

Evangel Baptist Church

Wheaton, Illinois

Profile February 2016



Cover photos, top to bottom:

Sunday worship, Sanctuary

“Connections” social time following service, Library, Fireside Room and lobby

VBS 2015: group in gym “posing” for a daily slide show picture

Entrance sign and driveway looking south from Manchester Road

Building looking south on west side (gym on left, portico entrance to lobby, with sanctuary beyond)

An interactive version of this document (with clickable links) is available at

www.evbapt.org/docs/evangel-profile.pdf

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INTRODUCTION

Evangel means “good news.” It is the good news of Jesus Christ that has provided our vision since our founding in 1959. We are located in Wheaton, Illinois, in the western suburbs of Chicago.

Where we are today

Like many churches in America, the trend at Evangel for several decades has been one of steady decline in numbers and a contraction of demographics. [In the past decade there has been a notable shift from a wide age range, including families, to predominantly adults 50+ with no children at home. This decline has occurred despite numerous efforts to seek the Lord’s direction in reversing the trend, including Praise Community (Saturday evening worship), Gateway (seeker-friendly worship) and several capital projects with outreach components. Small groups did take hold and continue to serve us well for discipleship, fellowship, and assimilation of new attenders. More recently:

- A resolution in the summer of 2013 offered use of our facilities for a Converge MidAmerica church plant. It was envisioned that this could lead to a merger, a replacement for Evangel, or it could also continue as an autonomous church (which would leave us to deal with continued attrition). It represented a genuine step of faith because the outcome could not be guaranteed. While there have been several potential candidates and at least two potential church partners that appeared very promising, nothing fruitful has developed.
- In the summer of 2015 we were approached about the possibility of joining forces with (being absorbed by) a multi-site church interested in possible expansion to a Wheaton-Winfield campus. The church decided to pursue other options instead.

Most critically for us now, **Pastor Dave Tietjen has indicated to Church Council his desire to retire in the late spring of 2017.** Knowing it this far in advance provides something few churches in our situation have: a timeframe in which we can be as proactive and positive as possible. The desire of the Council is that ***Evangel (in whatever form and by whatever name) should remain as a vibrant Gospel presence in the Wheaton/Winfield area.***

The above information is taken from a document entitled “Background and Prayer Guide for Conversation with Council,” used at a meeting on October 25, 2015. You can read the full document at www.evbapt.org/docs/conversation-2015-10-25.pdf.

As Pastor Dave faces retirement, we have begun a **succession plan** in which we are seeking God’s leading among several options that seem most apparent to us:

1. **Renewal.** Finding a pastor skilled in turn-around situations. With a shared vision for growth and outreach, we recognize that this involves a transformation of the church in fundamental ways and we are prepared to move in that direction.
2. **Realignment.** We are exploring potential partnerships with existing congregations who could benefit from our location and facilities to produce a multiplication effect. This likely would involve a merger, which we recognize carries risks on both sides and thus will require an extended time of careful consideration and preparation.
3. **Retirement.** Should other efforts fail (or God directs us to this option sooner), the property could be sold to a like-minded congregation that is in need of facilities and shares a vision for the Wheaton-Winfield area.

Planning Group

In the fall of 2015 a Planning Group was called together by Evangel Moderator Stu Johnson to work with Church Council in guiding us through the succession process: Stephanie Bemister, Jim Erickson, Doug & Teresa Fogwell, Bill & Debby France, Larry Funck (Finance Manager)*, Alethea Funck, Angie Krc (Church Clerk)*, Charlie Matthews (Properties Board Chair)*, Lee McCullough, Al Smith, Helen Read, Dave Tietjen (Senior Pastor, acting Worship Board chair)*, Jennie Tietjen (Community Care Board Chair)*, and Gil Zinke (Educational Ministries Chair)* *Asterisk indicates Church Council member*

Note: Pastor Edward and Ronda Mamalat (First Russian Baptist Church) have been invited to some sessions. Pastor Dave and Jennie Tietjen are active members of the Planning Group, but will not take part in some portions of the process (i.e., an Executive Search with Converge MidAmerica, and similar instances that would represent a conflict of interest with congregational decision-making).

What Evangel brings to the table

Evangel's 27,000 square foot building sits on roughly 4 acres of land on the west side of Wheaton. While our numbers have steadily declined for many years, the Lord has blessed us with remarkably strong financial resources and three rental partners that help sustain full use of the building throughout the week. We have no mortgage, good reserves, and while there are major capital needs—finishing parking lot repairs and remodeling the kitchen—we have been able to keep the building and grounds in very good condition. (Remodeling of the downstairs women's restroom and the kitchenette in the Fireside Room are expected to be completed in 2016.) *See more details in Part 2.*

Are we ready for change?

Any of the three options we are considering—renewal, realignment, retirement—involve **fundamental change**, out of which **a new church will emerge**. The biggest risk during such a transition is the loss of people who are not committed to seeing it through to the other side. It could jeopardize our ability to function at the present level. There are, however, numerous examples of churches where those who stayed through a major transition now bear testimony to the value of the effort, seeing a new vitality, people coming to faith and an excitement about seeing Christ build that local body.

As part of our preparation, we have used an **inventory of readiness to change**, produced by Converge MidAmerica, our denominational district. The inventory consists of 34 items, each to be rated as low, medium or high, scored as 0, 5, or 10 points. Of those who responded, the composite score of 206 put us just into the "You are ready to change" category (200-340 points).

The highest rankings went to Leadership, Communication and Personal Reaction (willingness to be part of change and serve as a change-agent). Other categories showed mixed results, with both high and low responses across several different questions. Among the most telling low scores that represent a challenge to leadership were these two: "The congregation is focused on the future more than the past" (low) and "The congregation enjoys their church so much they want to share it with others" (medium-low).

As with many such surveys, some had difficulty knowing how to interpret the questions and others felt there would be a difference in comparing history with the present (with some items shifting toward higher response now, others being higher in the past). *Part 3 of this document, "Evangel's DNA"—which was developed prior to distribution of the readiness inventory—provides detail about our values, with a critique of each and comments on history and aspirations.*

PART 1: A Snapshot of Evangel

Our Purpose and Mission

Evangel Baptist Church is a fellowship of believers in Jesus Christ whose purpose is to know and glorify God through worship, nurture and evangelism.

We are committed to understanding and obeying the Word of God to the end that our lives will be changed and growth will occur. Through the direction and power of the Holy Spirit, we seek to use our gifts and physical resources as a witness to those whose lives we touch, to the community around us and to the world beyond.

It is our goal to grow in personal holiness through the ministry of God's Word so that all we are and do, both corporately and individually, becomes an expression of worship to God.

From Article II of Evangel's Constitution (www.evbapt.org/docs/constitution.pdf)

Our Affiliations

Evangel is affiliated with **Converge Worldwide** formerly known as the **Baptist General Conference**, and **Converge MidAmerica**, which represents Converge churches in Illinois, Michigan, Indiana and parts of Missouri, Wisconsin, Kentucky and Tennessee. Also see the **Converge** page on our website for more details.

What We Believe

Affirmation of Faith (Article III of Evangel's Constitution).

For interactive versions of this document, Scriptures link to the passage on BibleGateway.com

THE WORD OF GOD

We believe that the Bible is the Word of God, fully inspired and without error in the original manuscripts and written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and that it has supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct.

([2 Timothy 3:15-17](#); [2 Peter 1:20-21](#))

THE TRINITY

We believe that there is one living and true God, eternally existing in three persons -- Father, Son and Holy Spirit; that these are equal in every divine perfection, and that they execute distinct but harmonious offices in the work of creation, providence and redemption.

([Genesis 1:1, 26](#); [Deuteronomy 6:4](#); [33:27](#); [Isaiah 6:8](#); [Matthew 28:19](#); [John 1:1-3](#); [Colossians 1:15-17](#))

GOD THE FATHER

We believe in God, the Father, an infinite, personal spirit, perfect in holiness, wisdom, power and love. We believe that He concerns Himself mercifully in the affairs of all people, that He hears and answers prayer and that He saves from sin and death all who come to Him through Jesus Christ.

