

SURVEY COORDINATOR'S guide

Dear church survey coordinator,

This Guide will help you coordinate the 2026 National Church Life Survey in your local church.

Your church is joining thousands of churches across the country in the largest and longest-running survey on church life in the world. It aims to benefit local, regional and national churches.

After completion, your church will receive a Church Life Pack of resources including your Profile of Results, to help inform your church in its ministry and mission. Our hope and prayer is that with God's blessing, this Church Life Survey will serve to strengthen the health and vitality of your church, and continue to spread the positive stories of churches nationwide to the Australian community.

Dr Ruth Powell, Director, and the NCLS Research Team.

[Your Church Name will
appear here]

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

FOR MULTI-SITE CHURCHES



Multi-site Church? If your local church is spread across more than one location or site, such as a parish, a cluster or a multi-campus church, then **each location or site needs their own set of materials.**

See 2026ncls.org.au/administer

YOUR CHURCH CODE(S)

Your CHURCH CODE(s) should be given to participants to complete paper or online surveys.

Write or enter your Church Code on each survey completed at each site.

[Your Church Code(s) will appear here]

OVERVIEW

Surveys

CHURCH ACTIVITIES SURVEY

Map local church activities
Add to the national story of the positive impact of churches in communities

CHURCH LIFE SURVEYS FOR ATTENDERS

Demographics
Inflow of people
Personal flourishing
Discipleship
Church vitality

LEADERS SURVEYS

Vital leadership
Wellbeing and resilience
Training needs
Church planting
Values and more



One person completes the Church Activities Survey.



Your church will receive Attender Surveys in up to 8 languages for those aged 16+.



If ordered, you will have Child Surveys for 8 to 15 year olds.



Your leader/s may complete Leader Surveys when it suits them.



One leader is to complete the New Churches survey if your church started from 2011 onward.

August

Complete the Church Activities Survey (one person).

September onward

Complete Attender Surveys and Leader Surveys
Return completed surveys.

Late 26/early 27

Get your local results. Denominations also get combined results.

RESOURCES

2026NCLS.ORG.AU/PREPARE

Contains materials to help you prepare, including a display poster and promotional resources.

2026NCLS.ORG.AU/ADMINISTER

Has more information and downloads including introductory videos, Parents & Carers Information & Consent Sheets, PowerPoint slides, worship service resources and sample text for sending reminders.

For each survey, there are items in your Survey Kit and a website address to share with people who wish to complete surveys online.

CHURCH ACTIVITIES *survey*

The Church Activities Survey is to be completed by a church leader or administrator or with knowledge of the church's life and activities.

- Complete one Church Activities Survey per church location.
- We encourage you to use the online survey if possible.
- NOTE: ACC Churches have their own annual ACC Census and do not need to complete the Church Activities Survey.

ATTENDER *survey*

The Attender Survey is to be completed by church attenders aged 16* and over, during a worship service, Mass or spiritual nurture activity.

- The Attender Survey can be completed on paper or online in eight languages. It takes around 20 minutes.
- Distribute survey materials to those leading the services/activities: the Site Instructions, including the NCLS Church Code for each church site or location, Attender Survey forms and Collection Envelopes.

* About 16 and 17 years olds: See Site Instructions for more information.

CHILD *survey* for 8 to 15 year olds

(OPTIONAL SURVEY THAT YOUR CHURCH MAY HAVE ORDERED)

The Child Survey is to be completed by child church attenders aged 8 to 15.

- The Child Survey can be completed on paper surveys or online.
- Distribute Parent Information and Consent Sheets.
- Copy extra if needed or download from the website to distribute to all parents. 2026ncls.org.au/child-survey

We believe it is important to hear from all ages. To align with Human Research Ethics standards we need written consent from parents before a child is given a survey to complete. See Child Survey Instructions. See 2026ncls.org.au/child-survey

LEADER *survey*

The Leader Survey is for people aged 18+ in ministry/pastoral leadership roles e.g. senior minister, pastor, priest and anyone (lay or ordained, staff or non-staff) in a significant position of ministry. This includes any clergy, those who lead ministry to children or youth, people who serve on your church's council or board etc.

