

# **Personality, Ministry and Spiritual Experience in the West Midlands Synod of the United Reformed Church**

A paper analysing the results of a survey among ministers in the West Midlands Synod of the United Reformed Church, exploring the relationship between personality and reported Spiritual Experiences and the influence on their ministry.



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April 2014

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# **Personality, Ministry and Spiritual Experience In the West Midlands Synod of the United Reformed Church**

## **Introduction.**

### ***Background***

Some years ago I completed research on the relationship between Spiritual Experiences faith and worship among members of a local congregation of the United Reformed Church (URC) and concluded that faith and Spiritual Experiences are related, in that a person's faith is both informed by and informs the understanding of Spiritual Experiences.<sup>1</sup> The research also concluded that there is a wide range of understandings and expressions of faith and therefore a wide range of types of Spiritual Experiences reported. This confirmed the findings of the 2001 Church survey<sup>2</sup>.

Since completing that research I became aware that personality may be a factor in the type of faith expressed and the type of Spiritual Experiences that a person encounters. In recent years significant work has been undertaken by a number of scholars including Prof. Leslie Francis on personality profiles of clergy in different churches.<sup>3</sup> However, no such project has yet been undertaken among ministers and Church Related Community Workers (CRCW), both referred to as ministers in the URC. Prof. Francis has also completed research on Spiritual Experiences among clergy.

Therefore the following project was set up to explore both the personality profiles and Spiritual Experiences of ministers in the URC and how these might relate to each other and influence their ministry.

### ***The Theological Background***

The Incarnation reminds us that we believe in a God who is immanent as well as transcendent and that God comes to us in our lives and in our world. We believe that God comes to us foremostly in Jesus Christ. This is a God who is relational, as seen in the life and teachings of Jesus and therefore faith and faith development centres on our relationship with God in Jesus Christ.

God relates to us in many ways, including specific spiritual experiences. These may include dreams, visions, the feeling of a presence, the hearing of a voice, or response to prayer. These may be described as special or extraordinary experiences. However, Spiritual Experiences may occur in many different ways and can include the everyday experiences, such as the wonder of nature or an encounter with another person, and God being revealed through worship and through the scriptures.

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<sup>1</sup>Burgess J.H., 2006, *Perceptions of God in the Particular: A case study of the relationship between spiritual experiences and expressed faith among members of a Birmingham church*, unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Birmingham.

<sup>2</sup> Philip Escott & Alison Gelder, (2002,) *Church Life Profile 2001: Denominational results for the United Reformed Church*, Church information for Mission.

<sup>3</sup> For example: Village A., Francis L. J. And Craig C., 2008, *Church tradition and Theological Type Preferences among Anglicans in England*, Warwick University; Francis L.J., Grubb S., and Robbins M. (2009) *Psychological Type Profile of Lead Elders within the Newfrontiers Network of Churches in the United Kingdom*, Warwick University; Burton L., Francis L.J. and Robbins M., 2010, *Psychological Type Profile of Methodist Circuit Ministers in Britain*, Warwick University.

Genesis 1 reminds us that we are made in the image of God and tells us that there is male and female, yet both exhibit the image of God and we can extend this idea and say that all cultures and ethnicity also exhibit the image of God, and each of us will reflect something of God's image. Yet we are all individuals and different (Jer. 1: 5, Psalm 139: 13) with different gifts, abilities and temperaments (Romans 12, I Corinthians 12, Ephesians 4.) From a theological perspective, then, personality is something that is a gift from God and therefore needs to be celebrated and is to be used in the service of God and for the "Missio Dei." God needs people with different personalities, temperaments and gifts both as a celebration of the diversity of creation, but also to work together and complement each other for the extension of the Kingdom.

The way that we express faith is influenced by, among other things, our experiences and personalities, therefore the description and classification of personality types and Spiritual Experiences is not about making judgements, but about understanding ourselves and our faith, and how we relate to other people and God. We might say that to understand ourselves enables us to be all things to all people! (I Cor 9: 19 - 23.)

### ***The Research Project***

51 Questionnaires were sent out to serving ministers and CRCWs in the West Midlands Synod of the United Reformed Church during June 2013. 32 completed questionnaires were returned and while a few were not fully completed, all of them were able to be used for the research. Although the group size is relatively small the response rate represents 63% which is very good. Therefore it is reasonable to assume that the results of the survey are representative of the serving ministers in the West Midlands Synod of the United Reformed Church.

The questionnaire consisted of a number of sections, some of which are used for this research project and others by Prof. Leslie Francis for his own research on personality and Spiritual Experiences. The questions were compiled from material previously used by Prof. Francis and John Burgess.

Part one consists of a few questions concerning the respondent including age, gender and information relating to their ministry.

Part two, is the Francis Psychological and Mystical Type Scales. This is, perhaps, the easiest questionnaire to use as it has fewer questions than the Keirsey Temperament Sorter or the Myers-Briggs Temperament Indicator (MBTI) instrument. The questions were considered suitable for a project involving ministers of the United Reformed Church as the style of questions are appropriate and this makes it easy to administer. This section of the questionnaire was used to indicate the Personality type of the respondent.

Part five of the questionnaire consisted of questions relating to the Spiritual Experiences of the respondent for the purpose of this research project. This included questions on the number of Spiritual Experiences the respondent had, and the place and activity at the time that they were experienced; and how much they had been of influence in various aspects of their faith, life and ministry. Similar questions were included concerning the influence of the scriptures and the teachings and traditions of the Church.

Parts three and four are being analysed by Prof. Leslie Francis for another research project.

## Personality Profiles

All respondents completed the Questionnaire and in most cases there were clear profiles. In the initial analysis respondents were assigned a psychological type<sup>4</sup> preference in each dichotomy (E or I, S or N, F or T, J or P) based on the highest score in each contrasting pair. The four dichotomies (or dimensions) are: Extravert – Introvert, indicating where a person gains their energy; Sensing – iNtuition, indicating what kind of information a person prefers to take in and use; Thinking – Feeling, indicating the process a person uses to make decisions; Judging – Perceiving, indicating how the person deals with the outside world.<sup>5</sup> Eight of the respondents had one dichotomy that was unclear and two respondents had three dichotomies that were unclear. Where the score is a tie (the dichotomy is unclear) it was decided to follow the MBTI approach to analysis assigning types to those that are unclear so that E/I becomes I, N/S becomes N, F/T becomes F and J/P becomes J. The theory behind the assigning of unclear dichotomies in this way is that research has shown that there is a general tendency within British society to expect people to be more Extravert, Intuitive, Thinking and Perceiving. Hence there may be an unconscious pressure on respondents to be influenced to assign answers to questions that show this bias. (Isabel Briggs Myers et al, 2003, p. 133 & OPP, 2011, p. 27)

The majority of ministers are Introverts (66%), Intuitives (78%), Feelers (84%) and Judgers (53%).<sup>6</sup> That the majority are Introverts is not surprising as this is often the profile for clergy, even though it is generally felt that Extraverts are more suited to a pastoral ministry. The majority being N and F generally fits with the temperament profiles of people working in situations that are more people related. However it needs to be noted that all personality types have specific gifts that can be offered for ministry, and the use of personality types to make judgements on suitability for ministry is a misuse of the process.

Such people with an INFJ personality Type are people who gain their energy from within themselves and who are reflective (I). Creative and visionary (N) they relate to others in a more open way, looking for possibilities, and being sensitive and compassionate, deeply committed to their values and seeking for meaning and purpose (F). They work in a structured way preferring to be organised and decisive, and value institutions and traditions (J). They are more subjective than objective in their approach and are more concerned with people's feelings and achieving harmony. NFs are generally seen as sociable and warm people, but this is balanced by the introvert nature that can find interpersonal relations tiring.

There were differences in temperament between the women and the men, with the "average" woman being INFJ while the "average" man is INFP. The personality profile of the "average" male minister will suggest that they live by values and morals, are sensitive and caring, respect the needs of others, but are less concerned for institutions and structures (Isabel Briggs Myers et al., 2000).<sup>7</sup> There is a tendency for the women to be less Introverted, less Intuitive but more Feeling and Judging, than the men. The largest number of women were ISFJ (25%) while the largest number of men were INFP (40%).

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<sup>4</sup> The questionnaire is used to describe the Type of personality. The MBTI process categorises personality into 16 different types. The understanding of "Type" is different to the understanding of "Trait." So, for example, if a person is described as "Extravert" the MBTI style of questionnaire does not indicate how extravert that person is, only that they are an extravert.

<sup>5</sup> For a fuller explanation of these see e.g. Leslie J. Francis, (2005), *Faith and Psychology: Personality, Religion and the Individual*, London: Darton, Longman and Todd; Isabel Briggs Myers & Peter B. Myers, (1995), *Gifts Differing: Understanding Personality Type*, Mountain View, California: Davies-Black Publishing; Malcolm Goldsmith and Martin Wharton, (1993), *Knowing Me, Knowing You: Exploring Personality Type and Temperament*, London: SPCK.

<sup>6</sup> See Appendix 1

<sup>7</sup> For more detail see footnote 2.

However, this profile is for the “average” or “normal” minister in the Synod. While some of the ministers fit this personality Type there are a range of personalities among the respondents. Overall, as the table below indicates, about one third of ministers have a personality Type INFP. The next most common Types are ENFP, ENFJ and ISFJ (12.5% each.)

ISTJ	6.3%
ISFJ	12.5%
INFJ	9.4%
INTJ	6.3%
ISTP	0
ISFP	0
INFP	31.3%
INTP	0

ESTP	0
ESFP	0
ENFP	12.5%
ENTP	3.1%
ESTJ	0
ESFJ	6.3%
ENFJ	12.5%
ENTJ	0

## Spiritual Experiences

### Number of experiences.

The questionnaire allowed for four choices. No experiences, one experience, occasional and many. One respondent noted that it would have been helpful to have had actual figures to work with, so defining the number more clearly. While this may have been helpful, it might also be seen as putting predetermined parameters on these terms which might be misleading. It was felt that it was better to allow each respondent to define the terms in relation to her or his own context. For example a minister in their thirties might consider 4 experiences many, while one in their sixties might consider this occasional, because it relates to their age and the time in which they might have had experiences. Likewise the context might be different according to the length of time a person had been a Christian, although it cannot be assumed that the spiritual is only experienced by those who have made a commitment of faith.

All the ministers completing the questionnaire claimed to have had spiritual experiences.

1 had only one experience (3%)

12 occasionally had experiences (38%)

19 had many experiences. (59%)

This suggests that the life of a minister has been punctuated with spiritual experiences, and while this may include a conversion experience, or the experience of the call to ministry, it is certainly not confined to these events.

### Place where experiences happened.

The questionnaire gave six options for places where experiences may have happened with the final option being "other". In all responses except the person who only had one experience, multiple boxes were marked by the respondents. This may relate to the different experiences taking place in different places and contexts, but it will also be true that some experiences fell in to more than one category. For example the experience may have been alone and in the countryside, or in church with other people.

The results are as follows:

29 (91%) people had experiences when they were alone and 29 (91%) when they were with other people. 23 (72%) when they were in church, 18 (56%) when they were at home and 16 (50%) when they were in the countryside. 19 (59%) people also had experiences in other places.

This would suggest that the most likely place for ministers to have a Spiritual Experience is in church, and therefore most likely when they were with other people. Although it is also possible that the minister was in the church on his or her own when they had the experience. However only one of the written reports may possibly suggest this. This will depend upon whether the term church is interpreted as the building or the people. It is most probable that church would have been interpreted as the building, as the section refers to "places."

