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Abstract

This article marks the 41st year of including statistical information on World Christianity and mission in the IBMR. This year's focus is geographical, covering major religious trends in Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America, Northern America, and Oceania over the last 125 years. This year's article includes the Middle East, which is formed by countries in Northern Africa and Western Asia. In 2025, the Global South is home to 69% of all Christians in the world, projected to reach 78% by 2050. Africa became the continent with the most Christians in 2018, passing Latin America (which passed Europe in 2014).

Keywords

World Christianity, global Christianity, mission, statistics, demography, Africa, Asia, Middle East, Europe, Latin America, North America, Oceania

In 1985 David B. Barrett produced the first statistical table in this series in the January issue of the *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*. He produced this table three years after publishing his comprehensive and highly popular *World Christian Encyclopedia* (Oxford University Press, 1982; 2nd ed., 2001; 3rd ed., Edinburgh University Press, 2019). Its purpose was to lay out, in summary form, an annual update of the most significant global and regional statistics relevant to understanding the current status of global Christianity.¹ The first three tables in this article continue the

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Table 1. Global Population, Global Cities, and Urban Mission, 1900–2050.

	1900	1970	2000	2020	% p.a.*	mid-2025	2050
Global Population							
Total population	1,619,625,000	3,695,390,000	6,148,899,000	7,840,953,000	0.88	8,191,988,000	9,709,492,000
Adult population (over 15)	1,073,646,000	2,302,129,000	4,290,579,000	5,827,214,000	1.46	6,264,023,000	7,699,095,000
Adults, % literate	27.6	63.8	76.7	84.1	0.02	84.2	88.0
Urban population (%)	14.4	36.5	46.7	56.1	1.06	59.1	68.0
Global urban population	232,695,000	1,347,106,000	2,869,247,000	4,397,965,000	1.95	4,843,655,000	6,604,545,000
Cities over 1 million	20	145	371	579	2.43	653	950
Under 50% Christian	5	65	226	345	2.80	396	500

*Column % p.a. trend. Average annual rate of change, 2020–2025, as % per year.

Sources: *World Population Prospects: The 2022 Revision* (New York: United Nations, 2022); *World Urbanization Prospects: The 2018 Revision* (New York: United Nations, 2018); UNESCO Institute for Statistics (2005–13); and Gina A. Zurlo and Todd M. Johnson, eds., *World Christian Database* (Leiden: Brill, accessed August 2024).

Table 2. Global Religion, 1900–2050.

Global Religion	1900	1970	2000	2020	% p.a.*	mid-2025	2050
Religious diversity ¹	2.7	4.3	4.5	4.4	-0.04	4.4	4.4
Religionists	1,616,370,000	2,986,913,000	5,365,962,000	6,942,770,000	0.97	7,285,421,000	8,842,489,000
Christians	558,346,000	1,216,131,000	1,987,905,000	2,519,505,000	0.98	2,645,317,000	3,312,204,000
Muslims	200,301,000	574,379,000	1,299,602,000	1,897,880,000	1.67	2,061,718,000	2,860,760,000
Hindus	202,976,000	467,434,000	843,615,000	1,090,611,000	0.70	1,129,155,000	1,245,725,000
Buddhists	126,946,000	233,383,000	448,423,000	531,050,000	0.27	538,173,000	533,434,000
Chinese folk-religionists	379,974,000	238,188,000	420,817,000	453,250,000	-0.22	448,283,000	392,978,000
Ethnoreligionists	117,313,000	171,476,000	225,753,000	288,156,000	0.46	294,801,000	306,733,000
New Religionists	5,986,000	39,557,000	63,579,000	67,463,000	0.07	67,690,000	65,329,000
Sikhs	2,962,000	10,668,000	21,605,000	29,254,000	1.45	31,433,000	41,842,000
Jews	11,725,000	13,959,000	12,948,000	14,800,000	0.74	15,357,000	17,942,000
Nonreligionists	3,255,000	708,478,000	782,937,000	898,183,000	0.19	906,567,000	867,003,000
Agnostics	3,028,000	543,321,000	645,052,000	751,227,000	0.26	761,092,000	733,956,000
Atheists	226,000	165,156,000	137,885,000	146,957,000	-0.20	145,475,000	133,047,000

Note: Religions do not add up to the total because religions with fewer adherents are not listed.