- Please circulate the Leader Survey flyer to all those invited to complete the Leader Survey.
- We encourage all leaders to use the online survey if possible.
- Invite leaders to also complete the standard Attender Survey with the rest of the church.
- Leaders can complete this survey any time during your Survey Period.
- Paper surveys may be sealed in the Leader Survey Collection Envelope.

NEW CHURCHES* *survey*

This short survey is to be completed by the primary leader in churches that started from 2011 onward.

- Please provide the paper survey to the primary leader.
- We encourage use of the online survey if possible.

Please encourage people to use the online surveys

churchactivities.ncls.au



Church Activities Survey — paper or online



Multi-site churches: one Survey for each site or location.

Catholic parishes: one Survey per parish.

attendersurvey.ncls.au



Attender Survey Site Instructions



Attender Surveys — paper or online



Attender Survey — translations



Attender Survey Collection Envelopes

childsurvey.ncls.au



Child Survey Instructions



Parents & Carers Information & Consent



Child Surveys — paper or online

Parents or carers need to give written consent before a child is given a survey to complete.

leadersurvey.ncls.au



Leader Survey flyer



Leader Surveys — paper or online



Leader Survey Collection Envelope



Leaders in multi-site churches only need to complete one Leader Survey.

newchurches.ncls.au

*This survey is only for churches that started from 2011 onward.



New Churches Survey — paper or online

SET UP MyNCLS ADMIN ACCOUNT

my.ncls.au

Church survey coordinators are given an online account called “**MyNCLS Admin**” to administer the survey and to view past and future results. Go to **my.ncls.au**

Account Email: [CoordinatorEmailAddress]
NCLSAdminKey: [AdminKey]

Already registered? Log in at my.ncls.au using the email address shown above.

Not yet registered? If you do not yet have a MyNCLS account, keep your NCLS Admin Key to link your church results to your account in the future. (NCLS Research will provide more information and support for this).

 **REMIND** We recommend sending one or more reminders to people completing online surveys during your Survey Period. For reminder template text see 2026ncls.org.au/administer

RETURN COMPLETED PAPER SURVEYS

1. Collect all completed survey items from worship services or activities at all your church sites.
2. Check the Checklist Coversheet has been completed (one per participating church site). Place on top of your other surveys.
3. Pack completed surveys back into the original Postpack or get suitable packaging. If you have not already returned the Church Activities Survey (one per site), please also include it.
4. Stick the return address label to NCLS Research on the Postpack.

5. Post back to: **NCLS Research**
Locked Bag 5010
Kingsgrove NSW 2208

Thank you for covering return postage costs.

Place in the Collection Envelope(s) and seal:

- ☐ Attender Surveys
- ☐ Child Surveys
- ☐ Attender Reply Slips
- ☐ Checklist(s) Coversheet

In sealed Leader Envelopes:

- ☐ Leader Surveys
- ☐ Leader Reply Slips
- ☐ New Churches Survey

Then place all in the Postpack to return. *Unused survey forms can also be returned.*

USED ONLINE SURVEYS ONLY? FINISH WITH ONLINE CHECKLIST

If your church used online surveys only, then once your Survey Period is closed, please let us know by completing this short online form. This will help us start to process your results.

checklist.ncls.au

Note: For NCLS Research to provide confidential and credible results we require a minimum return of 10 survey forms from adult attenders, or from child attenders (if you used these optional surveys).

A Church Life Profile or other Profiles cannot be produced for churches that return less than 10 forms. However all your responses will be added to wider reports for your denomination and in national reports.

THANK you!

Your church results will be available from late 2026.

For being part of the
National Church Life Survey

Keep in touch



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ncls.org.au/subscribe



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