Those who had experiences in the countryside may have been alone or with other people. Again the written reports do not suggest that any of the experiences were communal or shared – and so they would be individual experiences while with other people. Some written reports of experiences refer to times when the minister was with another person in a pastoral situation, or in hospital, and while they had a Spiritual Experience related to the context or

the person they were visiting, they did not necessarily have a shared experience, but they were with another person.

### **Activity.**

The third question asked what the people were doing when they had the experience or experiences. Again multiple answers were received from all respondents, including the person who only had one experience. This person was at worship, and thinking about life and looking at art. So it would be reasonable to assume that these three activities were all part of the worship that was taking place at the time.

From the information given it seems that a Spiritual Experience is most likely to happen when the person is at worship (25, 78%) or at prayer (23, 72%.) Listening to music (20, 63%), Thinking about God (19, 59%), thinking about life, at work and relaxing (17, 53% each) are all times when people have had experiences. Fewer people had experiences when looking at art (14, 44%) although this is still a significant number of people. But there are also many other activities that may help provide the context for an experience as 13 (41%) people also noted they were doing other things when they had an experience. Looking through the written reports, other activities will include being at a football match, situations of bereavement and pastoral visitation, on retreat, when in hospital awaiting an operation or results of tests, in conversation with others, and in caring situations.

This might suggest that the most likely activity that will put a person in a more receptive mood for a Spiritual Experience is at worship or prayer. Or put another way, God is more likely to be revealed to a minister through and at times of prayer and worship. The category "work" may also include times of worship and prayer, but could also be pastoral visitation, or study or preparation. However, the results from the survey indicate that, with the exception of art and "other," more than 50% of the respondents had had an experience in all of the categories. The response for "art" and "other" is only slightly less than half (44% and 41% resp.) Therefore although it is most likely that experiences will happen during worship and prayer, they can happen during any activity.

### **Summary**

Most of the ministers have had a number of Spiritual Experiences and these have taken place in a variety of places, either when the person was on their own or with other people, while they were involved in a variety of activities. The most common context for such experiences, however, seems to be while the minister was carrying out her or his duties, and principally at times of prayer and worship. This suggests that experiencing the spiritual is more likely to happen when the person is in the context and frame of mind to be open to the presence of God, the Divine or the spiritual, or indeed may be positively seeking an experience or the revelation of God.

### **Significance of Spiritual Experiences, the Church and the Scriptures.<sup>8</sup>**

#### ***Spiritual Experiences***

Spiritual Experiences are significantly to very influential for all the respondents in terms of their faith and ministry. The strongest influence is on the understanding of faith (4.3)<sup>9</sup> and God (4.0,) and the call (4.5,) the style and priorities of ministry (4.1 each.) Spiritual

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<sup>8</sup> See Appendix 2

<sup>9</sup> Respondents were asked to evaluate the influence of their Spiritual experiences, the scriptures and the church on their life and ministry by assessing this influence from 1 to 5, where 1 is insignificant and 5 is very significant. The figures in brackets represent the average for the respondents.



Experiences are least influential, but still moderately significant, on deciding which type of church to attend. The influence on other aspects, the understanding of the world, the way of worship, lifestyle, relationship with others and the call to ministry are all significant (3.5 – 3.7.)

The influence of Spiritual Experiences on the understanding for God and faith is slightly more significant for the women than for the men. They are slightly more significant for men for their understanding of the world and their call to ministry.

### ***Church teachings and traditions***

The traditions and teachings of the Church are moderately significant for ministers in all the aspects of faith and ministry surveyed. The strongest influence is on the style and priorities of ministry (3.7 each,) which is not surprising as this is exercised in relation to the needs and requirements of the Church. It was noted by one respondent that the Church traditions and teachings were understood in a general way and not specifically the URC. The area where there was least influence is the style of worship (3.1.) but this is still moderately significant. All other aspects were rated as between 3.3 and 3.6.

Generally the men considered that the traditions and teachings of the Church were more influential than for the women in all aspects except for the style of church that they prefer. The women felt that they were least important on their relationship with others.

### ***Scripture***

Scripture is significantly influential for the ministers in all areas. The strongest influence is on the understanding of God (4.6) and faith (4.5), and then on the call, style and priorities for ministry (4.2, 4.1, 4.3.) It is least influential on the type of church that is preferred.

There is little significant difference between the men and the women in their assessment of the influence of the scriptures on their life, faith and ministry. However, the men seem to be slightly more influenced by the scriptures in their call to and style of ministry.

### ***Summary***

All three categories of Spiritual Experiences, Church traditions and teachings, and Scripture are important influences for the ministers in all the tested areas of faith and ministry, and there is the suggestion that the scriptures are slightly more influential than Spiritual Experiences, with the Church teachings and traditions the least significant, but these are only small differences. It does however suggest that the scriptures and experiences are the more important factors in determining faith and ministry. This would be in keeping with the Reformed Tradition and a more individual understanding of relationship with the Divine.

One exception to this trend is what influences the respondent's preferred type of church. Here the greatest influence is the teachings and traditions of the Church (3.6) with Spiritual Experience being the next influence (3.2) and scripture the least (3.1.) This needs some reflection and examination, but it may relate to the fact that the respondents have chosen to minister in the United Reformed Church. Therefore the traditions and teaching are more significant.

A second exception is what influences the call to ministry. The overall picture is that Spiritual Experiences (4.5) are more significant than the Scriptures (4.2), with the teachings and traditions of the Church significantly less important (3.6.) This, however, is not surprising as a call to ministry would frequently be seen to have involved a personal revelation, or experience of God in Christ which includes a response and commitment.

Therefore while the scriptures might be as significant in the style of ministry undertaken and slightly more significant for the priorities of ministry, the actual call is more experiential. For the women, however, their Spiritual Experiences appear to be more influential on their call to ministry and the style of ministry they undertake. Only four of the respondents describe a Spiritual Experience that was related to their call to ministry, which suggests that while Spiritual Experiences are significant for their call, they may not be as significant (or dramatic?) as other experiences.

# Accounts of Spiritual Experiences

## Introduction

All respondents indicated that they had had Spiritual Experiences and all but four described or outlined some of those experiences. Some descriptions were much fuller than others while others were simply an indication of where the experience took place but give little detail of the experience or the outcome/consequence of the experience.

53 Spiritual Experiences are recorded. In all cases there is need for some interpretation, while some require much more interpretation to enable a classification of the experiences.

## Classification

There are many different ways in which the experiences can be classified. For example James (James, 1960) has a system that divides them into 6 major different types, with 24 sub-types. Hardy (Hardy, 1979) increased this to 12 major classes with almost one hundred sub-classes. Hay (Hay, 1979) used a different approach to classification looking at five main aspects each subdivided. Each Spiritual Experience described can possibly be put into a number of classifications as no one experience is simple, but all are complex and will include a number of elements. Where the description of the experience is fuller then it can be put into a number of classifications, but where the description is very brief it lends itself to fewer classifications, because there is insufficient information available. It would also be true to say that where there is a fuller description the classification will be more accurate, whereas the briefer the description may lead to greater error in classification.

In an earlier research project<sup>10</sup> I devised a classification system for Spiritual Experiences which analysed five different aspects. The setting is the place or activity when the Spiritual Experience occurred; the trigger is what initiated the experience; the medium is the vehicle used for the experience, such as a prayer or a dream. The fourth aspect is the purpose of the experience which is also the content or what happened at the time, e.g. that the person received some knowledge, information, assurance. The last aspect is the consequence of the experience, in other words, what the experience did for the person or the outcome or action resulting from the experience.

This classification system works well when the respondents are being interviewed, so that more of the story of the experience can be explored and understood. However when relying on anonymous written accounts some of which are very brief, this system becomes rather sketchy as much of the information needed is not available. Appendix 10 presents the table of analysis of the written accounts according to this system. Because there was insufficient information for many of the accounts it was felt that this was not a suitable system of classification for this project. However, it did facilitate the understanding and analysis of the Spiritual Experiences. Consequently it was decided to use a simpler system more suitable to the style of accounts received, which is used below, by classifying the Spiritual Experiences into three broad types, conversion experiences, experiences related to ministry and experiences of encouragement, comfort and assurance.<sup>11</sup>

The following three different types of experiences were identified from the descriptions given that are experiences of conversion in a broad sense.

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<sup>10</sup> John Burgess, (2006), *Perceptions of God in the Particular: a case study of the relationship between Spiritual Experiences and expressed faith among members of a Birmingham church*, Unpublished thesis, University of Birmingham.

<sup>11</sup> See also Appendix 11

**Call to Ministry (C1).** Six experiences concern an experience that can be classified as a call to ministry. These involve some element when the person involved felt that God had spoken to them in some way and that either made them think of becoming a minister or confirmed their sense of calling. These include the candidating process, a dream and situations where the people had been challenged by a speaker or seminar or a pastoral situation.<sup>12</sup>

**Commitment to Action (C2).** Four other experiences describe the outcome as leading to a particular action or a renewed or change in understanding and commitment to God or the work of the Church. These have been classified together. In broad terms they could be understood to be experiences that lead to conversion, where conversion may be about a renewed understanding of faith, or a challenge to new action as a response to God and faith. They include being in the context of worship, or on retreat.<sup>13</sup>

**Gifts of the Spirit (C3).** Three of the descriptions relate to the person receiving or using the “charismatic” gifts of the Spirit, such as speaking in tongues, being baptised in the Spirit or overpowered by the Spirit.<sup>14</sup>

The following experiences are ones that have helped the person in their ministry or the exercise of the ministerial gifts.

**Inspiration (M1).** Three people recorded times when they felt inspired in a special way that enabled them to undertake ministry more confidently. These include inspiration for an extempore sermon, words of prophecy and contentment.<sup>15</sup>

**Pastoral Situations (M2).** Five people recorded times when they were in a pastoral situation, such as being at the bedside of someone who was ill or dying and felt that God was present or working through that person or in that person. This brought about a change in the respondent or in the person who they were visiting. For those who were dying, prayer may have been involved which brought peace and comfort to the people involved.<sup>16</sup>

**Healing and Forgiveness (M3).** Another aspect of experiences in the pastoral context is those who have experienced healing in themselves or in others around them. These include physical healing and inner healing. The inner healing is usually associated with a sense of forgiveness and acceptance from God.<sup>17</sup>

**Words of Encouragement (M4).** Many experiences will include words of encouragement from God that help people in certain situations. These may be explicit in that people can recall the exact words or content of the assurance and encouragement, or may be just a sense of encouragement. Six of the descriptions include this aspect of the experience. They are experiences that are encouragement in personal situations but also include situations related to the ministry in which the person is involved.<sup>18</sup>

As mentioned above, many experiences include words of encouragement. Some scholars would consider that the vast majority of experiences include both words and feelings, and

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<sup>12</sup> 02a, 07b, 08, 19b, 24, 28. The numbers refer to the questionnaires which were simply given a reference number. Where more than one experience was recorded on a questionnaire each account was given a letter for reference. Hence 07b refers to the second account on questionnaire 7.

<sup>13</sup> 15b, 24, 11a, 20.

<sup>14</sup> 03b, 07a, 21b.

<sup>15</sup> 02b, 09, 19a.

<sup>16</sup> 04b, 07b, 10b, 19d, 30b.

<sup>17</sup> 04c, 14, 15a, 19d, 23a, 30a.

<sup>18</sup> 06a, 06b, 15a, 15b, 27a, 31b.

are experiences that give encouragement, peace and assurance. Indeed an encounter with the Divine will have these consequences. However, as Otto notes, they will also have the aspect of fear ("Tremendum") (Otto, 1950), or challenge as the persons consider themselves in the presence of God. Consequently many of the experiences fall into categories of encounter, comfort and assurance.