¹(0–10, 10=most diverse). The Religious Diversity Index methodology is described in Todd M. Johnson and Brian J. Grim, *The World's Religions in Figures* (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell), ch. 3.

*Column % p.a. trend. Average annual rate of change, 2020–2025, as % per year.

Source: Gina A. Zurlo and Todd M. Johnson, eds., *World Christian Database* (Leiden: Brill, accessed August 2024).

Table 3. Global Christianity by Tradition, 1900–2050.

	1900	1970	2000	2020	% p.a.*	mid-2025	2050
Total Christians, % of world	34.5	32.9	32.3	32.1	0.10	32.3	34.1
Affiliated Christians	522,440,000	1,112,204,000	1,886,371,000	2,383,436,000	0.91	2,493,823,000	3,161,041,000
Catholics	265,756,000	656,431,000	1,024,932,000	1,235,323,000	0.60	1,272,775,000	1,480,094,000
Protestants ¹	134,196,000	251,902,000	429,289,000	586,193,000	1.42	628,862,000	864,317,000
Independents	8,859,000	89,480,000	284,420,000	384,757,000	1.25	409,425,000	610,002,000
African	40,000	16,782,000	71,897,000	114,252,000	1.88	125,394,000	199,192,000
Asian	1,906,000	15,370,000	95,856,000	122,619,000	1.06	129,233,000	170,425,000
European	185,000	6,571,000	13,640,000	18,473,000	1.31	19,717,000	30,610,000
Latin American	33,000	8,963,000	27,949,000	42,889,000	1.42	46,014,000	81,293,000
Northern American	6,673,000	41,438,000	74,339,000	85,386,000	0.57	87,838,000	126,669,000
Oceanian	22,000	356,000	740,000	1,138,000	1.53	1,228,000	1,813,000
Orthodox	116,199,000	139,037,000	257,602,000	290,107,000	0.10	291,580,000	317,365,000
Unaffiliated Christians	35,906,000	103,927,000	101,533,000	136,069,000	2.17	151,494,000	151,163,000
Evangelicals ²	80,912,000	108,841,000	270,707,000	390,532,000	1.47	420,040,000	620,970,000
Pentecostals/Charismatics ³	981,000	57,631,000	442,643,000	623,844,000	1.25	663,863,000	1,031,503,000
Denominations	2,000	13,100	31,000	44,700	2.27	50,000	64,000
Congregations	400,000	1,330,000	3,000,000	4,180,000	1.03	4,400,000	5,500,000

Note: Categories below do not add up to affiliated Christians because of double affiliation (between traditions).

¹Including Anglicans. Past tables have listed Anglicans separately.

²Churches and individuals who self-identify as evangelicals by membership in denominations linked to evangelical alliances (e.g., World Evangelical Alliance) or by self-identification in polls.

³Church members involved in the Pentecostal/Charismatic/Independent Charismatic renewal in the Holy Spirit, also known collectively as “Renewalists.”

*Column % p.a. trend. Average annual rate of change, 2020–2025, as % per year.

Source: Gina A. Zurlo and Todd M. Johnson, eds., *World Christian Database* (Leiden: Brill, accessed August 2024).

tradition of the series, presenting the most recent overview of statistics related to World Christianity and mission. The data appear in comparative perspective and offer estimates for the years 1900, 1970, 2000, 2020, 2025, and 2050. Each set of tables since 1985 has provided a brief commentary to help situate the data, provide further context, and elaborate on implications of the data.

This article represents the 41st year of providing annual statistics in the *International Bulletin of Mission Research*. This year the article takes a geographic perspective on Christian trends – growth, decline, stasis – by focusing on continents as defined by the United Nations, plus the Middle East.² Table 4 provides continental figures for Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America, Northern America, and Oceania. The Middle East is also included, which is formed by countries in Northern Africa and Western Asia.³ In addition, Table 5 provides additional information regarding scriptures, Gospel access, and Christian finance.

