

Appendix B: Methodology for Estimating Christian Movements

In many countries, censuses and demographic surveys do not include the detailed denominational affiliation and religious self-identification measures necessary for determining the size of global movements within Christianity (such as evangelicalism, pentecostalism and the charismatic movement). The figures on Christian movements in this report were commissioned by the Pew Forum from the Center for the Study of Global Christianity (CSGC) at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary in South Hamilton, Mass. CSGC researchers generated their estimates based in large part on figures provided by Christian denominations and organizations around the world. CSGC has obtained denominational membership information from about 41,000 organizations worldwide.²⁴

The Center for the Study of Global Christianity's estimates for the number of pentecostals worldwide are based on membership data from historically pentecostal denominations, such as the Assemblies of God and the Church of God in Christ. Pentecostal denominations emphasize the gifts of the Holy Spirit, including speaking in tongues, divine healing and prophecy. (For more details, see *Defining Christian Traditions* on page 38.) The pentecostal estimates also include denominations and independent churches that have pervasive pentecostal characteristics or practices but are not considered historically pentecostal.²⁵

Charismatic Christians engage in spiritual practices associated with pentecostalism, such as speaking in tongues and divine healing, but belong to Catholic, Orthodox, Protestant or other denominations in which a minority of congregations have pervasive pentecostal practices. (For more details, see *Defining Christian Traditions* on page 38.) The Center for the Study of Global Christianity's estimates of the size of the charismatic movement are based on statistics from denominational groups, relevant survey data and questionnaires distributed to key religious leaders.

²⁴ This is the global sum of the total number of denominations in each country. There is overlap between countries because many denominations are present in more than one country.

²⁵ For purposes of this report, denominations and independent churches identified by the Center for the Study of Global Christianity as having an overwhelming majority of congregations engaging in pentecostal practices are classified as pentecostal. In their own reports, however, CSGC classifies denominations and independent churches that have pervasive pentecostal practices but are not considered historically pentecostal as charismatic. The CSGC classifications are designed to capture distinctions between historically pentecostal churches and denominations and newer religious institutions practicing pentecostalism. The classifications in the Pew Forum report, by contrast, are intended to capture differences between denominations and independent churches in which a majority of congregations engage in pentecostal practices (classified as belonging to the pentecostal movement) and those in which a minority of congregations engage in pentecostal practices (classified as belonging to the charismatic movement).

Evangelicals are Christians who believe in the centrality of the conversion or “born-again” experience in receiving salvation; believe in the authority of the Bible as God’s revelation to humanity; and have a strong commitment to evangelism or sharing the Christian message. (For more details, see *Defining Christian Traditions* on page 38.) The Center for the Study of Global Christianity counts as evangelical all members of denominations that belong to a national, regional or global evangelical council; the CSGC identifies these denominations as 100% evangelical. For denominations that do not belong to evangelical councils, the CSGC also estimates the share that is evangelical based on statistics from denominational groups, relevant survey data and questionnaires distributed to key religious leaders, following the same procedures used for estimating the number of charismatics.

In this report, pentecostal and charismatic are mutually exclusive categories. (The two movements are sometimes identified collectively as the renewalist population.) However, since many pentecostals and charismatics are also evangelicals, these categories (pentecostals and charismatics, on the one hand, and evangelicals on the other hand) are not mutually exclusive. At the same time, there are also evangelicals who are neither pentecostal nor charismatic, and a majority of global Christians are not associated with any of the three Christian movements.