**Assurance, Peace, Affirmation (E1).** Five of the descriptions indicate that the outcome of the experience was a resolution of problems, with the consequent feeling of being at peace, having assurance or affirmation of a person's faith or action.<sup>19</sup>

**Prayer (E2).** Although a number of experiences described include an element of prayer, whether this is explicit or not, particularly in a pastoral situation, three clearly have private prayer at the core or as the main element of the encounter with the Divine. These include a feeling of urgency to pray, and the need to pray to find assurance.<sup>20</sup> It is interesting to note that in the earlier part of the questionnaire 25 people indicated that they had had spiritual experiences while at prayer, yet few of the accounts actually set the experiences in times of prayer.

**Worship (E3).** Eight of the accounts indicate that the experience happened when the experient was at public worship. This may have been a Sunday service, or a time of worship while at a conference, seminar or retreat. It is interesting that all the respondents in the survey are ministers of the church, and yet only eight people gave accounts of Spiritual Experiences that happened in the context of worship. It does not mean that only eight people have had such experiences while at worship, but that these are the only ones to have noted that they were important or more significant than others.<sup>21</sup> Indeed in the earlier part of the questionnaire twenty three people indicated that they had had experiences while at worship.

**Presence of God (E4).** The second largest category of experiences are those that describe an encounter with God, in the form of the feeling of a presence about the person. The person may feel that this was clearly an encounter with God or Christ, but also it might have been more numinous and less easy to describe. The feeling of the presence may have been more ineffable but later understood or interpreted as the presence of God or Christ. These range from a feeling of comfort to a more physical and forceful encounter. They may have happened during a time of worship, or when the person was alone. So the place may vary, but a more common factor is that the presence comes at a time of need and brings reassurance.<sup>22</sup>

**Encounter through Other People (E5).** The largest group of experiences can be classified as those where a person has felt that God has spoken through, or they have been challenged by, other people. Often the challenge comes in the course of a discussion or words of a preacher or speaker. However it may also be through an encounter with people of a different expression of faith or spirituality, or being involved with community work and with people in need. Eight of the accounts include this element,<sup>23</sup> and if the pastoral situations are included, as they are also related to other people this would bring the total to fifteen. There are also two accounts that describe realisation that comes through certain encounters, or a looking back to see that opportunities and situations have been felt to be guided by God.

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<sup>19</sup> 05, 11b, 19c, 23b, 30a.

<sup>20</sup> 03b, 06a, 32d.

<sup>21</sup> 02, 04, 09, 10a, 11a, 21b, 27b, 28.

<sup>22</sup> 03, 04a, 10a, 11a, 19c, 21b, 25a, 31a.

<sup>23</sup> 04d, 17, 20, 24, 25, 27b, 32a, 32b.

**Other Events (O1 – O5).** A few people recorded incidents that were very specific and exceptional. These are not every day events or events that are related to the work or context of a minister. They include three accounts of dreams and visions, one of a sense of vicarious suffering, one person who took part in the musical Godspell and one where the person had a sense of unity with all things. One person mentioned a time of emotional relationship, and another, the euphoria of a football match.<sup>24</sup> Nobody specifically mentioned experiences that could be classified as experiencing the wonder of nature, although one report does include elements of this. One person recorded two brief accounts of experiences of synchronicity.

### Comparison of Accounts.

It is acknowledged that the written accounts supplied by the respondents do not represent all the Spiritual Experiences that they have had, but rather those that were probably more significant, and therefore any quantitative analysis of them is only provisional and tentative. However, surveying the written accounts supplied by male and female ministers there seem to be a few interesting comparisons. 12% of the accounts given by men relate the call to ministry, while only 5% of those given by women do; 21% of the accounts given by men involve an encounter with other people, while only 5% of the accounts by women; 9% of the accounts by men are experiences at times of prayer, while only 5% of women give such accounts; 9% of male accounts are about inspiration, while no women record such experiences. On the other hand 10% of the accounts given by women refer to the gifts of the Spirit, while only 3% of the accounts by men do; 20% of women's accounts include words of encouragement, while only 6% of male accounts do; 15% of women's accounts include assurance, peace and affirmation, while only 6% of men refer to this; 15% of women's accounts are about healing and forgiveness, while only 9% of men's accounts include this; and 10% of women had experiences that led them to a commitment to action while only 6% of men record these types of experiences.

Type of Experience		Male % (33)	Female % (20)	Total % (53)
Call to Ministry	C1	12.1	5.0	11.3
Commitment to Action	C2	6.1	10.0	7.5
Gifts of the Spirit	C3	3.0	10.0	5.7
Inspiration	M1	9.1	0	5.7
Pastoral Situations	M2	9.1	10.0	9.4
Healing and Forgiveness	M3	9.1	15.0	11.3
Words of Encouragement	M4	6.1	20.0	11.3
Assurance, Peace, Affirmation	E1	6.1	15.0	9.4
Prayer	E2	9.1	5.0	7.5
Worship	E3	15.2	15.0	15.1
Presence of God	E4	15.2	15.0	15.1
Encounter through Other People	E5	21.2	5.0	15.1
Other Events	O1 - O5	18.2	20.0	18.9

What does this mean and is there any significance in the differences? It might be that men and women have different types of experiences, or that the different genders will see greater significance in different types of experience, or that they are more willing to talk about different types of experiences. Assuming that the accounts represent the most significant Spiritual Experiences for the respondents, then one of these possibilities may be true. If the respondents simply wrote down accounts of experiences that come into their mind, then the

<sup>24</sup> 01, 08, 21a, 32c, 16, 26, 32b, 02c, 13a, 13b.

whole exercise might be arbitrary. This might also be true if the accounts are of the most recent experiences. However it is most likely that the ones that came to mind were the most significant for the people involved, and therefore there is some significance in the differences of spirituality of the genders.

# Relationship between Personality and Spiritual Experiences

## Introduction

The comparison between personality and types of Spiritual Experiences is very tentative and is approached from a quantitative perspective. This is a crude analysis using percentages of the different personality types recording different aspects of the Spiritual Experiences.

The psychological type was assessed using the Francis Psychological Type Scales. This is, perhaps, the simplest questionnaire to use as it has fewer questions than the Keirsey Temperament Sorter or the MBTI instrument. The questions were considered suitable for a project involving ministers of the United Reformed Church as the style of questions are appropriate and this makes it easy to administer.

In the initial analysis respondents were assigned a psychological type preference in each dichotomy (E or I, S or N, F or T, J or P) based on the highest score in each contrasting pair. Eight of the respondents had one dichotomy that was unclear and two respondents had three dichotomies that were unclear. Where the score is a tie (the dichotomy is unclear) it was decided to follow the MBTI approach to analysis assigning types to those that are unclear so that E/I becomes I, N/S becomes N, F/T becomes F and J/P becomes J.

## Extravert and Introvert.<sup>25</sup>

Of the 32 people who responded to the questionnaire 21 are Introverts (I) and 11 are Extraverts (E). The tables below indicate the number of respondents who indicated positively against the different categories. Three general questions were asked. How many Spiritual Experiences have you had? Where did these take place? What were you doing at the time the experiences occurred? It is clear that a particular experience may fall into more than one category in each case. It also needs to be noted that the category “at work” in question 3 is somewhat ambiguous for ministers and this could include any aspect of work such as preaching, pastoral work, study.

From the analysis it will be seen that significantly more Extravert ministers said they had many experiences than those who had occasional experiences. The general conclusion from this question is that I ministers have had occasional or many experiences, while most E ministers will claim to have had many experiences.

Number of Spiritual Experiences		
	I (21)	E (11)
	%	%
None	0	0
One	0	9
Occasional	48	18
Many	52	73

The results of question 2 suggest that there is little significance in the influence of personality on the place where a Spiritual Experience has taken place. The percentage differences between I and E in four of the categories is not significant. The data suggests that I ministers are more receptive to Spiritual Experiences when they were alone, and possibly E ministers when they are in church. More I ministers have had an experience in the countryside compared to E ministers. (57% of I compared to 36% of E.) Does this suggest that introverts are more receptive to “nature experiences” or to feeling the presence of the

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<sup>25</sup> See Appendices 3 and 4.



Divine when they are in the countryside and alone? It could be that being away from people they are more receptive to God? E ministers may be more receptive to God when they are in church.

Place of Spiritual Experiences		
	I (21)	E (11)
	%	%
Alone	95	82
With others	90	91
In church	67	82
At home	62	45
In the Country	57	36
Other	62	55

The results from question 3, suggest that I ministers are more likely to have a Spiritual Experience when they are at prayer, worship, working or listening to music. E ministers are more likely to have an experience when they are at worship, prayer, relaxing, thinking about God and listening to music. Worship is the most significant activity for E ministers in terms of having a Spiritual Experience. The most significant for I ministers is being at prayer – which could be communal or private prayer. The largest contrast between the two groups is that I ministers are much more likely to have a Spiritual Experience while at work, compared to E ministers.

Activity at time of Spiritual Experiences		
	I (21)	E (11)
	%	%
Prayer	71	73
Worship	67	100
Work	62	36
Relaxing	48	64
Thinking about God	57	64
Thinking about life	52	55
Listening to music	62	64
Looking at art	43	45
Other	33	55

### The Perceiving and Judging Types

Of the 32 people who responded to the questionnaire 17 were Judgers (J), 15 were Perceivers (P). The results suggest that Perceivers are more likely to have had many experiences rather than occasional experiences. This suggests that they are more likely to have had more experiences than J ministers.

Number of Spiritual Experiences		
	J (17)	P (15)
	%	%
None	0	0
One	0	7
Occasional	47	27
Many	53	67

All the Perceivers have had experiences when they have been with others, and this is also significant for Judgers. Most of the respondents have had experiences while alone, but on the whole there is little that can be deduced from this set of statistics, as there seems to be a similar distribution of places where the respondents, whatever their preference, were when they have had experiences.

Place of Spiritual Experiences		
	J (17)	P (15)
	%	%
Alone	94	87
With others	82	100
In church	71	73
At home	59	53
In the Country	41	60
Other	59	60

The analysis of what the respondents were doing at the time of their Spiritual Experiences does not seem to indicate that there is any significant difference between the people of different preference with the exception that more Ps had an experience when they were listening to music and at worship, compared to Js. Js had more experiences when they were thinking about God.

Activity at time of Spiritual Experiences		
	J (17)	P (15)
	%	%
Prayer	71	73
Worship	71	87
Work	53	53
Relaxing	53	53
Thinking about God	65	53
Thinking about life	53	53
Listening to music	53	73
Looking at art	47	40
Other	53	27

### **The Four Functions (NF, NT, SF, ST)**

The majority of the respondents were recorded as NF (21) with the next largest group being SF (6), so the conclusions from these groups may be indicative of this type of personality. However, the small size of the NT (3) and ST (2) groups mean that any conclusions are very speculative.

Analysis of the results of the questionnaire according to the four functions provided the following:

Number of Spiritual Experiences				
	NF (21)	NT (3)	SF (6)	ST (2)
	%	%	%	%
None	0	0	0	0
One	5	0	0	0
Occasional	29	0	83	50
Many	67	100	17	50

Acknowledging that apart from the NF group that the number of respondents in each group is rather small and therefore may not be representative of the people with this preference, the results indicate that the majority of NF and NT people record that they have had many Spiritual Experiences while the SF people had occasional rather than many. Although it also needs to be noted that the NF group is the only one to contain one respondent who has only had one experience that has been described as a Spiritual Experience.