In the early 21st century, essential demographic features of World Christianity are found in its diverse forms in the regions of the world. In 1900, 82% of all Christians lived in the Global North, in the areas of “Christendom” in Europe and Northern America. During the 20th century, Christian affiliation decreased in the Global North and increased substantially in the Global South. By 1970, the percentage of all Christians in the Global North had fallen to 57%. Sometime around 1980, it declined below the 50% mark.⁴ In 2025, 69% of all Christians worldwide lived in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and Oceania, projected to reach 78% by 2050. Africa became the continent with the most Christians in 2018, passing Latin America (which passed Europe in 2014). At the same time, Christianity in the Middle East declined from 12.7% of the population in 1900 to 4% in 2025, with continued uncertainty for the future.

Africa

Over the past 125 years, Africa has experienced the most dramatic demographic religious transformation of any continent.⁵ In 1900, Africa’s religious demographics were divided by mostly traditional religions in the south (62.5 million) and Islam in the north (35 million), with 9.6 million Christians on the whole continent. By 2025, Christianity had grown to more than 754 million (49.3%), while Islam grew to 636 million (41.6%). Practitioners of African Traditional Religion dropped from 58% in 1900 to about 8% by 2025. Today’s presence of ethnic religionists is a somewhat unexpected development, as many in the early 20th century predicted the complete disappearance of these traditional religions within a generation. Africa’s overall population grew tremendously in the 20th century, with the population expected to grow to 2.5 billion by 2050. Christianity does not have a monolithic presence in Africa. Not only are all four major traditions (Catholics, Independents, Orthodox, Protestants) substantially represented, but thousands of denominations have grown from African soil, most of which are Independent – the most diverse and fastest-growing movement within Christianity. The largest denominations are still Catholic, Orthodox, and Anglican, but Independent churches are similarly visible and active in society. African Christians increasingly are providing leadership in global Christian forums both within and across major Christian traditions and in Africa and the West.

Table 4. Christians by Continent and Christian Mission and Evangelization, 1900–2050.

	1900	1970	2000	2020	% p.a.*	mid-2025	2050
Christians by Continent							
Global North	459,901,000	692,870,000	816,126,000	840,612,000	-0.41	823,714,000	729,541,000
Europe (including Russia; 4 regions)	380,647,000	490,507,000	562,062,000	566,985,000	-0.54	551,934,000	473,649,000
Northern America (1 region)	79,254,000	202,363,000	254,063,000	273,627,000	-0.14	271,779,000	255,892,000
Global South	98,445,000	523,261,000	1,171,779,000	1,678,893,000	1.65	1,821,603,000	2,582,663,000
Africa (5 regions)	9,640,000	137,866,000	383,463,000	663,664,000	2.59	754,786,000	1,288,574,000
Asia (5 regions)	21,966,000	97,390,000	281,094,000	385,052,000	1.60	416,786,000	581,869,000
Latin America (3 regions)	62,002,000	269,960,000	482,856,000	600,589,000	0.64	620,116,000	678,906,000
Oceania (4 regions)	4,837,000	18,045,000	24,366,000	29,589,000	0.59	30,472,000	33,314,000
Percent of all Christians in the Global South	17.6	43.0	58.9	66.6	0.66	68.9	78.0
Middle East ¹	5,803,000	8,428,000	15,403,000	19,546,000	0.85	20,386,000	25,662,000
Christian percent of Middle East population	12.7	6.1	5.0	4.2	-0.48	4.1	4.0
Christian Mission							
National workers (citizens)	2,100,000	4,600,000	10,900,000	13,000,000	0.91	13,600,000	17,000,000
Foreign missionaries	62,000	240,000	420,000	425,000	1.15	450,000	600,000
Christian martyrs per 10 years ²	344,000	3,770,000	1,600,000	900,000	0.00	900,000	1,000,000
% in Christian countries ³	95.0	75.8	61.0	51.9	-0.17	51.5	49.4
Non-Christians who know a Christian (%)	5.3	13.4	17.4	18.3	0.30	18.6	20.0

¹Middle East includes Bahrain, Cyprus, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Türkiye, United Arab Emirates, and Yemen

²Ten-year total for decade ending in the given year. World totals of current long-term trend. See David B. Barrett and Todd M. Johnson, *World Christian Trends* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 2001), pt. 4, "Martyrology."