([Psalm 145:17](#); [Isaiah 6:3](#); [Romans 5:8](#))

JESUS CHRIST

We believe in Jesus Christ, God's only begotten Son, conceived by the Holy Spirit. We believe in His virgin birth, sinless life, miracles and teachings. We believe in His substitutionary atoning death, bodily resurrection, ascension into heaven, perpetual intercession for His people and personal visible return to earth.

(Isaiah 7:14; 9:6, 7; 53:1-12; Luke 1:26-35; John 14:1-6; Acts 1:9-11; 3:13-15; Romans 8:32-34; 2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Hebrews 4:15; 9:24)

THE HOLY SPIRIT

We believe in the Holy Spirit who came forth from the Father and Son to convict the world of sin, righteousness and judgment, and to regenerate, sanctify and empower all who believe in Jesus Christ. We believe that the Holy Spirit indwells every believer in Christ, and that He is an abiding helper, teacher and guide.

(John 3:3-5; 14:26; 16:7-15; Romans 8:9-16, 23, 26-27; 1 Corinthians 3:16; 6:19; Ephesians 1:13-14)

REGENERATION

We believe that all people are sinners by nature and by choice and are, therefore, under condemnation. We believe that those who repent of their sins and trust in Jesus Christ as Savior are regenerated by the Holy Spirit.

(Isaiah 64:6; Romans 3:10, 23; John 1:12; 3:1-18, 36; 5:24)

THE CHURCH

We believe in the universal Church, a living spiritual body of which Christ is the head and all regenerated persons are members. We believe in the local church, consisting of a company of believers in Jesus Christ, baptized on a credible profession of faith and associated for worship, work and fellowship. We believe that God has laid upon the members of the local church the primary task of giving the Gospel of Jesus Christ to a lost world.

(Matthew 28:18-20; John 15:16; Acts 1:8)

CHRISTIAN CONDUCT

We believe that Christians should live for the glory of God and the well-being of others; that their conduct should be blameless before the world, that they should be faithful stewards of their possessions; and that they should seek to realize for themselves and others the full stature of maturity in Christ.

(John 14:15, 23-24; 1 John 1:7-2:6)

THE ORDINANCES

We believe that Jesus Christ has committed to the local church two ordinances -- Baptism and the Lord's Supper. We believe that these two ordinances should be observed and administered until the return of the Lord Jesus Christ. We believe that the biblical form of baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the triune God. This baptism is the outward expression of an inward experience with Jesus Christ. We believe that the Lord's Supper was instituted by Christ for commemoration of His death.

(Matthew 28:19-20; Romans 6:3-4; 1 Corinthians 11:23-24)

RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

We believe that every human being has direct relations with God and is responsible to God alone in all matters of faith; that each church is independent and must be free from interference by any ecclesiastical or political authority; that therefore Church and State must be kept separate as having different functions, each fulfilling its duties free from dictation or patronage of the other.

CHURCH COOPERATION

We believe that local churches can best promote the cause of Jesus Christ by cooperating with one another in a denominational organization. Such an organization, whether a regional or district conference, exists and functions by the will of the churches. Cooperation in a conference is voluntary and may be terminated at any time. Churches may likewise cooperate with inter-denominational fellowships on a voluntary, independent basis.

THE LAST THINGS

We believe in the personal and visible return of the Lord Jesus Christ to earth and the establishment of His kingdom. We believe in the resurrection of the body, the final judgment, the eternal felicity of the righteous and the endless suffering of the wicked.

([John 14:1-3](#); [Acts 1:7-11](#); [1 Thessalonians 4:13-18](#); [Revelation 21:8](#); [22:20](#))

Church Covenant

Our Commitment to Building and Maintaining a Healthy, Christ-Honoring Church

(Article IV of the Evangel Constitution)

We are a people most blessed because by God's grace we have come to trust Jesus Christ and Him only for our salvation.

We have declared this union with Christ publicly through baptism and desire, with the help of the Holy Spirit, to live like the people of God. We, therefore, in His presence promise:

- To pray for one another.
- To study the Scriptures endeavoring to make the Word of God the pattern for our words, thoughts and actions.
- To worship God and serve Him together with the members of this fellowship.
- To observe faithfully the Lord's Supper.
- To give as God prospers us in supporting the financial needs of this place.
- To send the Gospel to the whole world.
- To witness to the power and love of Christ in our lives and lead others to faith in Him.
- To esteem the believers of this fellowship as the beloved children of God and practice the attributes of love.
- To protect the bond of peace that unites this assembly, allowing the freedom of expression and honoring the authority of our leaders.
- To abstain from whatever is unbecoming a Christian, knowing that our bodies, our minds, our spirits and our fellowship are sacred trusts from God.
- To give affection and time to our families, embracing the delight of sharing with them the Word of God because we are heirs together of the gracious gift of life.
- To become a vital part of another believing local church when we move from this area.

We, therefore, renew our promise to each other this day because of our love for the Lord Jesus and acknowledging His love for His bride, the church.

Governance

Evangel's organization follows the baptistic tradition of the importance of the congregation in the administration of the church. Our constitution provides for a Council/Board form of governance:

Church Council has "overall responsibility for direction, planning and coordination." It consists of the Senior Pastor (ex-officio), Moderator, Finance Manager, Church Clerk, and the chairs of the four boards.

Four **boards** are responsible for planning and overseeing the major ministry areas of Evangel:

Community Care (whose members fill the roles of Deacons and Deaconesses), **Educational Ministries**, **Properties**, and **Worship**. Community Care consists of six members; the other boards each have four members.

In addition, the congregation also elects the Treasurer (expenditures), Financial Secretary (offerings and other income), two auditors, and a three-person Nominating Committee.

An "Annual Meeting" in February presents reports from the previous calendar year. Budget approval and election of officers and boards are done in November. Other meetings can be called when a congregational vote is needed. For communication, a "Conversation with Council" session is held during the LIF@E Time hour on Sundays several times a year. These are used to bring updates and allow interaction between the congregation and church leadership.

Facility Rental: Extending Our Ministry

Over the years, the Lord has led to Evangel several groups who were in need of space. The income is helpful to us, but more significantly, the renters extend the ministry use of the facilities. We have never solicited such activity, but see it as God's providence. We currently rent our facilities to three groups:

First Russian Baptist Church has been meeting at Evangel for more than a decade. This is a group consisting predominantly of believers from Ukraine who came to the Chicago area in the 1990s following the collapse of the Soviet Union. FRBC's worship service is conducted in Russian. (Similar to our own denominational roots as Swedish Baptists a century earlier).

EDGE (Eastern DuPage for Godly Education) is a home-schooling co-op that is now in its third year at Evangel, after outgrowing its former rental location in Lombard. More than one hundred students and parents gather each Friday and can be found in virtually every corner of the building. If the group expands much beyond its current numbers, it may lead to a second day.

Serve City is a sports ministry that started to use our gym in October 2015. Serve City currently offers local middle school and high school volleyball teams an opportunity for extended playing time by partnering with local churches in the Chicago area. The program at Evangel expanded rapidly to four evenings a week. Previously, Evangel had conducted a basketball ministry for many years on Saturday mornings which most recently attracted a group of Sudanese refugees. Paul van Gorkom, the coordinator for Evangel moved and we feared that this outreach would end, but Serve City has agreed to start an open gym on Saturdays, first for boys 12-17, then expanding it to include time for adults (with the Sudanese and other nearby refugees in mind).

Because the rental ministries have become such an integral part in our own stewardship of the facilities the Lord has provided, it will be important to consider the future of each of them along with the future of Evangel itself.