The results suggest that the place of the experience is probably not relevant and has little to do with the personality preferences of the respondents. However the SFs indicate that they are less likely to have Spiritual Experiences at home or in the country, but like the others, are more likely to have them when alone, or in church and at worship.

Place of Spiritual Experiences				
	NF (21)	NT (3)	SF (6)	ST (2)
	%	%	%	%
Alone	90	100	83	100
With others	95	100	67	100
In church	71	100	50	100
At home	57	100	33	50
In the Country	52	100	17	50
Other	57	67	67	50

The activity of the person when they had a Spiritual Experience does not seem to be highly significant. The NFs are most likely to have experiences while at prayer, worship, relaxing or listening to music. The most likely activity for the SFs is while they are at prayer, worship or thinking about God, which may include studying or preparing sermons. For NTs it is while they are at prayer, or thinking about God and life.

Activity at time of Spiritual Experiences				
	NF (21)	NT (3)	SF (6)	ST (2)
	%	%	%	%
Prayer	67	100	67	100
Worship	81	67	67	100
Work	52	67	50	50
Relaxing	62	67	33	0
Thinking about God	57	100	67	0
Thinking about life	48	100	50	50
Listening to music	67	67	33	100
Looking at art	48	33	17	100
Other	33	67	67	0

## The Dominant Function

The dominant function for each personality is the one that has most influence over the way the person operates, or the one that is most developed. It is assisted by the auxiliary function. Hence there are eight possible dominant functions with associated auxiliary functions.<sup>26</sup> Of the eight possibilities only 6 were represented in the sample. Extraverted

<sup>26</sup> Introverted Sensing (Si), Extraverted Sensing (Se), Introverted Intuition (Ni), Extraverted Intuition (Ne), Introverted Feeling (Fi), Extraverted Feeling (Fe), Introverted Thinking (Ti), Extraverted Thinking (Te).

Sensing (Se) and Extraverted Thinking (Te) were not represented. The results of the questionnaire are as follows:

The number of Spiritual Experiences that each personality type had are represented in the table below. Because the small numbers in the groups Ni, and Ti these figures will not be of much value. Most of Si had occasional experiences and one had many. The Fi and Fe groups are almost equally divided between having had occasional and many experiences. The majority of Ne had many with one having only recognised one Spiritual Experience.

Number of Spiritual Experiences						
	Si (7)	Ni (4)	Ne (6)	Fi (9)	Fe (5)	Ti (1)
	%	%	%	%	%	%
None	0	0	0	0	0	0
One	0	0	17	0	0	0
Occasional	86	0	0	44	40	100
Many	14	100	83	56	60	0

The majority of the members of the Fe, Ne and Fi groups had experiences while alone, with others and in church. All the members of the Ni group had experiences in all the designated areas, except in church. All the members of the Si group had experiences while alone and the majority with others. Surprisingly only one Si had experiences in the countryside.

Place of Spiritual Experiences						
	Si (7)	Ni (4)	Ne (6)	Fi (9)	Fe (5)	Ti (1)
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Alone	100	100	83	89	80	100
With others	71	100	100	100	80	100
In church	43	75	67	78	100	100
At home	43	100	50	56	40	100
In the Country	14	100	33	67	40	100
Other	71	50	67	67	40	100

The majority of the Ne group had experiences while at prayer (83%), at worship (100%) and thinking about life (83%), and listening to music (83%). A small majority had them while relaxing, thinking about God (67% each.) The majority of the Fi group had experiences while at prayer, worship and listening to music. All the Fe group had experiences while at worship and a small majority while relaxing, thinking about God and at prayer. All the Ni group had experiences while listening to music, and the majority while at work, and thinking about life. The majority of the Si group had experiences while at prayer, and a small majority while at worship, work and thinking about God.

Activity at time of Spiritual Experiences						
	Si (7)	Ni (4)	Ne (6)	Fi (9)	Fe (5)	Ti (1)
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Prayer	71	50	83	78	60	100
Worship	57	50	100	78	100	100
Work	57	75	50	56	20	100
Relaxing	29	50	67	56	60	100
Thinking about God	57	50	67	56	60	100
Thinking about life	43	75	83	44	20	100
Listening to music	43	100	83	67	40	0
Looking at art	43	75	50	33	40	0
Other	43	50	50	22	60	0

## Influences on Faith, Life and Ministry

The questionnaire included three sets of questions concerning what influences the respondents' life, faith and ministry. The three influences chosen were Spiritual Experiences, the teachings and traditions of the Church and the Scriptures. The choice of these influences was made to try to assess the relative importance of Spiritual Experiences. Each question asked how the particular influence affected the understanding of God, faith, and the world, and how it influenced the way the person worshipped, which church was preferred, their lifestyle, how they related to others and the exercise of their ministry.

The following summarises the findings.

### ***Spiritual Experiences***<sup>27</sup>

Extraverts consider that their Spiritual Experiences are significant in their understanding of God, faith, worship, and lifestyle, but the greatest influence is on their understanding of faith (4.5)<sup>28</sup> and God (4.2). The least area of influence is the church which they attend. Introverts consider that Spiritual Experiences are moderate to significant in their understanding of God, the world, worship church, relationship with others and lifestyle, but significant for faith. It should be noted that as ministers of the URC, the church they attend is where they minister. Hence, while they believe they are called to minister to the congregations, the form of church life and worship may not be one that they would freely choose. Comparing the two groups, this would suggest that the Spiritual Experiences are more influential for Extraverts than Introverts.

Comparing the Judging and Perceiving types, the Perceivers consider that their Spiritual Experiences are more influential in all aspects of life and faith compared to the Judging types. The Ps give a rating of moderate to significant for all aspects, while the Js give moderate for all aspects, with significant for the understanding of faith and the influence on the church as some to moderate. The one exception is that Js consider the influence on faith as slightly higher than Ps (4.4/4.1.)

For NFs the influence on all areas is moderate with the influence on their understanding of God and faith becoming significant (4.1.) NTs however feel a much stronger influence of Spiritual Experiences on their understanding of God (4.7), faith (5.0), the world (5.0) and relationship with others (4.3.) SFs only feel the influence of Spiritual Experiences is

<sup>27</sup> See Appendix 5.

<sup>28</sup> The figures represent an average of the group. Each question is marked from 0 – 5 according to the strength of the influence. 0 = no influence, 1 = slight influence, 2 = some influence, 3 = moderate influence, 4 = significant influence, 5 = highly significant influence.

significant to faith and only moderate on their understanding of God, worship, relationship with others and their lifestyle. Finally STs seem to be the least influenced by their Spiritual Experiences although they are significant for their faith and their understanding of the world.

Comparing the influence of Spiritual Experiences on the dominant function groups it seems that the groups most influenced are the Ne, Ti and Ni. The Ne are significantly influenced in all areas except the world which is moderately influenced. The Si group is significantly influenced by their Spiritual Experiences in their understanding of faith, and moderately in all other areas. The Fe group is moderately influenced in all areas except faith which is significantly influenced and church over which there is some influence. The Fi group is moderately influenced by Spiritual Experiences in all areas except on the church where it only has some influence.

### ***Church Teachings and Traditions<sup>29</sup>***

Comments from one of the respondents suggest that this term was a little confusing. It is described as the teachings and traditions of the Church but this might mean the denomination or the Church as a whole.

Extraverts felt that these were moderately influential on all areas but significant in terms of the understanding of God. Introverts felt they were of some influence on their understanding of the world and moderate on all other aspects. Judgers and Perceivers felt that they were moderately influential in all areas.

SFs were the group most influenced by the Church teachings and traditions, indicating that they were moderately influential in all but the understanding of God, where they are a significant influence (4.2.) NTs considered that they were moderately influential in all areas except Lifestyle and relationship with others, where they were significant (4.0); STs and NFs that they were moderately influential in all areas, although STs were only influenced to some extent on their relationships with others.

The teachings and traditions of the Church seem to have only had some influence on the one Ti for all aspects of life and faith. The Fe group is influenced significantly in their understanding of God, faith and the world and moderately in their choice of church, worship, lifestyle, and relationship with others. The Ni group are moderately influenced by the Church in all areas except their understanding of Faith which is significantly influenced. The other three groups (Si, Ne and Fi) seem to be less influenced by the teachings and traditions of the Church; Ne being moderately influenced in all areas, and Si and Fi some to moderately influenced.

### ***Scripture<sup>30</sup>***

The indications from the results of the questionnaire suggest that overall Extraverts are more influenced by Scripture in all areas of life and faith than Introverts, although for both groups the Scriptures are moderately to significantly influential. For Extraverts, however, the scriptures are very significant for their understanding of God and their faith (4.7 & 4.8 resp.) For Js they are more influential on their understanding of God and faith compared to Ps, but Ps see them as more influential on their understanding of the world, worship, the church and lifestyle compared to Js. Their relationship with others is influenced to the same extent. In all aspects the influence is moderate to significant.

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<sup>29</sup> See Appendix 6.

<sup>30</sup> See Appendix 7.

The scriptures seem to be more influential on NTs than the other groups, being highly significant for the understanding of God (5.0), lifestyle (5.0) and relationship with others, and significant for all other aspects. NFs understand that the scriptures are moderate to significant for all aspects except the understanding of the Church. SFs are highly influenced by the scriptures in their faith (4.8), and significantly so for their understanding of God (4.5.) and moderately in all other aspects. The influence on STs is significant to highly significant.

Of all the three areas of influence, the Scriptures seem to be the most important for all the dominant function groups. The Si group understands them as significantly influential in understanding God and faith, and moderately influential in all other areas. The Ne group as significantly influential in all aspects. The Ni group as significant for God, faith and lifestyle and moderate in the other areas. The Fi group is influenced by the scriptures significantly in their understanding of God and faith, but moderately influenced in all other aspects.

## ***Ministry***

Extraverts consider that Spiritual Experiences are a very important influence on their call to ministry and important on their style of ministry and the way that they prioritise their work. The scriptures are also significant for all three aspects of ministry, being more important for the style and priorities but slightly less in terms of the call. The teachings and traditions of the Church are least influential, being of moderate importance. Introverts consider Spiritual Experiences, the Scriptures and Church teachings and traditions as slightly less important for the call, style and priorities of ministry compared to Extraverts. However the Spiritual Experiences and the Scriptures are significant while the influence of the church is moderate.

Ps indicate that Spiritual Experiences and the Scriptures are significant for their ministry, although the Scriptures are slightly more influential than the Spiritual Experiences for the style and priorities of ministry. Church traditions are moderately to significant in their influence. Js put a greater significance on the teachings and traditions of the Church than do Ps. Their Spiritual Experiences have the greatest influence over their call to ministry, but the Scriptures the greatest influence over setting their priorities for ministry. Ps consider that their Spiritual Experiences have a greater influence over their call to ministry and style of ministry, but the Scriptures over their priorities.

NTs consider that Scripture is highly significant for their call, style and priorities for ministry (5.0 for all) and Spiritual Experiences as almost as significant. So, the Scriptures are the most influential, but Spiritual Experiences as important for the call and the priorities for ministry. NFs' ministry is influenced by both Spiritual Experiences and Scripture in a significant way. Church teachings and traditions are a moderate influence on them. SFs' call to ministry is significantly influenced by Spiritual Experiences and the style and priorities significantly influenced by Scripture. ST's ministry seems to be more influenced by the teachings and traditions of the Church, which significantly influence all aspects, but the Scriptures are as significant with regard to their call to ministry.