³Percentage of all Christians living in countries $\geq 80\%$ Christian.

*Column % p.a. trend. Average annual rate of change, 2020–2025, as % per year.

Source: Gina A. Zurlo and Todd M. Johnson, eds., *World Christian Database* (Leiden: Brill, accessed August 2024).

Table 5. Scriptures, Gospel Access, and Christian Finance, 1900–2050.

	1900	1970	2000	2020	% p.a.*	mid-2025	2050
Languages with New Testament translations	228	582	1,454	2,257	2.07	2,500	4,200
Population without gospel access ¹	879,998,000	1,655,125,000	1,849,747,000	2,167,025,000	0.42	2,213,003,000	2,772,731,000
No gospel access as % of world population	54.3	44.8	30.1	27.6	-0.45	27.0	28.6
Christian Finance (in US\$, per year)							
Personal income of Christians	270 billion	4,100 billion	18,000 billion	56,470 billion	5.56	74,000 billion	178,000 billion
Giving to Christian causes	8 billion	70 billion	320 billion	1,032 billion	6.03	1,383 billion	5,200 billion
Ecclesiastical crime ²	300,000	5,000,000	19 billion	67 billion	6.53	92 billion	390 billion

¹Defined in *World Christian Trends*, pt. 25, "Macroevangelistics." The new term "Population without gospel access" is synonymous with "Unevangelized population" from past tables.

²Amounts embezzled by top custodians of Christian monies (US dollar equivalents, per year).

A new statistic shows progress in the number of languages with New Testament translations. Two scripture statistics have been retired from the table: Bibles printed per year; Bible density (copies in place).

Three finance statistics have been retired from the table: Churches' income; Parachurch and institutional income; Income of global foreign missions.

*Column % p.a. trend. Average annual rate of change, 2020–2025, as % per year.

Source: Gina A. Zurlo and Todd M. Johnson, eds., *World Christian Database* (Leiden: Brill, accessed August 2024).

Asia

Asia has experienced profound changes in its religious makeup since the beginning of the 20th century.⁶ Chinese folk-religionists and Buddhists, who made up over 50% of Asia's population in 1900, fell to 20% by 2025. Practitioners of traditional religions also fell slowly over the century, from 5.3% of Asia's population in 1900 to 3.5% in 2025. At the same time, the Hindu population and total share grew, though Hindus are still concentrated on the Indian subcontinent. Muslims grew at a somewhat faster pace and displaced Chinese folk-religionists as the continent's largest religion, with 28.3% of the population in 2025. Christians grew faster than the general population over the 20th century and represent 8.7% of Asia's population in 2025. In the 19th and early 20th centuries, Asia was an important destination of Western missionaries, many who believed in the superiority of Asian societies and their eventual acceptance of Christianity and Western civilization. Contrary to most expectations, however, Asia became the most nonreligious continent in the 20th century. This was due largely to the spread of Communist regimes whose policies prohibited religions and propagated atheistic ideology. Agnostics and atheists grew the fastest, averaging nearly 10% per year over the entire century. In 1900, the nonreligious numbered fewer than 55,000 but by 2025 more than 645 million, just over 13% of Asia's population. Changes within Asian Christianity have been equally profound. The majority of Christians in 1900 were Catholic and Orthodox, mainly in Western Asia, the Indian subcontinent and the Philippines. By 2025 the balance had shifted to Independent churches, especially house churches in China. Anglicans (absorbed into the Protestant union churches in India and Pakistan) have declined in proportion to the population, whereas Orthodox churches have consistently decreased through immigration to the West and the North. Catholics and Protestants have fared better, as their mission activities have been effective in encouraging indigenous populations to accept Christianity. The fastest current growth rates are found in South Asia and Southeastern Asia. Mongolia, Nepal, and Cambodia are notable for significant Christian growth since 1990 and represent some of the newest expressions of Christianity in the world.

