%	26%
		52%	58%	65%	74%
Q-6.	During the past year, how often did your <i>individual</i> Bible reading or study take place in each of the following settings? ( <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>one</i> <input type="checkbox"/> in each row.)				
		n=293	n=384	n=562	n=239
a.	At home				
	Very often .....	64%	63%	48%	64%
	Often .....	17%	16%	19%	18%
	Sometimes.....	16%	17%	24%	14%
	Rarely.....	2%	4%	8%	3%
	Never.....	1%	1%	1%	*
b.	At my office/place of work	+	+		
	Very often .....	5%	4%	59%	27%
	Often .....	3%	6%	28%	27%
	Sometimes.....	14%	14%	10%	18%
	Rarely.....	12%	13%	2%	12%
	Never.....	67%	64%	*	16%
c.	In a car or public transportation	+	+		
	Very often .....	2%	3%	1%	3%
	Often .....	6%	5%	4%	1%
	Sometimes.....	17%	14%	14%	12%
	Rarely.....	12%	15%	30%	25%
	Never.....	63%	64%	51%	60%

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	Members	Elders	Pastors	Specialized Clergy
Q-6. During the past year, how often did your <i>individual</i> Bible reading or study take place in each of the following settings? ( <i>✓one</i> <input type="checkbox"/> in each row.)	n=293	n=384	n=562	n=239
d. Other (specify): _____				
	+	+	+	+
Church .....	2%	4%	*	1%
Bible study; preparation for Bible study; group study; church school; in classes; continuing education [if minister] .....	1%	1%	2%	2%
Retreat; camp; trips with church youth; prayer walks .....	*	1%	2%	*
Vacation/hotel .....	4%	2%	2%	3%
Non-religious events; activities, (e.g., sports; recreation speaker; community meeting).....	—	—	1%	—
Other homes .....	1%	1%	—	—
Restaurant; coffee shop .....	—	*	2%	1%
Other public sites, (e.g., Wal-Mart; library; rest home; visiting places) .....	—	1%	1%	1%
While waiting for something or someone; (e.g., at doctor's office).....	*	1%	1%	1%
Outdoors .....	—	*	1%	1%
All others .....	*	1%	1%	1%

Q-7. Continue to recall your *individual* Bible reading or study over the past year. To what extent was that reading and study part of . . .

	n=293	n=384	n=562	n=239
a. Your preparation for a sermon?	+	+		
Very often .....	2%	2%	68%	43%
Often .....	1%	2%	20%	16%
Sometimes.....	5%	4%	9%	25%
Rarely.....	6%	10%	1%	10%
Never.....	87%	82%	*	6%
b. Your preparation for <i>teaching or leading</i> a Bible study group?	+			
Very often .....	11%	10%	51%	31%
Often .....	7%	17%	32%	20%
Sometimes.....	18%	20%	14%	28%
Rarely.....	11%	13%	3%	7%
Never.....	53%	40%	1%	14%
c. Your preparation for <i>attending</i> a Bible study group?	+			
Very often .....	18%	11%	19%	11%
Often .....	21%	24%	19%	11%
Sometimes.....	23%	29%	26%	24%
Rarely.....	7%	10%	21%	26%
Never.....	30%	25%	15%	30%

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	Members	Elders	Pastors	Specialized Clergy
Q-7. Continue to recall your <i>individual</i> Bible reading or study over the past year. To what extent was that reading and study part of . . .				
(Cont.)	n=293	n=384	n=562	n=239
d. Your own individual needs or wants?				
Very often .....	52%	46%	36%	43%
Often .....	24%	29%	35%	27%
Sometimes.....	18%	21%	27%	23%
Rarely.....	4%	4%	2%	7%
Never.....	1%	2%	*	*
e. Job- or academic-related assignments or work?	+	+		
Very often .....	2%	1%	23%	18%
Often .....	2%	3%	22%	20%
Sometimes.....	6%	4%	23%	19%
Rarely.....	8%	8%	17%	14%
Never.....	83%	85%	15%	28%
Q-8. When you have engaged in <i>individual</i> Bible reading or study over the past year, how long did you typically spend at each reading or study session? _____ minutes				
	n=293	n=384	n=562	n=239
1-15 minutes .....	28%	29%	22%	21%
16-29 minutes .....	19%	24%	19%	24%
30-44 minutes .....	32%	30%	33%	28%
45-59 minutes .....	9%	6%	9%	11%
1 hour or more .....	12%	11%	18%	15%
mean (minutes).....	29	28	33	31
median (minutes).....	30	25	30	30
Q-9. Which response below do you think comes closest to describing the content of your <i>individual</i> Bible reading and study over the past year? ( <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> only one <input type="checkbox"/> )				
	n=293	n=384	n=562	n=239
I have read entirely from the Old Testament.....	1%	1%	*	1%
I have read mostly from the Old Testament .....	8%	4%	2%	5%
I have read about equally from both the Old and New Testaments.....	61%	64%	73%	75%
I have read mostly from the New Testament.....	28%	31%	24%	19%
I have read entirely from the New Testament .....	1%	1%	*	—
Q-10. Do you have any children or grandchildren ages 18 or younger?				
Yes.....	65%	62%	63%	56%
No .....	35%	38%	37%	44%
Q-10a. [If “Yes,”] In the last year, have you read Bible passages or stories at home to a child or grandchild?				
	n=302	n=350	n=379	n=154
Yes, often .....	8%	6%	17%	13%
Yes, occasionally.....	21%	26%	29%	26%
Yes, rarely .....	26%	24%	30%	29%
No, never .....	33%	34%	15%	22%
Not applicable.....	13%	10%	9%	9%