Spiritual Experiences are significantly influential for the call to ministry for the Si group and the teachings of the Church significant for the style of ministry while Scripture is significant for the priorities in ministry. The Ne and Fi groups understand Spiritual Experiences and Scripture to be significantly influential for all aspects of ministry. They put a much lower value on the influence of Church teaching and traditions. The Ni group considers that Spiritual Experiences are highly significant for all aspects of ministry, and significant for the call and style of ministry. The Fe group consider that Spiritual Experiences are significant for the call to ministry, but the Church teachings and Scripture as significant for all areas.

## Written accounts of Spiritual Experiences

The questionnaire invited respondents to write short accounts of one or more of their Spiritual Experiences. While these cannot be analysed statistically, it is worth taking a brief glance at the possible relationship between personality and the Spiritual Experiences reported. As the respondents were invited to write brief accounts of some of their experiences it would be reasonable to assume that the experiences reported are the ones that were most memorable, and therefore probably the most significant or important ones for the respondents

The table below indicates which of the preference pair group reported more experiences in each category. Where there is little significant difference in the number of accounts reported the table is left blank.<sup>31</sup>

Type of Experience	code	E/I	S/N	F/T	J/P
Conversion					
Call to Ministry	C1	E	S		J
Commitment to Action	C2	I	S	F	J
Gifts of the Spirit	C3	E	N		J
Ministry					
Inspiration	M1		N	T	
Pastoral	M2		N	F	
Healing & forgiveness	M3		N		
Words of Encouragement	M4	I	N	F	J
Encounters					
Assurance, Peace, Affirmation	E1	I	S	T	J
Prayer	E2	I		T	J
Worship	E3	E		F	J
Presence of God	E4	I	N	T	J
Other People	E5	I	N	F	J
Other					
Visions	O1	E	N	F	J
Suffering	O2				
Unity	O3				
Synchronicity	O4				
Other	O5				

From the information available it appears that Extravert personalities are more likely to report Spiritual Experiences related to the call to ministry, the gifts of the Spirit, worship and visions than Introverts. Indeed there were no written reports of experiences related to gifts of the Spirit from Introverts. But more Introverts have given accounts of experiences related to commitment to action, words of encouragement, peace, prayer, presence of God and other people.

More S people reported experiences related to the call to ministry, commitment to action, words of encouragement, and other people, while more N gave accounts of experiences related to gifts of the Spirit, inspiration, pastoral situations, healing and forgiveness, presence of God and visions.

<sup>31</sup> See Appendix 8.



More F people reported experiences related to commitment to action, pastoral situations, worship, other people and visions, while more T people reported experiences related to inspiration, words of encouragement, prayer and the presence of God.

More J people than P people reported experiences related to the call to ministry, commitment to action, gifts of the spirit, peace, prayer, worship, presence of God, other people and visions.

Because of the small numbers of people included in the survey, the number of people in each category of personality type is too small to come to any sensible conclusions about the relationship between personality type and the type of Spiritual Experience recorded. However appendix 8 does indicate the relative frequency of each type of experience according to the personality type.

## Conclusions

The aim of this small project among ministers within the United Reformed Church in the United Kingdom has been to determine and evaluate their psychological types (personalities), to understand their spiritualities in relation to their reported Spiritual Experiences and to find out how they relate to each other and influence their ministry. The project was undertaken with the ministers and Church Related Community Workers in the West Midlands Synod of the church. The personalities were evaluated using the Francis Psychological and Mystical Type Questionnaire and the Spiritual Experiences using a questionnaire pioneered in an early research project among the members of a congregation in Birmingham.

From the above analysis it can be seen that within the West Midlands Synod of the United Reformed Church the ministers exhibit a range of different personalities. The most prominent personality type is INFP with a significant number of people being ISFJ, ENFP and ENFJ. Only nine of the possible sixteen types were actually represented. The largest number of women were ISFJ and the largest number of men being INFP. A comparison of the analysis with the UK general population<sup>32</sup> shows that there is little correlation between the two populations.

TYPE	URC	UK
ISTJ	6.3%	13.7%
ISFJ	12.5%	12.7%
INFJ	9.4%	1.7%
INTJ	6.3%	1.4%
ISTP	0	6.4%
ISFP	0	6.1%
INFP	31.3%	3.2%
INTP	0	2.4%

TYPE	URC	UK
ESTP	0	5.8%
ESFP	0	8.7%
ENFP	12.5%	6.3%
ENTP	3.1%	2.8%
ESTJ	0	10.4%
ESFJ	6.3%	12.6%
ENFJ	12.5%	2.8%
ENTJ	0	2.9%

The most significant difference is that there are a much larger numbers of INFP type among the ministers of the United Reformed Church than in the general population, and fewer ISTJ, which constitute the largest group among the people of the United Kingdom. Over all about two thirds (65.7%) of the ministers in the URC group are NF, compared to only about 14% of the UK population. According to Goldsmith and Wharton this is not unexpected as the greatest number of clergy in surveys undertaken are NF (Malcom Goldsmith & Martin Wharton, 1993, p. 153). Such people are likely to try to please everyone, be good communicators, inspirational leaders and have a real concern for people. However they need to be appreciated, can be easily hurt and are not good at dealing with conflict. Both Keirse (Keirse, 1998) and the MBTI Manual classify them as idealists who are more interested in people and relationships, valuing unity, cooperation, ethics and morality (Isabel Briggs Myers et al, 2003, p. 61). Perhaps it is not surprising that they are the majority of the leaders in the United Reformed Church!

Comparing the results with other surveys of clergy and church leaders also emphasises the unique distribution of personality types among ministers in the West Midlands Synod of the URC. The table below compares the results of two surveys conducted by Leslie Francis among Methodist ministers (Lewis Burton, Leslie Francis & Mandy Robins, 2010) and Lead Elders in the Newfrontiers congregations (Leslie J. Francis, Sean Gubb and Many Robbins, 2009). This emphasises the large number of INFP types in the URC ministry and the dominance of the NF personalities compared to these other two groups, which are still larger than the population as a whole but closer to this figure.

<sup>32</sup> According to the MBTI European Data Supplement, Oxford: OPP, 2011 p. 19

TYPE	URC	Meths	Newf
ISTJ	6.3%	9.4%	15.7%
ISFJ	12.5%	18.6%	9.7%
INFJ	9.4%	8.5%	6.0%
INTJ	6.3%	6.8%	9.7%
ISTP	0	0.7%	0.7%
ISFP	0	3.0%	1.5%
INFP	31.3%	8.1%	3.0%
INTP	0	3.2%	1.5%

TYPE	URC	Meths	Newf
ESTP	0	1.0%	0.7%
ESFP	0	4.8%	2.2%
ENFP	12.5%	7.3%	7.5%
ENTP	3.1%	2.2%	4.5%
ESTJ	0	5.0%	12.7%
ESFJ	6.3%	11.2%	9.0%
ENFJ	12.5%	7.0%	7.5%
ENTJ	0	3.5%	8.2%

In other studies conducted by Leslie Francis it was found that the largest group among Church in Wales (Anglican clergy) surveyed in 2001 was ISFJ (20%), similar to the Methodist survey; among Church leaders attending Spring Harvest in 2004 was ISTJ (30%), and among male evangelical seminarians in 2004 was ISTJ (19%) (Francis, 2005, pp. 106 - 108), closer to the Newfrontiers survey. Francis concludes that the more evangelical churches attract a more tough-minded ministry style than other churches. The West Midlands Synod of the URC seems to attract more ministers who approach leadership in a sensitive and conciliar manner.

The results of the analysis of the part of the survey dealing with Spiritual Experiences concluded that the reported experiences are wide ranging and most of them could be considered to be related to the minister's work, including conversion experiences, experiences related to pastoral situations and the use of ministerial gifts and those that provided personal comfort, assurance and encouragement. It seems that men and women might have different experiences, or at least, they will see greater importance in different types of experiences. Overall, the most likely place for a minister in the URC to have such an experience is during worship or at prayer. Therefore the context of worship is highly significant for them. However the number of documented experiences that relate to the worship context is not very large – only eight out of the fifty-three reported. So while this might be a common context for Spiritual Experiences, they are not necessarily the most significant or influential for the ministers. Perhaps the type of Spiritual Experiences reported most are those related to pastoral situations.

All the ministers reported that they had all had Spiritual Experiences, although one minister considered that he had only had one. In many ways this is reassuring as they provide evidence that ministers feel that they have particular encounters with the Divine, both in terms of their initial call to ministry and also throughout their ministry in connection with their tasks. They are mostly personal encounters and so contribute to their spiritual wellbeing, but also this helps with their ministry. Recognising that respondents may only have reported some of their Spiritual Experiences, perhaps those that were most significant, it is noteworthy that few included accounts of Spiritual Experiences in connection with their call to ministry. In surveys of Spiritual Experiences conducted over the years among church members or the public in general there has been an increasing reportage of experiences throughout the twentieth century. However the greatest response that was achieved was 76% in the year 2000. In the small survey connected to my previous research among members of the congregation of the URC in Birmingham in 2002 about 53% of the respondents admitted to having had Spiritual Experiences.<sup>33</sup> It is good to know that the ministers in the URC exceed both these figures. One question that is raised by this result is how much the church acknowledges the place of Spiritual Experiences in the life and ministry of its leaders?

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<sup>33</sup> See appendix 12 for a compilation of these surveys.

Spiritual Experiences are as important as scripture in influencing faith and ministry, while the influence of Church traditions and teaching are less. This would accord well with a Protestant approach to faith that might tend to be less concerned with the teaching of the Church, and with the URC's emphasis on ecumenism that puts less importance on historic tradition. That the Spiritual Experiences appear to be slightly more important than scripture in relation to a minister's call is not surprising as the church does value the personal response and commitment to Christ even though there is also an emphasis on an educated and equipped ministry.

When the Spiritual Experiences are analysed according to the different personality types there are some interesting results. It seems that there are some correlations between the type and number of experiences and the personality types.

Extravert ministers are more likely to have more experiences than Introverts and that they are likely to have them when they are at worship. They consider that they are highly significant in influencing the way they worship, their belief in God and their faith and their lifestyle, but the scriptures are even more important for the understanding of God and their faith. Both scripture and Spiritual Experiences are important for the style of ministry that they exercise, but the Spiritual Experiences are the more influential for their call to ministry. The types of experiences they report are more likely to be related to the call to the ministry, gifts of the Spirit and worship.

Introverts are more likely to have Spiritual Experiences when they are on their own and at prayer. Together with the scriptures they seem to be moderately to significantly important for their understanding of God, faith and lifestyle, but in terms of the exercise of their ministry and their call to ministry they are significant. The type of Spiritual Experiences that they report are mostly related to commitment to action, words of encouragement and the presence of God.

One strange result is that there seems to have been just as many Introverts having Spiritual Experiences when with other people as the number of Extraverts. This seems to contradict what would be expected from the personality profiles, but it may represent the nature of the work of ministry.

Perceivers consider that Spiritual Experiences are moderate to significant for all aspects of faith and life while they are significant for the call to ministry but the way it is exercised is influenced as much by scripture as by their experiences.

Judgers consider that the influence of their Spiritual Experiences on life and faith is generally moderate, so seeing them as less significant than Perceivers. Spiritual Experiences have important influence over the call to ministry but the scriptures have greater influence over the style of ministry. On the whole Js put a greater significance on the teachings and traditions of the Church than Ps and this may be because their personality would have a greater regard for traditions and institutions.

Although J people reported more experiences in many of the categories, there seems to be little difference between the two groups in the types of experience they have.

Unfortunately with only 32 people taking part in the survey it would be meaningless to try to analyse the data with the purpose of relating the types of Spiritual Experiences with the different whole type personality as each group is too small. Therefore such analysis and any conclusions and questions that are raised will need to wait until further work is completed with a larger group of people. Therefore it will be necessary to expand the survey to provide a much larger base number of participants before this type of analysis can be attempted.