Middle East

The "Middle East" is not technically a separate United Nations region, but it is included in this analysis because of its significance in world Christianity. Christians were 12.7% of the region's population in 1900 but only 4.1% in 2025, and it is likely that they will represent 4.0% or less of the population by 2050, though it is difficult to make future projections in this region.⁷ Muslims have grown from 86% in 1900 to 92.3% in 2025, projected to stabilize at 92.1% by 2050. Projections to 2050 are based on current Christian emigration trends and are particularly apparent in Iraq and Syria. If the political, economic and/or social conditions worsen in any of these countries, the numbers of Christians remaining in 2050 could be much lower. While many Middle Eastern countries experienced significant declines in their Christian

percentages of their populations between 1900 and 2025, Lebanon dropped an astounding 43 percentage points, largely due to three factors: first, lower birth rates, a consequence of Christians' comparatively higher economic status; second, immigration to the United States, Australia and various European countries, especially during the wars from 1975 to 1990; and third, Christians' decreasing influence in national affairs. Losses in many Christian communities were already well underway by 1970. By 2050, the Christian presence in these countries is expected to continue declining in percentage as well as, for most countries, in actual population. Of particular concern is Syria, where the civil war has now forced one million refugees into neighboring Lebanon, including large numbers of Christians. What began as internal displacement has now evolved into international migration. While some of this might be temporary, it is likely that many Christians will never return.

At the same time, six Middle Eastern countries have had massive influxes of Christians, most notably since 1970. These include Qatar, Kuwait, United Arab Emirates (UAE), Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, and Oman. Qatar and Kuwait saw the greatest percentage increase, each over 10 percentage points. These Christians are mostly migrants from the Philippines, South Korea and other countries working in oil production, construction, domestic tasks and other jobs in the service industry. Orthodox Christians are the largest major Christian tradition in the Middle East. The countries with the most Orthodox Christians are Egypt (Coptic), Cyprus (Greek) and Syria (Armenian, Greek and Syrian), and each of these communities dates back at least 17 centuries. Emigration, however, has profoundly affected the Orthodox churches, with their share of the regional population falling from 11.1% in 1900 to only 2.4% in 2025, and likely to 2.3% or less by 2050.

Europe

Europe became substantially more diverse in its religious makeup over the course of the 20th century.⁸ In 1900 nearly 95% of Europe's population professed some form of Christianity; in 2025 the continent is 74.5% Christian. Agnostics and atheists made the most numeric gains after Christians and together make up more than 17% of Europe's population (from 0.4% in 1900). The other great increases were made by Muslims, whose 9 million members in 1900 grew to more than 53 million by 2025, largely through migration from Northern Africa and Western Asia. At the same time, Jews declined from 2.4% to 0.2% as a result of the Holocaust and emigration, especially to Israel and the United States. The religious makeup of Europe has been changing due to the arrival of asylum seekers, refugees, and other kinds of migrants from the Middle East, South and Southeast Asia, Africa and elsewhere, causing an increase in the number of Muslims, Hindus and Buddhists. The dominance of White (Christian) identity has been openly challenged, testing Europe's progressive values. Several countries experienced a spike in xenophobia at the height of the refugee crisis in 2015, which has disproportionately impacted Muslims.

As both the number of Christians and their share of the European population has been steadily declining, its composition also has been changing. First, although Catholics and

Orthodox still make up under 80% of all Christians in Europe, Independents are the fastest-growing tradition both over the century and between 2000 and 2025. Second, immigration has impacted Christian communities; some of the largest congregations in Europe today are ethnic minority churches. In continental Europe and its four regions, Christianity is declining largely through religious switching, mainly to agnosticism and atheism as evidence of secularization, and deaths, while it is increasing through births (those born into Christian families) and immigration. Emigration plays only a small role in Christianity's decline, while conversions appear to do little to invigorate Christianity.

