

Churchgoing on the Rise in U.K.

Researchers found that more than a quarter of adults attended church at least once last year, up from 21 percent in 2007

✖ **Feb. 03, 2009** – After years of reported decline, churchgoing is on the rise in the United Kingdom.

More than a quarter of adults in the U.K. attend church at least once a year and 15 percent attend once a month, according to research by the Christian relief and development organization Tearfund.

Last year, roughly 13 percent attended church monthly. And 26 percent of adults, representing some 12.8 million people, attended once a year, up from 21 percent in 2007.

“Our understanding is that more people are attending now than before, even if that is only a couple of times a year rather than every week,” Tearfund chief executive Matthew Frost said in a statement.

“This might mean going to church at one of the high points in their family’s year, such as Christmas or Easter, or attending Sunday services or midweek events. This is of course immensely encouraging, because it shows that people are associating church and a belief in God with hope and joy, and a positive way to spend their time.”

The findings are the result of interviews with 7,000 adults between September 2007 and September 2008 about their churchgoing habits.

Groups showing the biggest increase include 25- to 34-year-olds, whose church attendance jumped from 15 percent in 2007

to 22 percent last year; 65- to 74-year-olds, whose churchgoing rose from 27 percent to 33 percent; and those over age 75, whose attendance increased from 29 percent to 39 percent.

Geographically, the biggest increase was found in Wales, where church attendance doubled from 12 percent to 24 percent. It was followed by southeast England and Scotland, where churchgoing rose from 19 percent to 27 percent in each location; and northwest England, which saw church attendance rise from 21 percent to 28 percent.