Overall the survey has been very worthwhile and produced some interesting findings about ministers in the West Midlands Synod of the United Reformed Church, their personalities and the type of Spiritual Experiences that they have reported. It is proposed to extend the survey to include ministers from more synods so that the findings of this research project can hopefully be confirmed and extended.

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## Appendix 1

Francis Personality Test Results

Respondents 01 - 32

MBTI

### Personality Profiles

	E	I	N	S	F	T	J	P
Male	6.0	14.0	17.0	3.0	16.0	4.0	9.0	11.0
Female	5.0	7.0	8.0	4.0	11.0	1.0	8.0	4.0

Male%	30.0	70.0	85.0	15.0	80.0	20.0	45.0	55.0
Female %	41.7	58.3	66.7	33.3	91.7	8.3	66.7	33.3

Total	11.0	21.0	25.0	7.0	27.0	5.0	17.0	15.0
<b>Total %</b>	34.4	65.6	78.1	21.9	84.4	15.6	53.1	46.9

Average Male                  INFP

Average Female              INFJ

Average total

INFJ

	ST	SF	NT	NF
Male	1.0	2.0	3.0	14.0
Female	1.0	4.0	0.0	7.0

Male%	5.0	10.0	15.0	70.0
Female %	8.3	33.3	0.0	58.3

Total	2.0	6.0	3.0	21.0
<b>Total %</b>	6.3	18.8	9.4	65.6

Average Male                  NF

Average Female              NF

Average total

NF

Dominant Function	%	
S(i)	7	21.9
S(e)	0	0.0
N(i)	4	12.5
N(e)	6	18.8
F(i)	9	28.1
F(e)	5	15.6
T(i)	1	3.1
T(e)	0	0.0
unknown	0	0.0

100.0

								Ministry		
								Call	Style	Priorities
God	Faith	World	Worship	Church	Lifestyle	Others				
Spiritual Experiences										
Totals	128	136	114	117	102	112	114	144	131	130
All	4.0	4.3	3.6	3.7	3.2	3.5	3.6	4.5	4.1	4.1
Male	3.9	4.1	3.8	3.6	3.3	3.5	3.6	4.6	4.1	4.1
Female	4.2	4.6	3.2	3.8	3.1	3.5	3.5	4.3	4.2	4.1
The Church										
Totals	116	107	100	112	116	106	104	113	119	117
All	3.6	3.5	3.1	3.5	3.6	3.3	3.3	3.6	3.7	3.7
Male	3.5	3.5	3.1	3.7	3.6	3.4	3.5	3.9	3.9	3.8
Female	3.8	3.4	3.2	3.3	3.7	3.3	2.9	3.2	3.5	3.4
The Scriptures										
Totals	146	144	120	117	100	125	130	133	131	139
All	4.6	4.5	3.8	3.7	3.1	3.9	4.1	4.2	4.1	4.3
Male	4.5	4.4	3.9	3.8	3.3	3.9	4.1	4.5	4.3	4.4
Female	4.7	4.7	3.6	3.4	2.9	3.9	4.1	3.7	3.8	4.3

Participants recorded the amount of influence according to a scale of 1 - 5, with 5 being the greatest influence.

The tables show the totals for each category and the average over the group.

Number of males = 20, number of females = 12



	Number of Spirit Experiences				Place of Spiritual Experience					
	None	One	Occ	Many	Alone	Others	Church	Home	Country	Other
E (11)	0.00	0.09	0.18	0.73	0.82	0.91	0.82	0.45	0.36	0.55
I (21)	0.00	0.00	0.48	0.52	0.95	0.90	0.67	0.62	0.57	0.62
J (17)	0.00	0.00	0.47	0.53	0.94	0.82	0.71	0.59	0.41	0.59
P (15)	0.00	0.07	0.27	0.67	0.87	1.00	0.73	0.53	0.60	0.60
NF (21)	0.00	0.05	0.29	0.67	0.90	0.95	0.71	0.57	0.52	0.57
NT (3)	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.67
SF (6)	0.00	0.00	0.83	0.17	0.83	0.67	0.50	0.33	0.17	0.67
ST (2)	0.00	0.00	0.50	0.50	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.50	0.50	0.50
Si (7)	0.00	0.00	0.86	0.14	1.00	0.71	0.43	0.43	0.14	0.71
Se	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r
Ni (4)	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.75	1.00	1.00	0.50
Ne (6)	0.00	0.17	0.00	0.83	0.83	1.00	0.67	0.50	0.33	0.67
Fi (9)	0.00	0.00	0.44	0.56	0.89	1.00	0.78	0.56	0.67	0.67
Fe (5)	0.00	0.00	0.40	0.60	0.80	0.80	1.00	0.40	0.40	0.40
Ti (1)	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.00
Te	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r
ISTJ (2)	0.00	0.00	0.50	0.50	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.50	0.50	0.50
ISFJ (4)	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00	1.00	0.75	0.25	0.25	0.00	0.75
INFJ (3)	0.00	0.00	0.33	0.67	1.00	0.67	0.33	1.00	0.67	0.67
INTJ (2)	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.50
ISTP	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r
ISFP	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r
INFP (10)	0.00	0.00	0.40	0.60	0.90	1.00	0.80	0.60	0.70	0.60
INTP	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r
ESTP	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r
ESFP	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r
ENFP (4)	0.00	0.25	0.00	0.75	0.75	1.00	0.50	0.25	0.25	0.50
ENTP (1)	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
ESTJ	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r
ESFJ (2)	0.00	0.00	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	1.00	0.50	0.50	0.50
ENFJ (4)	0.00	0.00	0.25	0.75	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.50	0.25	0.50
ENTJ	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r

Note: n/r = not represented in sample

The figures in the table represent the average for each group. The size of each group is indicated in brackets.

	Activity								
	Prayer	Worship	Work	Relax	God	Life	Music	Art	Other
E (11)	0.73	1.00	0.36	0.64	0.64	0.55	0.64	0.45	0.55
I (21)	0.71	0.67	0.62	0.48	0.57	0.52	0.62	0.43	0.33
J (17)	0.71	0.71	0.53	0.53	0.65	0.53	0.53	0.47	0.53
P (15)	0.73	0.87	0.53	0.53	0.53	0.53	0.73	0.40	0.27
NF (21)	0.67	0.81	0.52	0.62	0.57	0.48	0.67	0.48	0.33
NT (3)	1.00	0.67	0.67	0.67	1.00	1.00	0.67	0.33	0.67
SF (6)	0.67	0.67	0.50	0.33	0.67	0.50	0.33	0.17	0.67
ST (2)	1.00	1.00	0.50	0.00	0.00	0.50	1.00	1.00	0.00
Si (7)	0.71	0.57	0.57	0.29	0.57	0.43	0.43	0.43	0.43
Se	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r
Ni (4)	0.50	0.50	0.75	0.50	0.50	0.75	1.00	0.75	0.50
Ne (6)	0.83	1.00	0.50	0.67	0.67	0.83	0.83	0.50	0.50
Fi (9)	0.78	0.78	0.56	0.56	0.56	0.44	0.67	0.33	0.22
Fe (5)	0.60	1.00	0.20	0.60	0.60	0.20	0.40	0.40	0.60
Ti (1)	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Te	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r
ISTJ (2)	1.00	1.00	0.50	0.00	0.00	0.50	1.00	1.00	0.00
ISFJ (4)	0.75	0.50	0.50	0.25	0.75	0.50	0.25	0.00	0.75
INFJ (3)	0.33	0.33	1.00	1.00	0.67	0.67	0.67	0.67	0.33
INTJ (2)	1.00	0.50	0.50	0.50	1.00	1.00	0.50	0.50	0.50
ISTP	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r
ISFP	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r
INFP (10)	0.70	0.80	0.60	0.50	0.50	0.40	0.70	0.40	0.20
INTP	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r
ESTP	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r
ESFP	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r
ENFP (4)	0.75	1.00	0.25	0.50	0.50	0.75	0.75	0.50	0.25
ENTP (1)	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.00	1.00
ESTJ	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r
ESFJ (2)	0.50	1.00	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50
ENFJ (4)	0.75	1.00	0.25	0.75	0.75	0.25	0.50	0.50	0.75
ENTJ	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r

Note: n/r = not represented in sample

The figures in the table represent the average for each group. The size of each group is indicated in brackets.

	God	Faith	World	Worship	Church	Lifestyle	Others	Ministry		
								Call	Style	Priorities
E (11)	4.18	4.45	3.55	3.91	3.36	4.09	3.64	4.64	4.09	4.09
I (21)	3.90	4.14	3.57	3.52	3.10	3.19	3.52	4.43	4.10	4.05
J (17)	3.88	4.35	3.53	3.29	3.06	3.35	3.41	4.41	3.88	3.94
P (15)	4.13	4.13	3.60	4.07	3.33	3.67	3.73	4.60	4.33	4.20
NF (21)	4.05	4.14	3.57	3.95	3.33	3.71	3.67	4.57	4.29	4.14
NT (3)	4.67	5.00	5.00	3.00	3.33	3.33	4.33	5.00	4.33	5.00
SF (6)	3.67	4.33	2.67	3.33	2.67	3.00	3.00	4.17	3.67	3.67
ST (2)	3.50	4.00	4.00	2.50	3.00	3.00	3.00	4.00	3.00	3.00
Si (7)	3.57	4.14	3.00	3.43	3.43	2.86	3.14	4.00	3.57	3.43
Se	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r
Ni (4)	4.25	4.50	4.75	3.25	3.00	3.25	4.50	5.00	5.00	5.00
Ne (6)	4.50	4.50	3.83	4.50	4.17	4.50	4.33	4.67	4.50	4.50
Fi (9)	3.89	3.89	3.33	3.78	2.78	3.33	3.44	4.44	4.22	4.00
Fe (5)	3.80	4.40	3.20	3.20	2.40	3.60	2.80	4.60	3.60	3.60
Ti (1)	5.00	5.00	5.00	3.00	4.00	4.00	3.00	5.00	3.00	5.00
Te	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r
ISTJ (2)	3.50	4.00	4.00	2.50	3.00	3.00	3.00	4.00	3.00	3.00
ISFJ (4)	3.25	4.00	2.25	3.50	3.25	2.50	2.75	3.75	3.50	3.50
INFJ (3)	4.33	4.33	4.67	4.00	3.67	4.33	4.67	5.00	5.00	4.67
INTJ (2)	4.50	5.00	5.00	2.00	2.50	2.50	4.00	5.00	4.00	5.00
ISTP	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r
ISFP	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r
INFP (10)	4.00	4.00	3.40	3.90	3.00	3.30	3.50	4.50	4.30	4.10
INTP	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r
ESTP	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r
ESFP	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r
ENFP (4)	4.25	4.25	3.75	4.25	3.75	4.25	4.00	4.75	4.25	4.25
ENTP (1)	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00
ESTJ	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r
ESFJ (2)	4.50	5.00	3.50	3.00	1.50	4.00	3.50	5.00	4.00	4.00
ENFJ (4)	3.75	4.25	3.00	3.75	3.50	3.75	3.00	4.25	3.75	3.75
ENTJ	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r

Note: n/r = not represented in sample

The figures in the table represent the average for each group. The size of each group is indicated in brackets.