Latin America

At first glance, the religious makeup of Latin America appears to have changed very little over the last 125 years.⁹ In 1900 the population was 95.2% Christian; in 2025 it is 91.9% Christian. However, several other religions have made significant gains and increased their percentage shares of the population. First, there has been growth of agnostics and atheists (the nonreligious); in 1900 they were only 0.6% and less than 0.02% of the population, respectively, but in 2025 have reached 3.7% and 0.5%. Second, Spiritism has undergone somewhat of a revival in this period, especially in Brazil; overall, Spiritists grew from 0.4% to 2.2% of the population of Latin America. Third, there was sudden and unanticipated growth in the number of Jews in the middle of the 20th century as a result of emigration from Europe in the wake of the Holocaust. Today, there are approximately 400,000 Jews in Latin America, mostly in Argentina, Mexico, and Brazil, though these populations are slowly decreasing as many continue to immigrate to the United States, Israel and Spain. Fourth, the number of Muslims has grown rapidly through immigration, reaching 1.9 million by 2025, though there exist growing Latino/a Muslim communities in Argentina and Brazil. Finally, Buddhists, Hindus, Chinese folk-religionists and others have grown enough over the period to increase their percentage shares of the population.

Although the overall percentage of Christians changed little in the 20th century, the internal composition of Christianity has changed significantly. Catholics remain the largest tradition, but Protestants (*evangélicos*) and Independents have been rapidly increasing their shares of Christianity in the continent. This includes Protestant denominations such as Presbyterians in Mexico and Brethren in Honduras, Pentecostal groups such as God is Love in Brazil and Independent house churches such as the People of God in Paraguay and Elim churches in El Salvador. Other Independent churches have also been growing rapidly, especially the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and Jehovah's Witnesses in Brazil and Mexico. Finally, the Orthodox community has also experienced growth through immigration (for example, Palestinians and Greeks to Chile) or in mass movements from Catholic churches (e.g. Guatemala).

North America

Religion in Northern America changed substantially over the 20th century.¹⁰ The continent was 97.1% Christian in 1900 and fell to 70.9% by 2025. Two main trends over

the century were responsible for this decline. First, various forms of secularization have increased the number of nonreligious (atheists and agnostics) on the continent, who grew from just over one million in 1900 to more than 84 million in 2025. Most are Christians who became agnostics; a smaller number became atheists. Canada was hit the hardest by this trend, with its Christian percentage dropping more than 30 percentage points in 125 years (from 98% to 60.3%). A second trend is the impact of immigration. Large numbers of Muslims, Buddhists, and Hindus moved to Northern America, especially in the latter half of the 20th century. Muslims grew to nearly seven million, Buddhists to over five million and Hindus to 2.3 million. At the same time, smaller religious communities increased rapidly, many growing at two or three times general population growth rates per year by the end of the century.

Immigration also plays a significant role in the changing demographics of Christianity. The vast majority of immigrants coming to the United States, for example, are Christians from Latin America, Asia and Africa. Christianity in Northern America has declined in percentage and has experienced profound changes in its internal composition. Protestants, who were the majority in 1900, have declined dramatically as a proportion of all Christians (falling from over 50% to only 20%). Catholics have been increasing, largely the result of immigrants from Latin America, while Independents have made the largest gains, becoming the second largest of the Christian traditions in the region in the latter part of the 20th century. The largest such group is the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, headquartered in Salt Lake City, Utah, in the USA. Northern American Independent churches often arose out of dissatisfaction with other churches, usually stemming from disagreements over doctrine. Historical drivers included the Pentecostal/Charismatic movement, the fundamentalist/modernist controversy and what constitutes the “true church,” while more recent motivators include differences over women’s rights and roles in the church, abortion, and same-sex relations.

