

People in house churches report greater satisfaction than conventional churchgoers

January 19, 2007

Posted: 1/19/07

People in house churches report greater satisfaction than conventional churchgoers

By Adelle Banks

Religion News Service

WASHINGTON (RNS)—Worshippers who attend services in independent house churches report higher levels of satisfaction than Christians in conventional church services, a new study shows.

[The Barna Group](#) interviewed more than 2,000 Americans about their experiences in traditional congregations and the nondenominational churches whose services are held in homes or other locations than a church building.

Higher percentages of people attending a house church said they were “completely satisfied” with the four dimensions of church life they were asked about:

- 68 percent of house church attenders were completely satisfied with the leadership of their church, compared to 49 percent of people attending conventional church services.
- 66 percent of people attending a house church were completely satisfied with the faith commitment of the people in their gathering, compared to 40 percent of conventional church attenders.
- 61 percent of house church adherents were completely satisfied with the level of personal connectedness they experienced, compared to 41 percent of conventional churchgoers.
- 59 percent of those attending a house church were completely satisfied with the spiritual depth they felt in that setting, compared to 46 percent of conventional church attenders.

The study also found the vast majority of house churches—80 percent—meet weekly, but only one-quarter of them meet on Sundays; one-fifth of them vary their meeting day. Gatherings tend to last for two hours, with 7 percent meeting for less than an hour and 9 percent meeting for more than three.

Researchers discovered many house church attenders are checking out the independent gatherings but have not yet made a decision to leave a conventional church. Forty-two percent of those attending house churches regularly rely on them exclusively for their primary worship experience.

The survey by the Ventura, Calif.-based research organization was conducted in August and October 2006 and included interviews of a random sample of 2,008 adults. It has a margin of error of plus or minus 2.2 percentage points.

News of religion, faith, missions, Bible study and Christian ministry among Baptist churches, in Texas, the BGCT, the nation and around the world.