Ministries and Activities: *A typical week at Evangel*

SUNDAY

Morning – **Worship Service** in the Sanctuary

Connections (social time with refreshments in Fireside Room, Library and Lobby)

LIF@E Time – “Lessons in Faith at Evangel” – adult learning time (Sep-Dec, Apr-May)

Weekly prayer hour during winter months (Jan-Mar)

Age-specific Sunday School for children

Afternoon – **First Russian Baptist Church**

Various times and locations – **Evangel Small Groups**

MONDAY evening - **Serve City**, gym

TUESDAY

Morning – **Coffeebreak** – ministry for women, with Bible study, a “feature,” and social time

This is one of Evangel’s longest-running ministries and has been a model for other churches

Evening – **Serve City**, gym

First Russian Baptist Church

WEDNESDAY

Evening – **Midweek Prayer**, Fireside Room (Apr-Dec – switches to LIF@E Time hour Jan-Mar)

THURSDAY

Morning – **Men’s Breakfast** (at local McDonald’s)

Evening – **Serve City**, gym

FRIDAY

Day – **EDGE**, throughout building

Evening – **Serve City**, gym

SATURDAY

Morning – **Men’s Connection**, Fireside Room, fellowship and prayer (2nd Saturday each month)

Serve City, gym

FOR DETAILS on most Evangel activities, see our website (www.evbapt.org):

- See the [Archive](#) for LIF@E Time handouts; Pause to Pray; Touch Points; Worship bulletin, Sermon Notes (PDF of PowerPoint), Sermon Outline, and Sermon Podcast
- See the [Coffeebreak](#) and [LIF@E Time](#) pages for links to schedules
- See the [Calendar](#) for additional events and details (List View has more detail)

In addition, the Values section in Part 3 provides more background and analysis about these activities.

Missions: The Evangel Connection

Evangel has provided strong support for missions throughout its history, driven in large part by the number who have an Evangel connection—some from church families, others who attended Evangel while attending Wheaton College, and others who also had regular contact with Evangel.

Evangel currently supports the following people. All but two have a direct Evangel connection. About a dozen others over the years have had a similar connection. More detail is available on our [website](#).

Dennis and Julie Anderson, GoServ Global, Albert City, Iowa – former Youth Pastor at Evangel, now serving to coordinate relief efforts for natural disasters in the central U.S, and a work in Haiti initiated during hurricane relief. *Supported since 2012.*

Dawn Boice, TEAM (retired), Wheaton, Illinois – John (deceased) and Dawn served in Peru. They were among the first from Evangel to become missionaries. *Supported since 1963. (We continue to provide reduced support for three retired missionaries whose boards did not have adequate retirement plans available when they retired.)*

Troy and Heather Cady, PlayFull, Chicago, Illinois – former Youth Pastor at Evangel, served in Spain with Christian Associates, then moved to Chicago to engage in staff development. Troy started a ministry known as PlayFull, which became an independent organization. *Supported since 2000.*

Eric and Nicole Curtiss, Christian Associates, Colorado Springs, CO – Eric grew up in Evangel when his parents were on furlough from Austria with Greater Europe Mission. His parents are now retired, while Eric has put his missions and business experience to use to become COO of Christian Associates. *Supported since 2014.*

Ed and Mary Fox, Commission to Every Nation, Guatemala – Ed attended Evangel as a Wheaton College student and is the nephew of former long-time Evangel member Grace Anderson Elwell. Ed and Mary began with Wycliffe Bible Translators, then when that work closed, were able to continue their work of Bible translation in Guatemala under other agencies. *Supported since 1983*

David and Carmen Gunderson, Arrive Ministries, Minneapolis, Minnesota - David and his brother Bill grew up in Evangel, where their parents, Bob and Ruth, were long-time members. David and Carmen served in Niger with SIM before returning to ministry in the United States, where they work among a large number of Somali refugees in the Minneapolis area. *Supported since 2006*

Beth Hanna, Camino Global, Mexico – Beth attended Evangel with her family when they were on furlough from CAM International in Mexico, and for a time when her husband Ken (deceased) taught at Moody. *Supported since 1981.*

Alyce Johnson, Proclaim! International, retired – Alyce attended Evangel when she was a student at Wheaton and later as she and Bob (deceased) were on furlough from Greater Europe Mission in Belgium and other posts in Europe before joining Proclaim! to minister among Muslims in southern Europe and northern Africa. (Alyce is the daughter of Robert Evans, the founder of Greater Europe Mission). *Supported since 1979.*

Ben and Sarah Johnson, Immigrant Hope (Evangelical Free Church of America), Minneapolis, Minnesota – Ben and Sarah were active members of Evangel while students at Wheaton College. When doors for employment in the Wheaton area closed, they pursued other options and were led by God to a new work among immigrants, based first in Brooklyn and more recently in the Minneapolis area. *Supported since 2012*

Eric and Janet Johnson, Converge Worldwide, northern Mexico – Eric's primary focus is leadership development and church mobilization as he develops materials. Janet focuses on forming and developing LEADNET teams for pastor's wives. *Supported since 1981.*

Bob and Debbie Long, Converge Worldwide, Philippines – After a lifetime of ministering to youth and youth leaders in the U.S., Bob and Debbie felt called by God to join a movement of making disciples who make disciples among the youth in the Philippines. (While serving as director of youth programs for Converge MidAmerica, Bob developed a coaching relationship with Evangel's youth pastors, made regular visits, and has been a guest speaker). *Supported since 2003.*

John and Elaine Mehn, Converge Worldwide, Japan – Evangel has supported John and Elaine through many years of their work in Japan. We have had the privilege of having them with us a number of times for mission conferences and speaking engagements. *Supported since 1985*

Dave and Synnøve Mitchell, TEAM, retired, now living in California – Dave and Synnøve were active at Evangel when Dave was attending Wheaton Graduate School. They have returned to Evangel a number of times over the years. Dave is still involved in special projects for TEAM, including trips to Pakistan. *Supported since 1981*

Paul and Joanie van Gorkom, GoServ Global, Albert City, Iowa – long-time members of Evangel, Paul became the first Executive Director of GoServ Global. They moved to Iowa in the summer of 2015 to take on the new assignment. *Supported since 2015.*

Gil and Norene Zinke, Training Leaders International (TLI), based in Glendale Heights, Illinois – Gil grew up in Japan. He and Norene served there for many years with BGC/Converge before returning to the U.S., where Gil first worked with Leadership Resources International (LRI) in pastoral training before joining TLI to perform similar duties in 2015. They now attend Evangel and Gil has reported frequently on his trips throughout Southeast Asia for LRI and a beyond that for TLI. *Supported since 2010*

Evangel's Worldwide "Alumni Club"

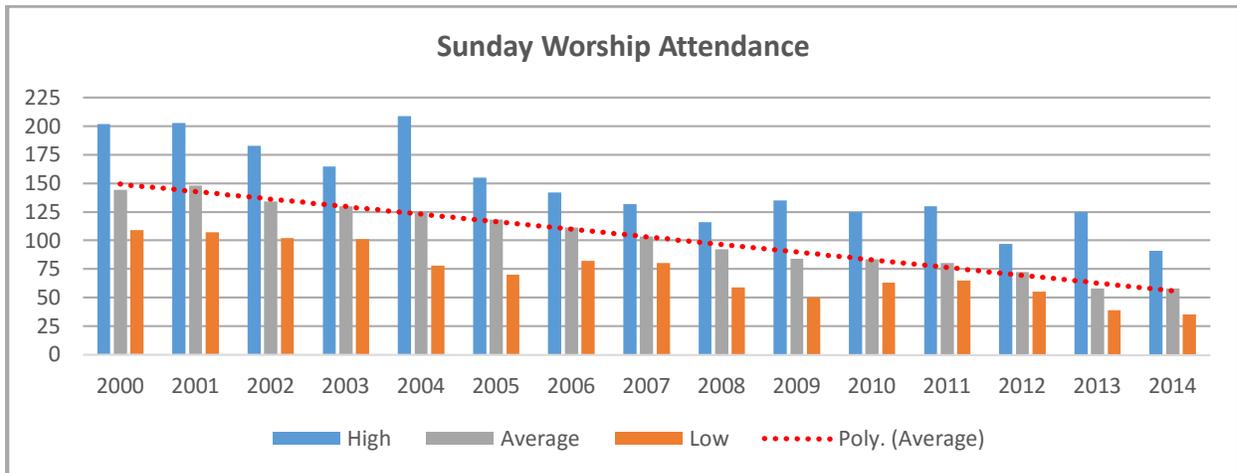
In its more than 50-year history, Evangel has been home to numerous people who have spread out across the globe. Many names would be recognizable. It would take pages to list them all. In addition to the missionaries listed above, you would find college professors, teachers, authors and editors, executives and professionals, musicians, public officials, to name just a few.