	God	Faith	World	Worship	Church	Lifestyle	Others	Ministry		
								Call	Style	Priorities
E (11)	4.00	3.55	3.73	3.64	3.64	3.55	3.45	3.64	3.82	3.82
I (21)	3.43	3.24	2.81	3.43	3.62	3.19	3.14	3.48	3.67	3.57
J (17)	3.71	3.53	3.12	3.41	3.53	3.35	3.06	3.71	3.76	3.71
P (15)	3.53	3.13	3.13	3.60	3.73	3.27	3.47	3.33	3.67	3.60
NF (21)	3.48	3.19	3.10	3.43	3.62	3.19	3.19	3.38	3.57	3.52
NT (3)	3.67	3.67	3.00	3.67	3.67	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00
SF (6)	4.17	3.83	3.33	3.83	3.67	3.50	3.33	3.50	3.83	3.83
ST (2)	3.50	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.50	3.00	2.50	4.50	4.50	4.00
Si (7)	3.71	3.29	2.86	3.57	3.86	3.29	2.71	3.86	4.00	3.86
Se	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r
Ni (4)	3.75	4.25	3.00	3.75	3.75	3.50	3.75	4.00	4.00	3.75
Ne (6)	3.83	3.17	3.50	3.67	3.83	3.33	3.33	3.33	3.50	3.50
Fi (9)	3.22	2.89	2.78	3.33	3.56	3.11	3.33	3.11	3.44	3.44
Fe (5)	4.20	4.00	4.00	3.60	3.40	3.80	3.60	4.00	4.20	4.20
Ti (1)	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00
Te	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r
ISTJ (2)	3.50	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.50	3.00	2.50	4.50	4.50	4.00
ISFJ (4)	4.00	3.50	3.00	3.75	3.75	3.50	2.75	3.50	3.75	3.75
INFJ (3)	3.00	3.67	2.67	3.33	3.67	2.67	3.00	3.33	3.33	3.33
INTJ (2)	3.00	3.00	2.00	3.00	3.00	3.50	3.50	3.50	3.50	3.50
ISTP	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r
ISFP	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r
INFP (10)	3.40	3.10	2.90	3.50	3.70	3.20	3.40	3.30	3.60	3.50
INTP	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r
ESTP	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r
ESFP	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r
ENFP (4)	3.50	2.75	3.25	3.50	3.50	3.00	3.25	3.00	3.50	3.50
ENTP (1)	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00
ESTJ	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r
ESFJ (2)	4.50	4.50	4.00	4.00	3.50	3.50	4.50	3.50	4.00	4.00
ENFJ (4)	4.00	3.50	3.75	3.25	3.50	3.75	2.75	4.00	3.75	3.75
ENTJ	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r

Note: n/r = not represented in sample

The figures in the table represent the average for each group. The size of each group is indicated in brackets.

	God	Faith	World	Worship	Church	Lifestyle	Others	Ministry		
								Call	Style	Priorities
E (11)	4.73	4.82	3.91	3.82	3.27	4.09	4.27	4.27	4.27	4.45
I (21)	4.48	4.33	3.67	3.57	3.05	3.81	3.95	4.10	4.00	4.29
J (17)	4.65	4.59	3.53	3.41	2.94	3.88	4.06	4.00	3.94	4.24
P (15)	4.47	4.40	4.00	3.93	3.33	3.93	4.07	4.33	4.27	4.47
NF (21)	4.48	4.43	3.76	3.67	3.00	3.86	4.05	4.19	4.05	4.29
NT (3)	5.00	4.67	4.00	4.33	4.33	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00
SF (6)	4.50	4.83	3.50	3.17	2.67	3.50	3.67	3.50	4.00	4.33
ST (2)	5.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.50	3.50	4.00
Si (7)	4.57	4.57	3.43	3.14	2.86	3.57	3.86	3.71	3.71	4.29
Se	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r
Ni (4)	4.50	4.25	3.25	3.75	3.75	4.25	4.50	4.75	4.25	3.75
Ne (6)	4.67	4.83	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.33	4.67	4.50	4.33	4.67
Fi (9)	4.33	4.11	3.89	3.67	2.67	3.67	3.67	4.00	4.00	4.44
Fe (5)	4.80	4.80	3.80	3.60	2.40	3.80	3.80	4.00	4.20	4.20
Ti (1)	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00
Te	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r
ISTJ (2)	5.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.50	3.50	4.00
ISFJ (4)	4.25	4.75	3.50	3.25	2.50	3.50	3.75	3.25	3.75	4.50
INFJ (3)	4.33	4.33	3.00	2.67	3.00	3.67	4.33	4.33	3.67	3.67
INTJ (2)	5.00	4.50	3.50	4.00	4.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00
ISTP	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r
ISFP	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r
INFP (10)	4.40	4.20	3.90	3.80	2.90	3.70	3.70	4.10	4.10	4.30
INTP	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r
ESTP	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r
ESFP	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r
ENFP (4)	4.50	4.75	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.25	4.75	4.75	4.50	4.75
ENTP (1)	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00
ESTJ	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r
ESFJ (2)	5.00	5.00	3.50	3.00	3.00	3.50	3.50	4.00	4.50	4.00
ENFJ (4)	4.75	4.75	3.75	3.75	2.25	4.00	4.00	3.75	3.75	4.25
ENTJ	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r

Note: n/r = not represented in sample

The figures in the table represent the average for each group. The size of each group is indicated in brackets.

Personality, Ministry and Spiritual Experiences      Reported Experiences - Compilation

## Francis Personality Test Results

Personality	Call			Ministry				Encouragement					Other					
	Ministry	Action	Gifts	Inspire	Pastoral	Healing	Words	Peace	Prayer	Worship	Presence	Others	Visions	Suffering	Unity	Synchr	other	
7	E (11)	0.36	0.09	0.27	0.09	0.18	0.18	0.00	0.09	0.09	0.36	0.18	0.18	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
	I (21)	0.10	0.14	0.00	0.10	0.14	0.19	0.24	0.19	0.14	0.19	0.29	0.38	0.05	0.05	0.10	0.14	
	S (8)	0.25	0.38	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.25	0.25	0.13	0.25	0.13	0.50	0.00	0.00	0.25	0.00	
	N (24)	0.17	0.04	0.13	0.13	0.21	0.25	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.25	0.29	0.25	0.13	0.04	0.04	0.13	
	F (27)	0.19	0.15	0.11	0.07	0.19	0.19	0.15	0.11	0.11	0.30	0.22	0.37	0.11	0.04	0.04	0.11	
	T (5)	0.20	0.00	0.00	0.20	0.00	0.20	0.20	0.40	0.20	0.00	0.40	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
	J (17)	0.18	0.18	0.12	0.06	0.06	0.12	0.18	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.35	0.47	0.12	0.00	0.06	0.06	
	P (15)	0.06	0.02	0.02	0.04	0.08	0.08	0.04	0.02	0.00	0.08	0.04	0.04	0.02	0.02	0.00	0.04	
	NF (21)	0.14	0.05	0.14	0.10	0.24	0.24	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.29	0.24	0.29	0.14	0.05	0.05	0.14	
	NT (3)	0.33	0.00	0.00	0.33	0.00	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.00	0.67	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
	SF (6)	0.33	0.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.33	0.17	0.17	0.33	0.17	0.67	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.33	
	ST (2)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
	ISTJ (1)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	ISFJ (4)	0.00	0.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.50	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.00	0.00	0.50	0.00
	ISTP	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r
	ISFP	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r
INFJ (3)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.33	0.33	0.67	0.00	0.00	0.33	0.00	0.00	
INTJ (2)	0.50	0.00	0.00	0.50	0.00	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.00	1.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
INFP (8)	0.13	0.13	0.00	0.13	0.36	0.36	0.25	0.13	0.00	0.36	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.00	0.13	0.00	0.25	
INTP	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	
ESTP	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	
ESFP	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	
ESTJ	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	
ESFJ (2)	1.00	0.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.50	0.00	0.00	0.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
ENFP (4)	0.50	0.00	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.25	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
ENTP	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	
ENFJ (4)	0.00	0.00	0.50	0.00	0.25	0.25	0.00	0.00	0.25	0.25	0.50	0.50	0.25	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
ENTJ	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	

The figures in the table represent the average for each group. The size of the group is indicated in brackets.

## Appendix 9

### Personality Ministry and Spiritual Experiences

Comparison of results of Personality Questionnaire according to the KTS and MBTI calculations.

The KTS process ignores those personality types where the preference is unclear in at least one of the preference pairs. The MBTI process assigns unclear preferences in the following way. E/I becomes I; S/N becomes N; T/F becomes F; J/P becomes J.

	KTS	MBTI
Preference	%	%
E	37.9	34.4
I	62.1	65.6
N	75.0	78.1
S	25.0	21.9
F	82.1	84.4
T	17.9	15.6
J	44.4	53.1
P	51.9	46.9
Function		
ST	7.7	6.3
SF	19.2	18.8
NT	11.5	9.4
NF	61.5	65.6
Dominant		
Si	18.8	21.9
Se	0	0
Ni	6.3	12.5
Ne	15.6	18.8
Fi	21.9	28.1
Fe	9.4	15.6
Ti	3.1	3.1
Te	0	0
Unknown	25.0	0

	KTS	MBTI
Type	%	%
ISTJ	9.5	6.3
ISFJ	14.3	9.4
ISTP	0	0
ISFP	0	0
INFJ	0	14.3
INTJ	9.5	6.3
INFP	38.1	31.3
INTP	0	0
ESTP	0	0
ESFP	0	0
ESTJ	0	0
ESFJ	9.5	6.3
ENFP	14.3	12.5
ENTP	4.8	3.1
ENFJ	0	12.5
ENTJ	0	0

# Appendix 10

## Summary of Classification of Spiritual Experiences according to the Fivefold Classification

Experience		Setting	Trigger	Medium	Purpose	Consequence
01		Musical				
02	a	Candidating	Interview		Assurance	Call to Ministry
	b	Sermon	Worship		Encouragement	Contentment
	c	Football				
03	a	God's Presence	Creation			
	b	Tongues	sleep	Prayer	Seeking help	
04	a	Ordination				
	b	Healing				
	c	Grief				
	d	1 <sup>st</sup> Nation spirituality				
05		Decision making	Decision	Inspiration		Assurance
06	a	9/11 attacks	World event	Prayer	Knowledge	Renewal
	b	Leadership challenge	Personal situation	Presence	Information	Assurance
07	a	Baptised in Spirit				
	b	Prayer	Other person's prayer	Other person's prayer		Commitment/Call
08		Dream		Dream		Confirmation of Call
09		Retreat				Inspiration



Experience		Setting	Trigger	Medium	Purpose	Consequence
10	a	Easter communion	Prayer	Presence/force		
	b	Prayer	Prayer	Presence/force		
11	a	Easter Worship	Worship	Worship	Acceptance	Conversion
	b	Conversation	Gifts of the spirit	Conversation	Confirmation	Affirmation
13	a	God-incidents				
	b	Opportunities				
14		Healing	Memory		Healing	Growth and renewal
15	a	Awaiting Tests	Hospital	Presence	Assurance	Peace
	b	School weekend	Given Task	Vision/voice	Answer to question	New understanding
16		Vicarious suffering			Experience of guilt	
17		Testimony	Testimony	Testimony	Renewed faith ?	
19	a	Prophecy				
	b	Call				Call to ministry
	c	Prayer		Prayer		Peace
	d	Healing		Healing		
	e	Art		Art	Presence of God	
20		Conversation	Conversation	Friend	Desire for Justice	Action for Justice
21	a	Vision of Hell		Vision	Vision of Hell	Disturbing
	b	Toronto Blessing	Prayer	Prayer	Feeling the power of God	Peace
23	a	Prayer		Prayer	Sense of forgiveness	Forgiveness