Oceania

Oceania was 77.4% Christian in 1900, dropping to 65.3% by 2025. This change, however, masks significant changes within its regions.¹¹ First, Melanesia experienced a profound transformation; in 1900 the region was only 15% Christian, whereas in 2025 it is over 92% Christian. In particular, Papua New Guinea has seen tremendous change over the century, moving from majority traditional religions to Christianity – now 95% Christian, though many tend to combine traditional indigenous beliefs with Christian practices. Surprisingly, much of this growth occurred after Papua New Guinea achieved its independence from Australia (a predominantly Christian nation) in 1975. Australia/New Zealand has fallen from almost 97% Christian to 53% Christian. Following the pattern of Europe and Northern America, Oceania has seen a marked increase in the number of nonreligious (atheists and agnostics), growing from 0.7% in 1900 to 24.3% in 2025, although the vast majority are found in Australia and New Zealand. At the same time, ethnic religionists have plummeted from 21% in 1900 to only 1% of the population in 2025. Other religions have increased in the same

period, mainly the result of Asian immigration to Australia. Buddhists, Muslims, and Hindus in Oceania now number at least 900,000 each. Micronesia also has seen an increase in Christian adherence since 1900, from 76% to 93%.

The internal composition of Christianity also changed considerably over the past 125 years. The majority of Christians in Oceania were Protestant in 1900, reflecting, in part, the earliest missionary endeavors of Anglicans, Methodists, Presbyterians, and Lutherans. By 2025, Catholics and Independents have significantly increased their proportions, while Protestants make up 38% of all Christians. The largest denominations in the continent represent a variety of Catholic, Protestant (including Anglican) and Orthodox groups. Many island nations received Christianity via missionaries from other nations in the Pacific, such as from Tahiti.

Conclusion

This brief overview of World Christianity by region illustrates big-picture trends in the growth and decline of Christianity around the world. The most significant trend is the continuing demographic shift of Christianity from North to South, which has implications for theological education, historical awareness, social action, inter-religious relations, the production of theology, gender roles, and more. A regional demographic view also shows how the shift is working itself out in different places around the world and what trends might be anticipated in the future.

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Notes

1. The terms “global Christianity” and “World Christianity” are used interchangeably in this article.
2. In this analysis, the Middle East includes the following 17 countries: Bahrain, Cyprus, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Türkiye, United Arab Emirates, and Yemen.
3. The following regional texts are updated demographics and descriptions from Todd M. Johnson and Gina A. Zurlo, *World Christian Encyclopedia*, 3rd edition, Edinburgh University Press, 2019, pp. 8–19.
4. For North/South estimates from 33-2100 CE, see Johnson and Ross, eds., *Atlas of Global Christianity*, Edinburgh University Press, 2009, p. 51.
5. For recent overviews on Christianity in Africa, see Wanjiru M. Gitau and Mark A. Lamport, eds., *Globalizing Linkages: The Intermingling Story of Christianity in Africa* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2024); Kenneth R. Ross, J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, and Todd M. Johnson, eds. *Christianity in Sub-Saharan Africa* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2017); and Kenneth R. Ross, Mariz Tadros, and Todd M. Johnson, eds. *Christianity in North Africa and West Asia* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2018).

6. For more, see Amos Yong, Mark A. Lamport, and Timothy T.N. Lim, eds. *Uncovering the Pearl: The Hidden Story of Christianity in Asia* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2023); Kenneth R. Ross, Mariz Tadros, and Todd M. Johnson, eds. *Christianity in North Africa and Western Asia* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2018); Kenneth R. Ross, Daniel Jeyaraj, and Todd M. Johnson, eds. *Christianity in South and Central Asia* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2019); and Kenneth R. Ross, Francis Alvarez, and Todd M. Johnson, eds., *Christianity in East and Southeast Asia* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2020).
7. See Todd M. Johnson and Gina A. Zurlo, "Ongoing Exodus: Tracking the Emigration of Christians from the Middle East." *Harvard Journal of Middle Eastern Politics and Policy III (2013–2014):39–49* and Ross, Tadros, and Johnson, eds., *Christianity in North Africa and Western Asia*.
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9. See Keeneth R. Ross, Ana Maria Bidegain, and Todd M. Johnson, eds., *Christianity in Latin America and the Caribbean* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2022) and its Spanish translation, *El Cristianismo en América Latina y el Caribe* (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 2024).
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11. See Upolu Lumā Vaai and Mark A. Lamport, eds., *Restoring Identities: The Contextualizing Story of Christianity in Oceania* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2023); Kenneth R. Ross, Katalina Tahafee-Williams, and Todd M. Johnson, eds., *Christianity in Oceania* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2021).

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