Evangel has been blessed by God with a host of gifted people over the years (including those in the present congregation!) In turn, we have seen that blessing extending around the world as God has directed students to the next chapter in their lives and others to new places of work, retirement, or other callings.

In a recent example, we were in need of advice on a visa issue. Pastor Dave contacted Ben Johnson, who works with immigration. Ben mentioned Roy Larsen as someone in their organization with expertise on that particular issue...remarkably, Roy attended Evangel while he was a student at Wheaton College and served as a volunteer youth leader!

Whether known as "Evangel" or something else in the future, we look forward to welcoming new generations of people to be used by God to build his Kingdom here...and to keep the "alumni club" growing!

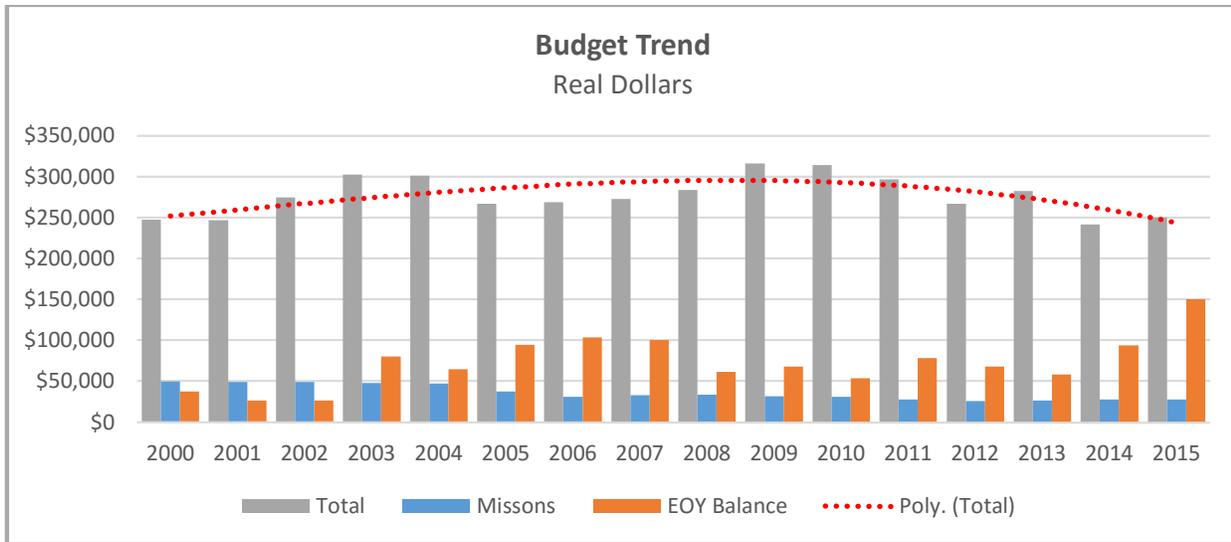
Trends



The trend in the last fifteen years continues a steady decline in attendance going back to a peak in the early 1980s. The chart covers only the Sunday morning service. While other activities would raise the total, it would not alter the basic trend. In the past decade there has been a notable shift from a wide range of ages, including families, to predominantly adults 50+ with no children at home.

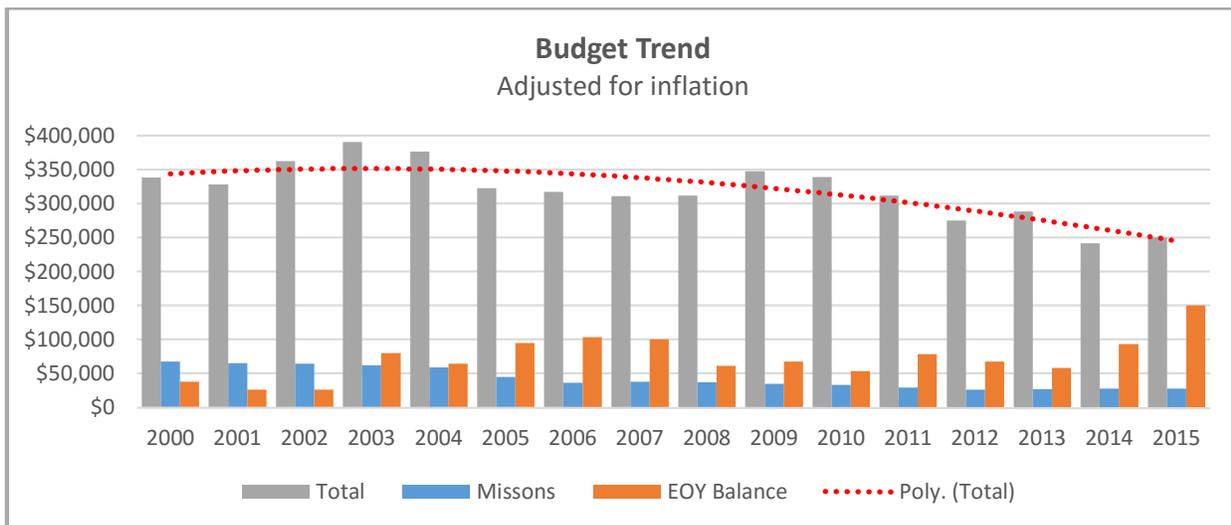
It is encouraging that total ministry at Evangel does involve a far greater number. In a typical week when First Russian Baptist Church, EDGE, and Serve City are all active, more than three hundred people are in the building. This does not diminish the urgent need to reverse the downward trend for the primary ministry of Evangel itself.

[Budget charts appear on the next page]



This chart reflects the operating budget (Total) approved by the congregation each year. It does not include expenditures for major maintenance and other purposes that use off-budget funds, which vary considerably from year to year, depending on current projects. Missions, part of the operating budget, remains a strong 11% of the total budget today, though that is down from 20% in 2000, when we also supported a number of organizations in addition to missionaries.

“EOY Balance” represents the December 31 (End of Year) total of all funds available, including Special Reserves, Memorials, Major Maintenance and other designated funds as well as the two funds used for the budget (Ministries and Facilities/Operations). Reserves have remained strong and even increased significantly over the past three years because of rental income and several large gifts and bequests.



In this chart, previous years have been indexed for inflation using the [CPI Inflation Calculator](#) of the U.S. Department of Labor. Each 2015 dollar is the equivalent of \$1.37 in 2000 dollars. Looking at it another way, to maintain the \$250,000 budget in 2000 would require about \$340,000 today. The trend line shows that even though the budgets in 2000 and 2015 were about \$250,000 in real dollars, when inflation is taken into account, the value of those budget dollars has declined.

Significantly, however, the operating budget and reserves have remained strong despite a sharper decline in attendance.

PART 2: Evangel's Environment

Location: the big picture

The city of Wheaton is 25 miles west of downtown Chicago. Being part of the third largest metropolitan area in the country gives access to a wide range of cultural venues, world class education, high quality health care and other resources and amenities. The map shows Wheaton's location and highlights just a few of the educational institutions and hospitals in the area.