Experience		Setting	Trigger	Medium	Purpose	Consequence
23	b	Operation	Operation		No more fear of death	Peace
24		Seminar			Sense of Mission	Call to ministry
25	a	At the feet of Jesus	Worship		Presence of Jesus	
	b	Community Work				
26		Feeling of unity			Awareness of life	Unity with the Divine
27	a	Voice	Sunlight	Vision/voice	Words of encouragement	Encouragement
	b	Butterfly	Sermon	Butterfly	Understanding	
28		Call to ministry	Searching for meaning	Presence	Response to God	Call to ministry
30	a	Spring Harvest	Talk	Prayer	Healing	Cleansing and peace
	b	Hospital visit	Vision of the Devil	Prayer	Healing and forgiveness	Peace
31	a	Presence of God			Presence of God	
	b	Clarity of thought		Worship	Inspiration	
32	a	Care		Other people	Finding care	
	b	Fiancé				Love
	c	Seven suns		Vision		
	d	Prayer			New understanding	

## Summary of Classification of Spiritual Experiences related to Ministry and Personality

Experience			Type	Personality
01		Musical	O4	INFP
02	a	Candidating	C1	INFP
	b	Sermon	M1, E3	
	c	Football	O4	
03	a	God's Presence	E4	ENFJ
	b	Tongues	C3, E2	
04	a	Ordination	E3, E4	INFP
	b	Healing	M2	
	c	Grief	M3	
	d	1 <sup>st</sup> Nation spirituality	E5	
05		Decision making	E1	ISTJ
06	a	9/11 attacks	M4, E2	ISFJ
	b	Leadership challenge	M4	
07	a	Baptised in Spirit	C3	ENFP
	b	Prayer	C1, M2	
08		Dream	C1,O1	ENFP
09		Retreat	M1, E3	ENFP
10	a	Easter communion	E3, E4	INFP
	b	Prayer	M2	
11	a	Easter Worship	C2, E3, E4	ISFJ
	b	Conversation	E1	
13	a	God-incidents	E6	ISFJ
	b	Opportunities	E6	
14		Healing	M3	ENFP
15	a	Awaiting Tests	M3, M4	INFP
	b	School weekend	C2, M4	
16		Vicarious suffering	O2	INFP
17		Testimony	E5	INFP
19	a	Prophecy	M1	INTJ
	b	Call	C1	
	c	Prayer	E1	
	d	Healing	M2, M3	
	e	Art	E4	
20		Conversation	C2, E5	ISFJ
21	a	Vision of Hell	O1	ENFJ
	b	Toronto Blessing	C3, E3, E4	

Experience			Type	
23	a	Prayer	M3	INFP
	b	Operation	E1	
24		Seminar	C1, C2	ESFJ
25	a	At the feet of Jesus	E4	INFJ
	b	Community Work	E5	
26		Feeling of unity	O3	INFJ
27	a	Voice	M4	ENFJ
	b	Butterfly	E3, E5	
28		Call to ministry	C1, E3	ESFJ
30	a	Spring Harvest	M3, E1	ENFJ
	b	Hospital visit	M2	
31	a	Presence of God	E4	INTJ
	b	Clarity of thought	M4	
32	a	Care	E5	INFJ
	b	Fiancé	E5, O4	
	c	Seven suns	O1	
	d	Prayer	E2	

Appendix 12: Comparison of surveys of Spiritual Experiences, from Burgess J.H., (2006),  
Perceptions of God in the Particular.

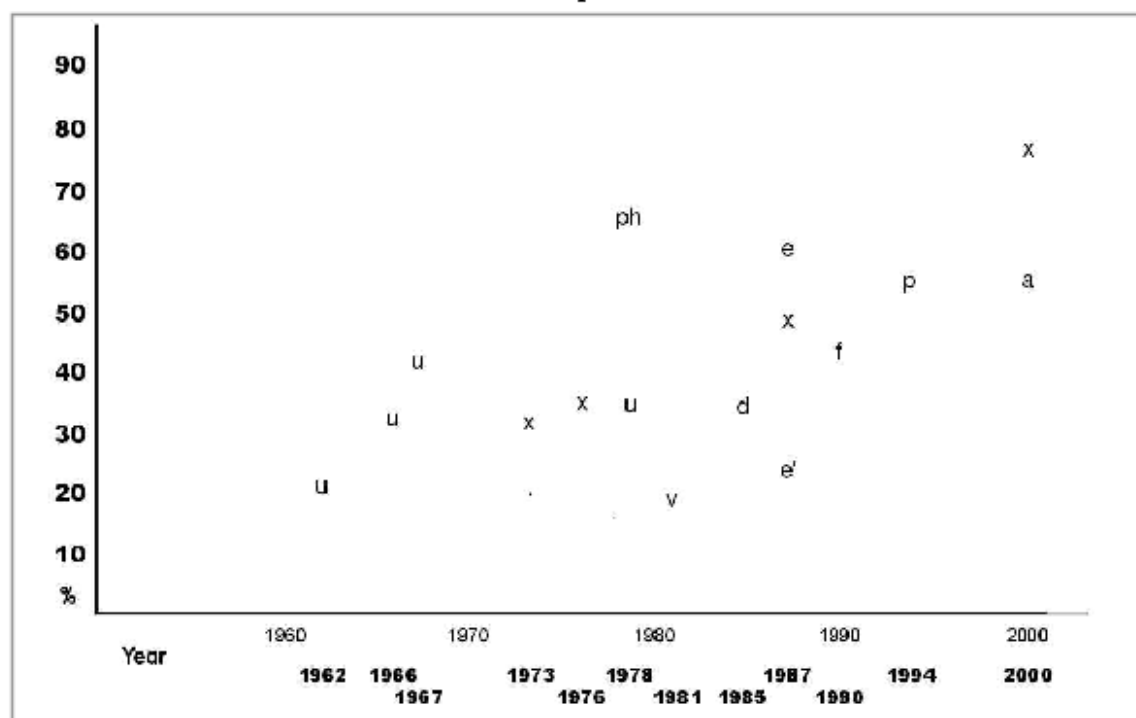
**Table 12**

Date	Country	Survey (and Reference)	Key	%
1962	U.S.A.	Gallup/Back & Bourque (Hay 1987 p. 121)	u	20.5
1966	U.S.A.	Gallup/Back & Bourque (Hay 1987 p.121)	u	32
1967	U.S.A.	Gallup/Back & Bourque (Hay 1987 p.121)	u	41
1973	U.K.	Hay (Hay 1987 p. 124)	x	31
1976	U.K.	N.O.P. (Hay & Morisy JSSR 1978 p. 256)	x	36
1978	U.S.A.	Princetown (Hay 1987 p. 122)	u	35
1978	U.K.	Hay Students (Hay JSSR 1979 p. 167)	h	65
1978	U.S.A.	Presbyterian Panel (Rice 1991 p. 47) <sup>1</sup>	p	64
1981	U.K.	European Values (Thompson 1988 p. 229)	v	19
1985	U.K.	Hardy (Hay 1987 p. 121 )	d	33
1987	U.K.	Edrington (Edrington 1987 p. 104)	e (e')	60 (22)
1987	U.K.	Hay & Heald (Hay & Hunt 2000 p. 13)	x	48
1990	U.K.	Finding Faith Today (Hanley 1992 p. 104) <sup>1</sup>	f	43
1994	U.S.A.	Presbyterian Panel (Presby 1994 p. 10) <sup>1</sup>	p	54
2000	U.K.	Hay & Hunt (Hay & Hunt 2000 p. 13)	x	76
2000	U.K.	Perceptions of God <sup>1</sup>	a	53

**Comparison of Surveys of Spiritual Experiences**

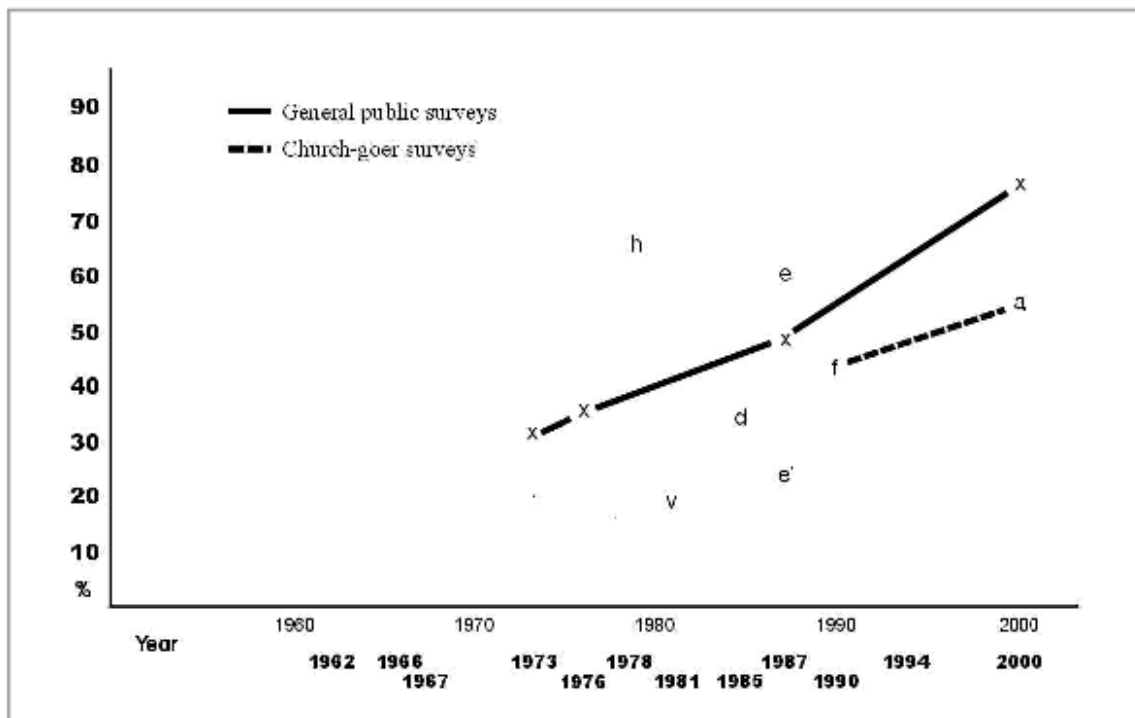
<sup>1</sup>= survey conducted among church-goers only

**Graph 1**



**Comparison of Spiritual Experiences - Percentage Responses**

Graph 2



Comparison of Spiritual Experiences - U.K. Data, showing trends

Edrington R. B., (1987), *Everyday Men: living in a climate of unbelief.*, Frankfurt: Lang.

Hanley P., (1992), *Finding Faith Today: the technical report*, Swindon: British and Foreign Bible Society.

Hay D., (1979), Religious Experience Amongst a Group of Post-Graduate Students – A Qualitative Study, *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, vol. 18, pp. 164 – 182.

Hay D., (1987), *Exploring Inner Space: is God still possible in the 20<sup>th</sup> century?* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.), Oxford: Mowbray

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Hay D. and Morisy A., (1978), Reports of Ecstatic, Paranormal, or Religious Experience in Great Britain and the United States, *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, vol. 17, pp. 255 – 258.

Presbyterian Church (USA), (1994), Presbyterian Panel: Listening to Presbyterians – Spirituality. *Presbyterian Panel*. Feb. 1994, p. 10. Available at: [http://www.pcusa.org/research/panel/reports/0294\\_full\\_report.pdf](http://www.pcusa.org/research/panel/reports/0294_full_report.pdf). (downloaded 29/08/04)

Rice H., (1991), *Reformed Spirituality: an introduction for believers*. Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster/John Knox.

Thompson K., (1988), *How Religious are the British?* in Thomas T. (ed), *The British: their religious beliefs and practices 1800 – 1986*, London: Routledge.