Note: Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding

\* = less than 0.5%; rounds to zero

— = zero (0.0); no cases in this category

+ = nonresponses of 10% or more on this question (reported percentages for all questions omit nonresponses)

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	Members	Elders	Pastors	Specialized Clergy
Q-11. In the last year, have you engaged in any form of regular Bible reading or study as part of a <i>Bible study group</i> , that is, a small group devoted specifically to study of the Bible?				
Yes.....	41%	49%	80%	38%
No → Skip to Q-13.....	59%	51%	20%	62%

	n=191	n=286	n=486	n=102
Q-12. If “yes,” to Q-11, did your <i>Bible study group</i> use any of the following methods or formats as a guide to its reading? (✓ one □ in each row.)				
a. Reading a particular book of the Bible from beginning to end	+	+		
Yes .....	62%	62%	64%	60%
No.....	38%	38%	36%	40%
b. Reading selections from the lectionary	+	+	+	
Yes .....	26%	25%	35%	36%
No.....	74%	75%	65%	64%
c. Reading selections from <i>Daily Prayer</i> or <i>The Mission Yearbook of Prayer and Study</i>	+	+	+	+
Yes .....	13%	16%	8%	14%
No.....	87%	84%	92%	86%
d. Reading selections from a devotional magazine like <i>Upper Room</i> or <i>These Days</i>	+	+	+	+
Yes .....	22%	23%	12%	16%
No.....	78%	77%	88%	84%
e. Reading passages at random	+	+	+	
Yes .....	42%	45%	30%	30%
No.....	58%	55%	70%	70%
f. Listening to radio programs or audio recordings, or watching television programs or video tapes/DVDs, on which the Bible is read	+	+	+	
Yes .....	29%	27%	27%	18%
No.....	71%	73%	73%	82%

Q-13. When you have read your Bible over the past year—whether on your own or as part of a study group—which of these resources did you <i>use regularly</i> as part of your Bible reading and study? (If you have <i>not</i> read the Bible in the last year, skip to Q-15.)				
a. A study Bible	+	+		+
Yes .....	64%	67%	82%	70%
No.....	36%	33%	18%	30%
b. A Bible commentary	+	+		
Yes .....	38%	44%	92%	76%
No.....	62%	56%	8%	24%
c. A Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) study curriculum	+	+	+	+
Yes .....	28%	28%	22%	16%
No.....	72%	72%	78%	84%

Note: Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding

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Q-13. When you have read your Bible over the past year—whether on your own or as part of a study group—which of these resources did you *use regularly* as part of your Bible reading and study? (If you have *not* read the Bible in the last year, skip to Q-15.)

	Members	Elders	Pastors	Specialized Clergy
d. Kerygma	+	+	+	+
Yes .....	3%	4%	12%	5%
No.....	97%	96%	88%	95%
e. Bethel Bible study	+	+	+	+
Yes .....	2%	2%	2%	*
No.....	98%	98%	98%	100%
f. Disciple Bible study	+	+	+	+
Yes .....	3%	4%	6%	2%
No.....	97%	96%	94%	98%
g. A Bible study from the Internet	+	+	+	+
Yes .....	14%	13%	20%	21%
No.....	86%	87%	80%	79%
h. Company of Pastors or Order of Elders resources	+	+	+	+
Yes .....	12%	15%	10%	11%
No.....	88%	85%	90%	89%
i. Other (please specify): _____	+	+	+	+
Yes .....	40%	34%	53%	50%
No.....	60%	65%	46%	48%
[Written comment; yes or no not indicated] .....	—	1%	*	1%

Q-14. When you read the Bible—whether on your own or as part of a group—to what extent do you read it for . . .

a. Comfort?	+	+		
Always .....	22%	16%	9%	10%
Often .....	30%	31%	35%	28%
Sometimes.....	33%	35%	46%	46%
Rarely.....	10%	13%	8%	12%
Never.....	6%	6%	1%	2%
b. Entertainment?	+	+		
Always .....	2%	1%	1%	1%
Often .....	3%	3%	4%	4%
Sometimes.....	17%	15%	20%	15%
Rarely.....	27%	31%	43%	43%
Never.....	52%	49%	31%	36%
c. Guidance?	+	+		
Always .....	34%	30%	25%	25%
Often .....	34%	36%	48%	38%
Sometimes.....	24%	27%	23%	29%
Rarely.....	5%	4%	3%	5%
Never.....	4%	4%	1%	3%