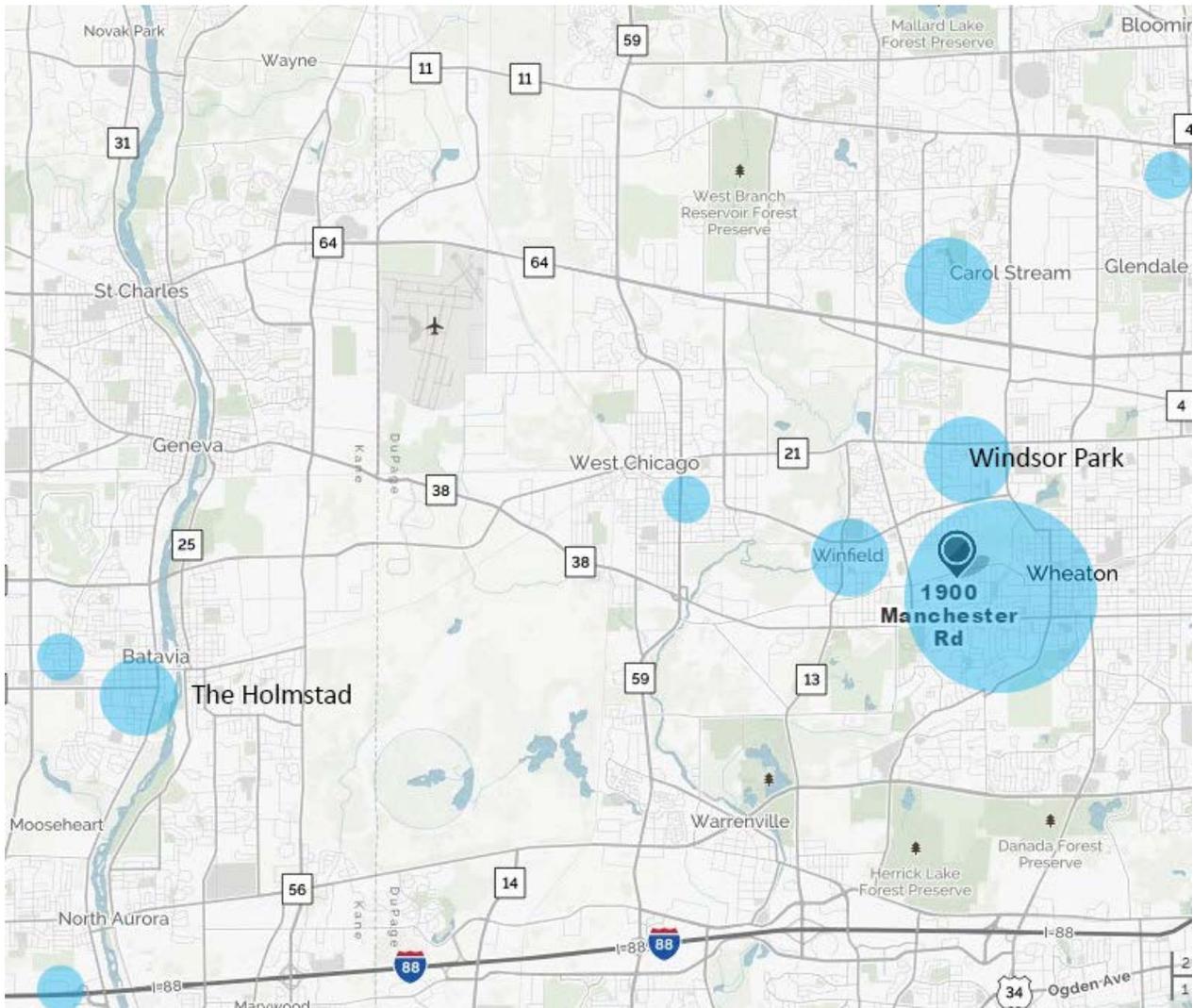


Delnor and Central DuPage Hospitals have recently become part of Northwestern Medicine. Good Samaritan is part of Advocate Health Care. Edward Hospital is now part of Edward-Elmhurst Health.

Closer in: Where the people attending Evangel come from

This map shows the areas in which the people of Evangel live, with the size of the circles approximating the proportion (from the current church directory). This does not include the organizations that rent our facilities, with First Russian Baptist Church and the EDGE home school co-op drawing from an even wider area, and Serve City drawing from local schools.

A number of people from Evangel have continued to attend after moving to Windsor Park in Carol Stream and The Holmstad in Batavia, both affiliated with Covenant Retirement Communities. A number of additional people have started to attend after moving into these communities from other parts of the country (particularly so with Windsor, which is closer).



By the numbers: *the communities around Evangel*

	DuPage County	Wheaton	Winfield	West Chicago	Carol Stream
POPULATION					
Total	916,924	53,406	9,368	27,416	40,136
Median Age	38.2	38.5	44.1	31.8	37.2
Under 18 years	24.7%	23.2%	21.6%	30.4%	22.6%
18-64 years	63.7%	63.2%	63.5%	61.5%	68.0%
65 years and older	11.6%	13.6%	14.9%	8.2%	9.4%
RACE					
White, not Hispanic	70.5%	82.8%	89.0%	39.6%	63.3%
Hispanic	13.3%	4.9%	6.3%	51.2%	13.9%
Percent Mexican	79.0%	60.9%	59.5%	92.6%	76.7%
Black/African American	4.5%	4.4%	1.3%	2.6%	5.2%
Asian	10.0%	7.4%	2.6%	6.6%	16.4%
Other	1.8%	0.5%	0.9%	0.1%	1.1%
ORIGIN					
Native-born	80.4%	88.8%	92.9%	64.3%	77.4%
Foreign-born	19.6%	11.2%	7.1%	35.7%	22.6%
LANGUAGE					
English only	73.8%	85.9%	91.5%	45.8%	69.9%
Speak other languages	26.2%	14.1%	8.5%	54.2%	30.1%
EDUCATION					
High school grad	92.3%	95.6%	97.5%	73.7%	90.5%
Bachelor's or higher	46.7%	61.1%	55.8%	24.7%	37.7%
INCOME, EMPLOYMENT AND POVERTY					
Per capita income	\$38,931	\$42,106	\$47,631	\$25,995	\$30,679
Median household income	\$79,016	\$84,833	\$96,464	\$69,252	\$74,026
Mean household income	\$105,253	\$115,058	\$123,992	\$89,536	\$82,073
Individuals 16+ in Labor Force	70.6%	67.7%	70.8%	73.0%	77.5%
Unemployed	8.0%	6.9%	9.2%	9.7%	8.5%
Income below Poverty Level	7.1%	6.8%	4.8%	15.0%	8.5%
HOUSING AND HOUSEHOLDS					
Total housing units	356,625	20,045	3,714	8,166	15,452
Average occupancy	2.6	2.7	2.5	3.4	2.6
Median value (owner-occupied)	\$279,700	\$336,500	\$288,000	\$226,500	\$229,100
Households	279,700	19,194	3,414	7,330	14,264
Families	70.6%	69.6%	74.8%	83.0%	71.8%
Married couple, % of total	57.3%	59.7%	65.0%	66.1%	56.2%
Married couple, % of families	81.2%	85.7%	86.9%	79.6%	78.2%
Nonfamily households	29.4%	30.3%	25.2%	17.0%	28.2%

Source: United States Census Bureau, American Community Survey, estimates for 2014 www.census.gov

Definitions used in Income section:

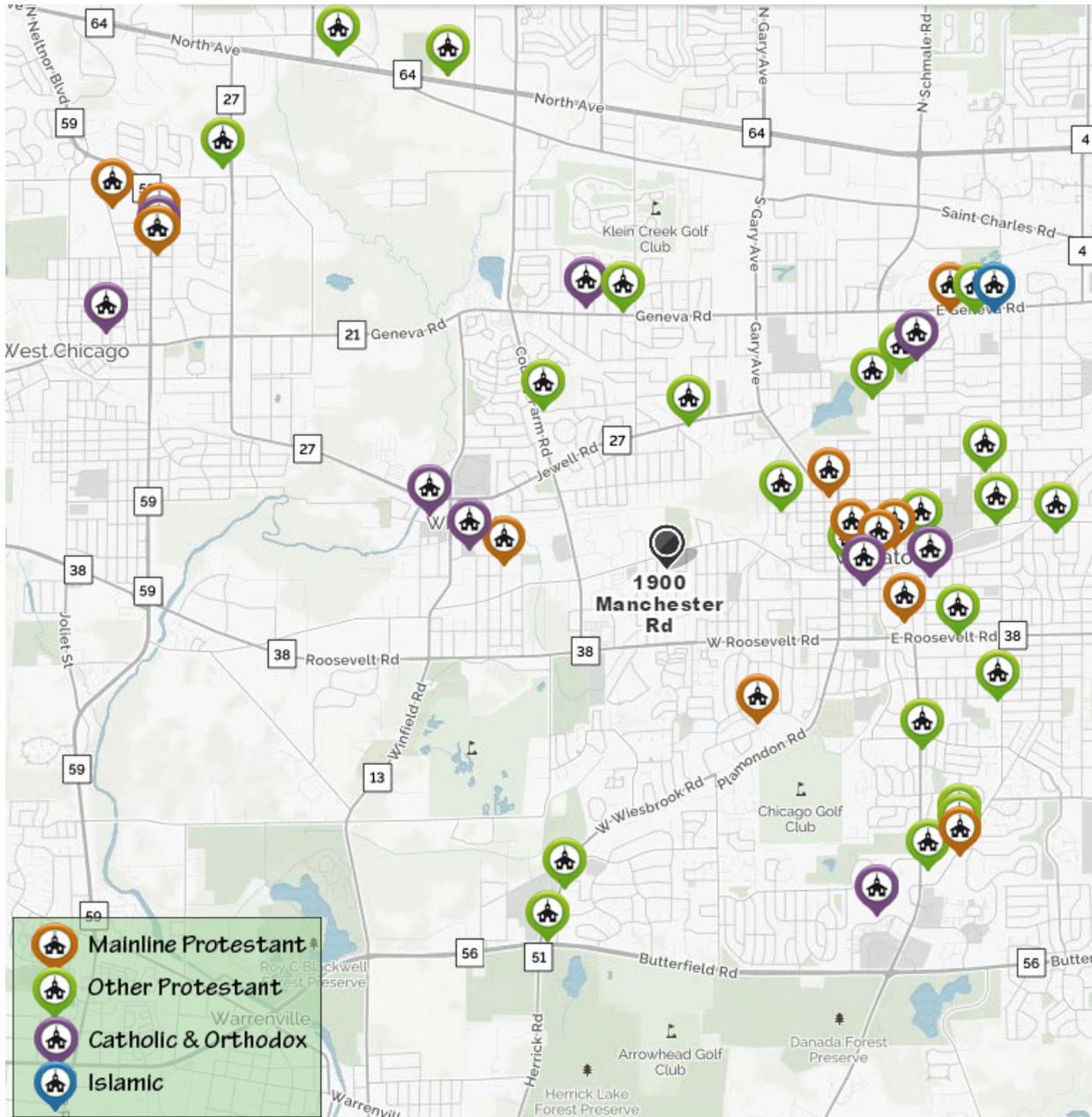
Per capita – income divided by total number of individuals

Median – half way point (half of households are below this point, half are above)

Mean – average (total income divided by number of households) – this can be skewed by a small number at the extreme low or high ends – in this case, all of the means are higher than the median, indicating that a number of households have income significantly above the median. Because even one extraordinary case could cause this result, the median is the more realistic measure. (This caveat affects per capita as well).

Evangel's unique location in a church-rich environment

Wheaton has a reputation as a city of churches, which is still true to some extent, though its place as a haven of evangelical *residents* has been tempered considerably over the past thirty to forty years by the growth of the city far beyond the central core dominated by Wheaton College and a number of large churches; the move of the Bible Church, one of the largest, from the city center to a large campus closer to Carol Stream and West Chicago (on Route 64/North Avenue); and the overall changes in American religious demographics, which have not escaped Wheaton. *The map does not include a number of small rental groups scattered across the area, most renting space in schools.*

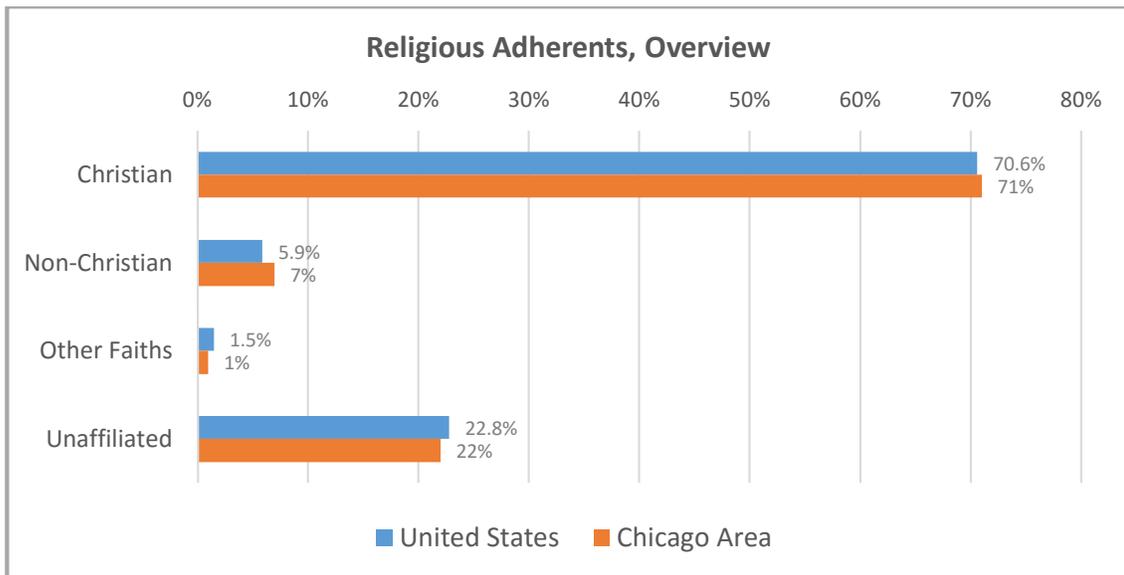


This map shows that Evangel (at the 1900 Manchester Rd marker) is actually in something of an “evangelical desert” in its immediate vicinity and stretching to the west, where most of the churches are mainline, Catholic or Orthodox. This in itself represents a missional opportunity. In addition, many people are drawn to the immediate area of Evangel by its close proximity to the DuPage County

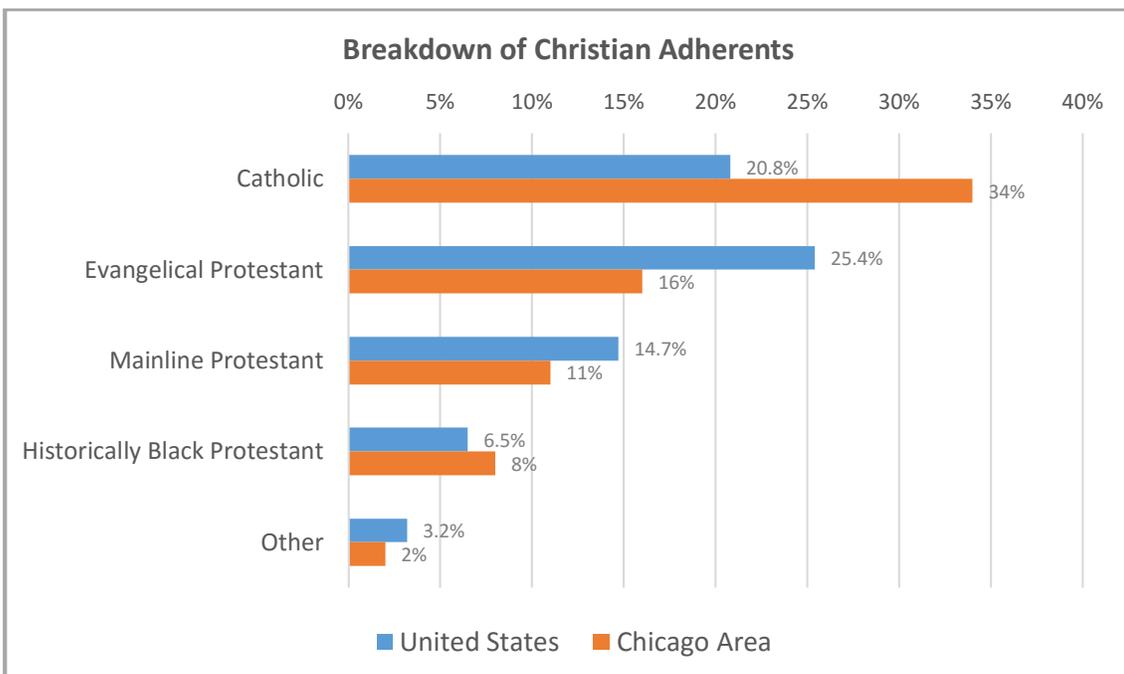
Government Center and Fairgrounds to the north, as well as Graf Park, which draws many people (especially on Sundays) for Park District sports and other activities.

