NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES OF SINGAPORE

新加坡基督教全国教会理事会
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Summary and Recommendations of church leaders on the General Household Survey 2025

On 13 October 2026, NCCS organised a discussion of the results of the General Household Survey 2025 ("GHS") and its implications for the Churches in Singapore. Leaders from the following churches and Christian organisations attended:

The Methodist Church in Singapore • The Anglican Diocese of Singapore • The Lutheran Church in Singapore • The Presbyterian Church in Singapore • The Salvation Army Singapore • The Evangelical Free Church of Singapore • The Church of Singapore • The Roman Catholic Archdiocese • The Singapore Baptist Convention • The Bible-Presbyterian Church in Singapore • City Harvest Church • New Creation Church • Love Singapore • The Evangelical Alliance of Singapore • The Alliance of Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches of Singapore • The National Council of Churches of Singapore

Relevant GHS Findings

The purpose of the meeting was to address the supposed decline in the number of Protestants reflected in the GHS. The following key findings were gleaned from the GHS:

A. Religious Landscape: A rise in the "no religion" category and a decline in most religious groups.

B. Christianity: 2025 marks the first quantitative drop for Christianity, from 18.9% (2020) to 17.1% (2025) as a proportion of the population.

C. Divergence: A divergence was noted between Catholic and Protestant numbers. The Catholic proportion rose from 7.0% to 7.6%, while the Protestant proportion fell from 11.9% to 9.5%.

D. Demographics: Non-religious affiliation is concentrated among the younger population and those with higher education and English usage.

Participants spoke freely from their respective church perspectives about potential reasons for any decline. A wide range of observations was shared.

Discussion

Although participants cautioned against treating percentage decline as evidence of failure of the church, the following was noted:

1. The COVID pandemic encouraged online services which are now part of normal church life. Church attendance fell dramatically during the pandemic and have not risen back to post-pandemic levels. The drop in attendance requires more internal review.

Evangelism and Witness

2. Younger people increasingly absorb information through phones and social media. There is a need for more digital approaches and a stronger online presence for God's Word. Teaching must be made more relevant to youths, especially second-generation Christians, to help them develop an authentic faith.

3. In the past, nationwide crusades and conventions were powerful witnesses to non-Christians. While churches can work together again for similar large-scale outreach, evangelism methods need updating as communication channels and consumption habits evolve. Information is more available and accessible. Many know *about* God and Jesus but may not understand what it means to be saved.

4. Being aware of how churches are perceived in the community is important to correct wrong impressions. Conflict between churches creates confusion and weakens Christian witness. Unity needs to be visible through shared action and not just stated agreement. Churches should highlight similarities and each other's uniqueness rather than differences and weaknesses.

Discipleship

5. Spiritual Formation was identified as a central concern.

6. Church attendance and programme participation do not necessarily indicate strong discipleship.

7. Family Worship should be emphasised and family prayer and spiritual practices at home should be renewed. Parents may need discipling to effectively disciple children.

8. Spiritual fathers and mentors might be more effective than purely teacher-student relationships. Fathering must combine unconditional love and guidance with personal credibility. Authenticity of the Christian life is part of the Gospel message.

Youth and Intergenerational Ministry

9. The meeting agreed that younger generations want and need to take active ownership. Greater youth and female representative may be required in leadership conversations. Youth ministry roles once provided practical leadership experience but current models rely more heavily on youth pastors.

10. Intergenerational church dynamics can be viewed as a practical response to an ageing church. Older members can disciple younger members through honest sharing of struggles and experience.

11. Intergenerational relationships can improve membership retention. Young people may benefit from several significant intergenerational relationships within a church.

12. Young Christians can model faith, resist social pressures, and build genuine friendships in schools and colleges. They should be supported to be examples in their schools. They should be equipped to deal with secular and hostile environments.

13. More support can be offered to para-church organisations in educational institutions. As churches have grown, participation in these groups has declined. More support can be given to young people

transiting to tertiary education.

Service and Outreach

14. Service programmes appear to be generating more participation. It was observed that Christians increasingly join outreach programmes after renewed spiritual formation. Local initiative serve migrant workers, delinquents and children affected by parental incarceration.

15. These social impact initiatives provide Christians with ways to serve and return to active church life.

16. Migrant and non-resident outreach remains significant with perhaps larger proportions of conversions reported among non-residents compared to Singaporeans in one church. Perhaps Singaporeans are more resistant to the Gospel now as worldly values are widely normalised.

Catholic Church Perspective

17. The Catholic Church experience was also discussed. It was noted that Catholic growth remains unverified and no recent Catholic study separates growth from biological increase, migration, foreign workers, or evangelism. But there may be a stronger Catholic identity. Global unity, clear doctrine, prayer, liturgy, and visible lives of sacrifice were cited as sources of credibility. It was also observed that Catholic retreats may provide concentrated spiritual formation, with four Conversion Experience Retreats being led personally by the Cardinal every year. These residential retreats have about 150 participants per retreat.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The meeting concluded that the Church in Singapore has remained faithful and very active. There is a wide range of programmes and activity. The Church was likened to a mustard seed. It started as a tiny seed and has grown with branches to shelter other creatures. While there may sometimes be yellow leaves, the church is growing.

But there may be a need to rethink current approaches and consider how they can be improved.

The following were raised as areas for improvement:

Family Worship and Spiritual Formation
Intergenerational Ministry and Worship
Digital approaches and online presence
Evangelism and Witness
Service to the poor and needy

This gives us the acronym **FIDES**, which is Latin for 'faith'.

Ultimately, we are not responsible for any random church growth number. We are called to be faithful at all times. And we have been.

We are reminded that Paul planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth (1 Corinthians 3:6, ESV). We pray that as we continue to plant and water, may God give us growth in His time.