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	Members	Elders	Pastors	Specialized Clergy
Q-14. When you read the Bible—whether on your own or as part of a group—to what extent do you read it for . . . (Cont.)				
d. Information?	+	+		
Always .....	27%	24%	22%	20%
Often .....	40%	40%	54%	45%
Sometimes.....	27%	28%	20%	29%
Rarely.....	4%	5%	3%	5%
Never.....	3%	2%	1%	1%
e. Inspiration?	+	+		
Always .....	39%	36%	47%	40%
Often .....	37%	39%	44%	43%
Sometimes.....	18%	21%	9%	15%
Rarely.....	3%	2%	*	2%
Never.....	3%	2%	*	1%
Q-15. When the Bible was read during the <i>most recent</i> worship service you attended in your congregation, did the reader:				
a. Provide a brief <i>historical or contextual</i> introduction?				
Yes .....	62%	59%	58%	46%
No.....	31%	36%	42%	52%
Don't remember .....	7%	5%	1%	3%
b. Provide a brief introduction to the <i>meaning</i> of the text?				
Yes .....	64%	59%	51%	38%
No.....	28%	35%	48%	59%
Don't remember .....	7%	7%	1%	3%
c. Announce the book and chapter of the passage(s)?				
Yes .....	99%	99%	98%	98%
No.....	—	1%	2%	1%
Don't remember .....	1%	*	*	1%
d. Invite worshippers to follow along using their own or a pew Bible?				
Yes .....	82%	86%	73%	59%
No.....	15%	12%	26%	36%
Don't remember .....	3%	2%	1%	5%
Q-16. During the <i>most recent</i> worship service you attended in your congregation, was a Psalm . . .				
a. Read?				
Yes .....	38%	48%	58%	47%
No .....	47%	41%	42%	48%
Don't recall .....	16%	10%	1%	4%
b. Sung?	+	+		
Yes .....	24%	20%	22%	23%
No .....	54%	64%	76%	72%
Don't recall .....	22%	16%	2%	5%

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	Members	Elders	Pastors	Specialized Clergy
Q-17. During the <i>most recent</i> worship service you attended in your congregation, when Bible passages ( <i>not including a Psalm</i> ) were read out loud, how many passages were read?				
One passage.....	17%	18%	31%	25%
Two passages.....	54%	53%	52%	58%
Three passages.....	17%	23%	16%	16%
Don't remember .....	13%	7%	1%	2%
Q-18. Is a lectionary used to choose the scriptures for your congregation's worship?				
Yes, always.....	19%	28%	28%	28%
Yes, often.....	23%	29%	34%	36%
Yes, sometimes.....	10%	8%	12%	12%
Yes, rarely .....	3%	3%	11%	8%
No, never .....	4%	6%	16%	14%
Don't know.....	41%	26%	*	3%
Q-19. How often are the sermons in your congregation based on . . .				
a. The lectionary reading for that Sunday?				
Always .....	15%	23%	23%	24%
Often .....	34%	37%	39%	42%
Sometimes.....	14%	13%	12%	11%
Rarely.....	4%	5%	13%	10%
Never.....	3%	4%	12%	11%
Don't know .....	29%	18%	*	2%
b. Preaching through a book of the Bible?	+	+		+
Always .....	8%	8%	3%	2%
Often .....	26%	22%	15%	8%
Sometimes.....	26%	29%	25%	26%
Rarely.....	17%	20%	31%	27%
Never.....	9%	14%	25%	31%
Don't know .....	13%	8%	1%	6%
c. Themes or topical issues (e.g., Ten Commandments, Beatitudes, a contemporary problem, etc.)?				
Always .....	5%	5%	3%	2%
Often .....	41%	29%	26%	24%
Sometimes.....	36%	42%	41%	38%
Rarely.....	8%	14%	23%	20%
Never.....	1%	5%	8%	13%
Don't know .....	9%	6%	*	3%
Q-20. Do you share a household with one or more family members?				
Yes.....	74%	78%	85%	78%
No .....	26%	22%	15%	22%

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	Members	Elders	Pastors	Specialized Clergy
Q-20a. If “yes,” do you and other family members <i>typically</i> read the Bible together . . .				
	n=343	n=447	n=509	n=208
a. At meals on a <i>daily</i> basis?				
Yes .....	4%	4%	5%	2%
No .....	96%	96%	95%	98%
b. At meals on an <i>occasional</i> basis?				
Yes .....	17%	17%	23%	23%
No .....	83%	83%	77%	77%
c. At Christmas, Easter, or other major Christian celebrations?				
Yes .....	45%	43%	65%	64%
No .....	55%	57%	35%	36%
d. At birthdays or anniversaries?				
Yes .....	5%	6%	7%	6%
No .....	95%	94%	93%	94%
e. At a regular time set aside for Bible reading or study?				
Yes .....	12%	13%	22%	18%
No .....	88%	87%	78%	82%

Q-21. Please use the space below for additional comments.

[Not tabulated]

Response form:

Paper .....	87%	84%	77%	81%
Web .....	13%	16%	23%	19%

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