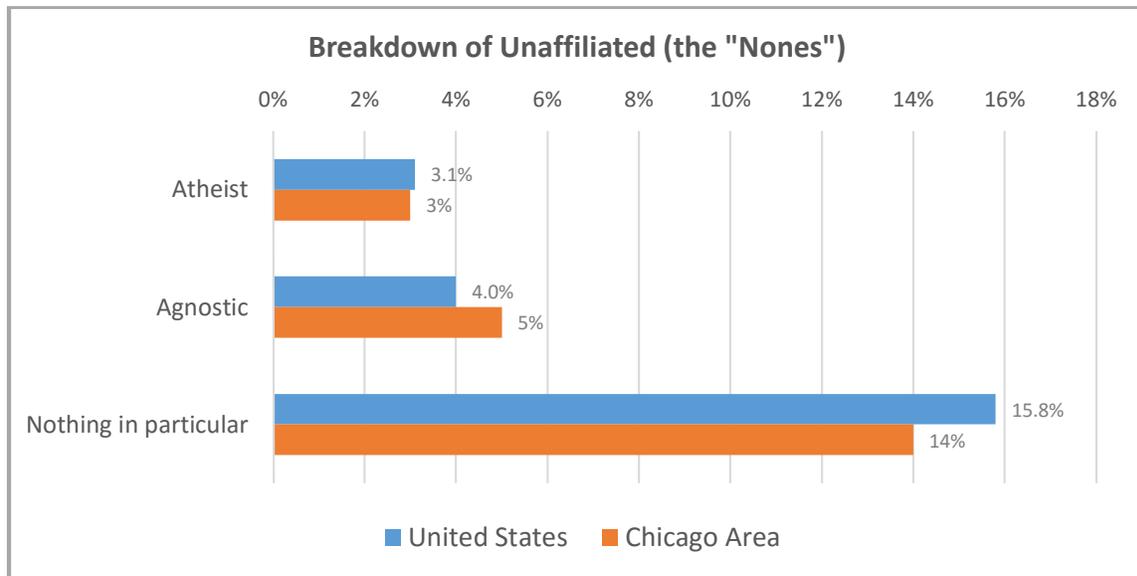
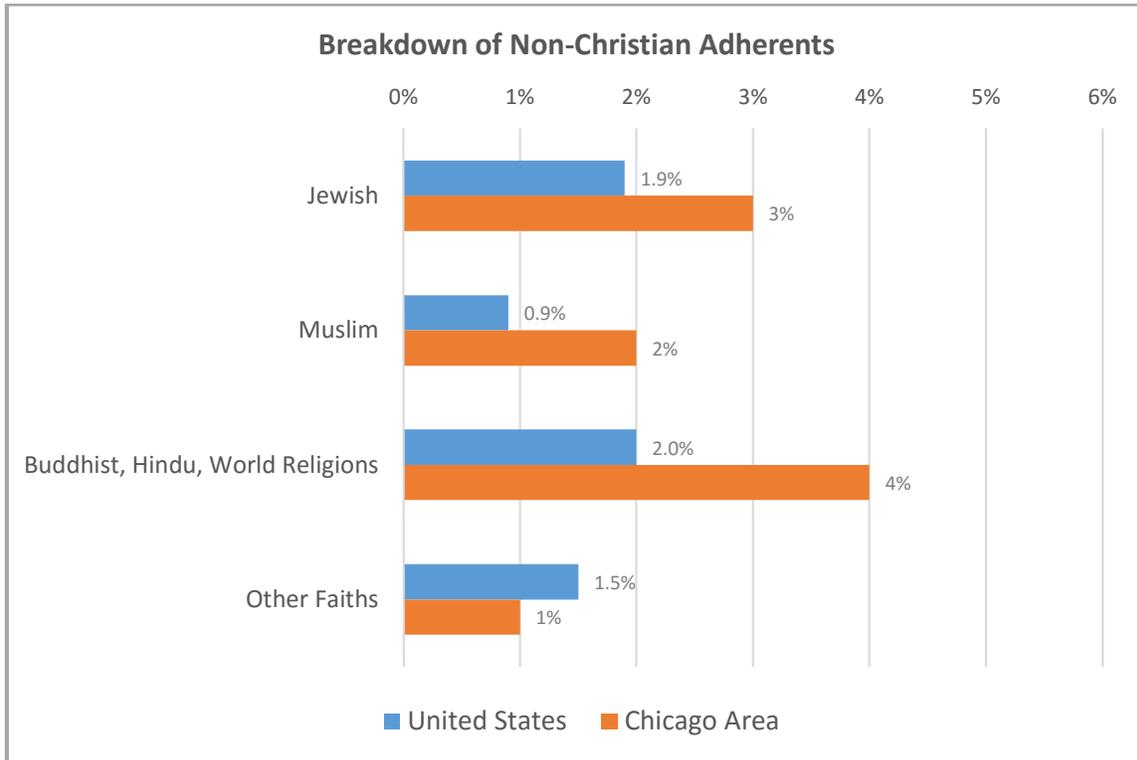
Religious adherents: U.S. vs Chicago area

While the United States Census Bureau is a treasure trove of demographic information of incredible detail, it is not allowed to ask questions about religious affiliation or practices because of First Amendment protections of religious liberty. The following data comes from the Pew Research Center’s Religious Landscape Study (RLS) for 2014. This is one of the more reliable studies available, using self-reports of affiliation. (Others use membership reports from denominations and churches, which can be badly inflated). The RLS does not go down below major metropolitan areas, so we can’t look at DuPage County, but can compare the Chicago area (including DuPage County) with the entire United States.



Because of the lower level of statistical confidence as you “drill down” into the data, numbers for the Chicago area are rounded to the nearest whole percentage.





A few general observations from Pew, Gallup and Barna Group research:

- Long-term trends indicate a significant rise of the “Nones,” starting in the mid-90s, when they were less than 5%, and then accelerating after 2000. While there is some movement from “nothing in particular” to atheist or agnostic, it is relatively slow and balanced by those who become adherents or remain “spiritual” but reject organized religion (therefore, considered “none”).
- While Catholic adherents have been relatively stable for decades (about one quarter of U.S. adults), the numbers have been sliding downward toward 20% in the last ten years.
- Self-identified Protestants fell to less than 50% of adults in 2012 according to Gallup, but there are countervailing trends, with losses among mainline adherents driving the decline while increases among Evangelicals (as defined by Pew and the general public) have slowed it.

The Religious Landscape Report contains considerably more detail about religious beliefs and practices. You can find it at www.pewforum.org/religious-landscape-study.

It is possible to purchase reports for a specific area, usually by zip code. Evangel used such an approach in 2000, with two surveys conducted by Percept Group, Inc. The MAP (Ministry Area Profile) consisted primarily of analysis of Census Bureau data. The second, called "Compass" measured spiritual awareness and characteristics from a catalog of items used by Percept.

Whether it is worth commissioning a similar study sometime in the future should be carefully evaluated since good demographic data is now readily available through the Census Bureau and there may be less costly ways to measure religious beliefs and practices, and to do so with better focus on the questions important to us (using Survey Monkey and similar approaches).

PART 3: Evangel's DNA

Guidelines used to determine what our Values are:

The following definitions of "value" apply here: From the Oxford Dictionary:

The regard that something is held to deserve, the importance, worth, or usefulness of something: your support is of great value.

A person's principles or standards of behavior; one's judgment of what is important in life: they internalize their parent's rules and values.

Values are strongly held – such that when they are violated people are unhappy and restless and when they are met people are happy and agreeable. We see that some of Evangel's values are evident and some are aspirational (we have not truly performed them but would like to).

The values that Evangel Baptist holds:

Doctrine:

We value historic evangelical baptistic doctrinal positions. These are detailed in our Affirmation of Faith, found on page 4.

Missions:

We value supporting and sending a variety of missionaries globally and domestically, with priority for those have been actively involved in our congregation.

Worship:

We value a worship service on Sunday mornings, which is currently followed by a time of corporate fellowship and then a time for learning. We value a blend of musical expressions and we are open to creativity.

Preaching:

We value a strong commitment to biblical teaching and preaching with a desire for it to be applicable and relevant to daily life and to the needs of our culture.

Congregational Involvement:

We value the use of everyone's God-given talents in church life, including governance, program staffing, and various roles in worship.

Fellowship:

We value "loving God, loving people, serving both" (our motto) and value harmony in our church relationships.

Outreach:

We value reaching out to and serving in our community; we seek to expand that outreach to younger families in particular.

Stewardship:

We value being a congregation that faithfully and generously gives and using what God has entrusted to us, including our church building, for Kingdom purposes.

Comments: History, Critique and Aspirations related to each Value

Doctrine

1. **History:** since its start in western Wheaton in 1959 Evangel Baptist Church (EBC) has followed a traditional baptistic approach to church life.
2. **Critique:** We've stayed true to this approach up to and including the present.
3. **Aspirations:** We aspire to remain in this approach.

Missions

1. **History:** EBC has supported numerous missionary individuals and families throughout its existence. Many of our own congregation have left EBC to go to the field with the financial and prayer support of EBC.
2. **Critique:** At present we support 15 missionary units (12 couples and 3 individuals). We do well for a church with only 50-plus active members. (See list of missionaries on page 9).
3. **Aspirations:** We aspire to retain this focus, continue supporting those we do now and expand our support in the future.

Worship

1. **History:** We have followed a Sunday morning schedule for all of the years we have been in existence. This has included singing, praise, prayer and public preaching and teaching which we hold in high regard. We have also had drama as part of our worship experience in the past. Membership requires believer's baptism by immersion, an experience that is celebrated as part of worship.
2. **Critique:** We have tried a variety of approaches with mixed results, including a Saturday night worship service (1999-2002) and another seeker-friendly service (2009-2012). We have engaged in a variety of corporate prayer sessions.
3. **Aspirations:** We would eagerly welcome drama again and look forward to increased numbers to help expand creative expression and congregational involvement in worship. We aspire to more active forms of community prayer to actively seek God's will, to broaden our experience, and to stretch our faith.

Music (part of Worship)

1. **History:** While we have historically valued traditional music, in recent years we have adopted a more "blended" approach, using a wide variety of musical expressions.
2. **Critique:** As numbers have declined most recently, we no longer have enough volunteers to give full expression of music styles.
3. **Aspirations:** We aspire to regain the rich mix of musical expression we have had in the past.

Preaching

1. **History:** We have always had an ordained pastor providing us sermons generally in the traditional form of exposition from our pulpit. The typical length has been 35-40 minutes during the service. Good preaching has also been employed in all services, including weddings and funerals and these almost always have had a strong Gospel message included for non-believers.
2. **Critique:** We have not experienced much of a topical or rhetorical form of sermon in our history. We do not have a schedule of scripture to preach from but have given our pastor the freedom to choose the topics to consider and the texts to preach from.
3. **Aspirations:** We aspire to reach non-believers, to be newcomer-friendly, and to have strong application of the Word in our lives.

Congregational Involvement

1. **History:** While many small churches augment limited staff with skilled volunteers, Evangel has been particularly blessed with a high proportion of people who have been able and willing to use their talents in service through the church. We have been blessed over the years with musical and creative talent far beyond what a typical church of our size would hope to have.
2. **Critique:** As attendance has declined and narrowed, it has become more difficult to recruit and sustain a number of activities. We have made adjustments in organizational structure to reduce the number of required elected positions. We have sadly seen a decline in the variety of musical and dramatic talent once typical of our worship experience. Conducting intensive activities such as VBS has become increasingly difficult. Our people continue to give as much of themselves as possible, but in reality many are burned out and anxious for relief, while others are no longer physically able to contribute as they once did.
3. **Aspirations:** We desire to see God breathe new life into this church, not so much to regain what we have lost, but to see new expressions of talent and involvement.

Fellowship

1. **History:** In recent years we have had a men's group, a women's bible study held on Tuesdays, Wednesday night prayer meeting, and small groups that generally meet on the weekends. From the mid 1990's to as late as 2002 we had our most vibrant youth group ministry. We have previously had a variety of children's' programs, but changes in demographics have caused us to give up most of our youth-based ministries.
2. **Critique:** We grieve that we have shrunk to a mostly 50-years-and-older, white, middle-class congregation. We have experienced much harmony in our church family relationships. We have been known as a friendly church, but the results of a 1999 Natural Church Development survey revealed ineffectiveness in retaining visitors. Even today, our Connections fellowship time (following the worship service), while valued by many of our members, can be intimidating and uninviting to newcomers unless someone shows personal interest.
3. **Aspirations:** We aspire to have more families with young children, to grow to over 100 active members, to have a viable youth presence, and to be an inviting church family. We aspire to continue in harmony, which historically evidenced itself with unanimous approval of our decisions and objectives, but as a true aspiration would embrace any dissent as healthy to true growth.

Outreach

1. **History:** We have historically been more focused on our internal forms of ministry. We've tried reaching out via some specific attempts in the past to include prayer walks through the immediate neighborhoods, handing out fliers to invite neighbors to our events (primarily to Vacation Bible School), having a popcorn and water bottle booth at our driveway for those going to the Wheaton 4th of July fireworks across the street, and open-air entertainment by our youth group on our north lawn. We have given to the local food pantry routinely, always at Thanksgiving and often at others times of the year. We have an active fellowship fund which is resourced during the monthly communion service with a separate offering.
2. **Critique:** We've become inwardly focused without the energy, ideas and motivation to reach out. We have focused very specifically every summer on a week-long VBS that has been supported well by our congregational volunteers. Sadly, we have no youthful leadership to take this over and it has mostly fallen on the shoulders of our pastor and his wife. We don't formally teach and promote a strict approach to discipleship, i.e. teaching the doctrine of discipleship and actively training our membership in how to educate a new believer on what it means to be a disciple.
3. **Aspirations:** We desire to become more active here through the inclusion of new church members and robust discipleship. We want to remain friendly; looking to leadership to encourage us in ways to connect with visitors and those in our community.

Stewardship

1. **History:** We have historically used our building at 1900 Manchester Road for the worship and fellowship needs of EBC. Since 2004 we have maintained active use of the facilities through rental opportunities the Lord has provided (see page 7). We value these three ministries. We have been able to use the rental income for major maintenance and to help offset building-related costs (utilities, cleaning, supplies). Besides how we have used the building, we have been a congregation that actively tithes and gives. We have in the past been able to sustain a yearly budget of \$250,000 or more (see page 12). Since 2000 we have successfully pursued two large capital improvement projects (Brighter Light, 2002-04 and Fit for the Mission, 2007-08) that substantially improved our facility and kept it up to date. The mortgage loan was paid off several years ago. We have been able to pay our pastor and staff, and provide monthly support to missionaries without interruption since committing to a substantial reserve fund during a lean time more than twenty years ago.
2. **Critique:** Evangel has followed excellent financial practices throughout its history, established at its founding by members with professional financial experience. Our rental to other ministries has benefitted us not just financially but by extending use of the facilities throughout the week. We are on the edge of possibly losing more giving units so that we will face more serious budget cuts and staff reductions. It is why we are at a crossroads that requires more urgent action than we have faced before.
3. **Aspirations:** We aspire to see our campus used for the Kingdom of God, to see our own small congregation grow again and to ensure expanded outreach, mission support and witness to our community.

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Good News
Evangel Baptist Church

loving God, loving people, serving both

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