

Notes: April 3 2021

Start: 10 AM

Order of service:

1. Meet and Greet
2. Introduction (if new people)
3. Ma Tovv
4. Open in Prayer for service
5. Liturgy – Sh'ma +
6. Announcements
7. Praise and Worship Songs
8. Message
9. Aaronic Blessing
10. Kiddush
11. Oneg

Children's Blessing:

Transliteration: *Ye'simcha Elohim ke-Ephraim ve hee-Menashe*

English: *May God make you like Ephraim and Menashe*

Transliteration: *Ye'simech Elohim ke-Sarah, Rivka, Rachel ve-Leah.*

English: *May God make you like Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel and Leah.*

Introduction: Adonai Chose Avraham and Therefore Isra'el

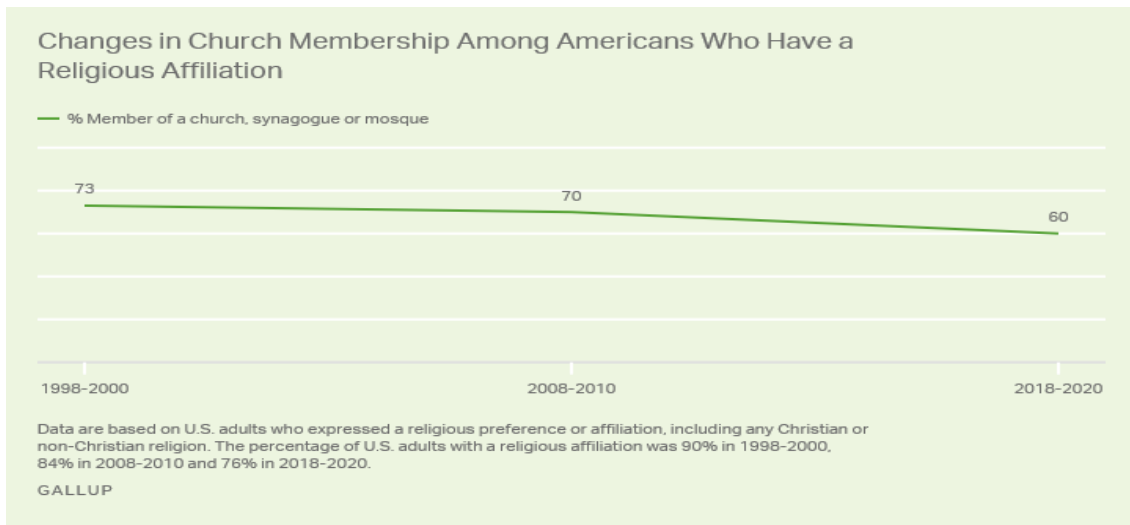
Recent Gallup Poll

Gallup a name that has been around for decades, founded by George Gallup in 1935 set the standard for public opinion polls. Today there are hundreds of companies that administer public opinion polls. Lately we have seen a great deal of bias in polling, in that objectivity in the questioning intended to garner the true temperature of the public has been replaced by subjective questions, infusing bias with the intent of skewing the results in favor of a specific position.

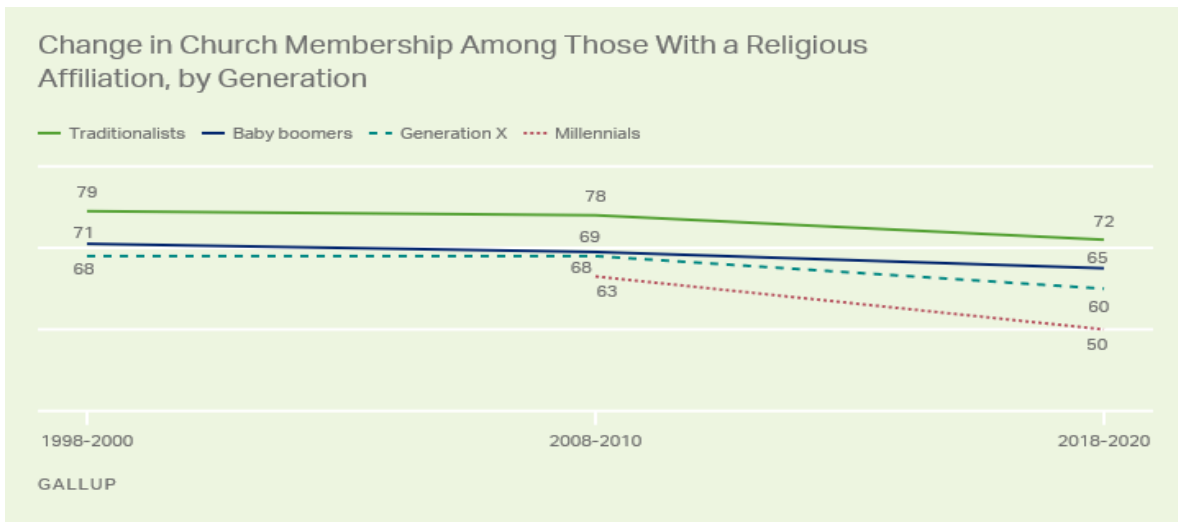
Thus the results I am about to show you are likely not skewed in a specific direction by any organization or entity intending to promote a specific position, but is the stark reality that is occurring now and has been occurring since the beginning of the new millennium.

Show slides...

Slide 1:



Slide 2:



Slide 3:

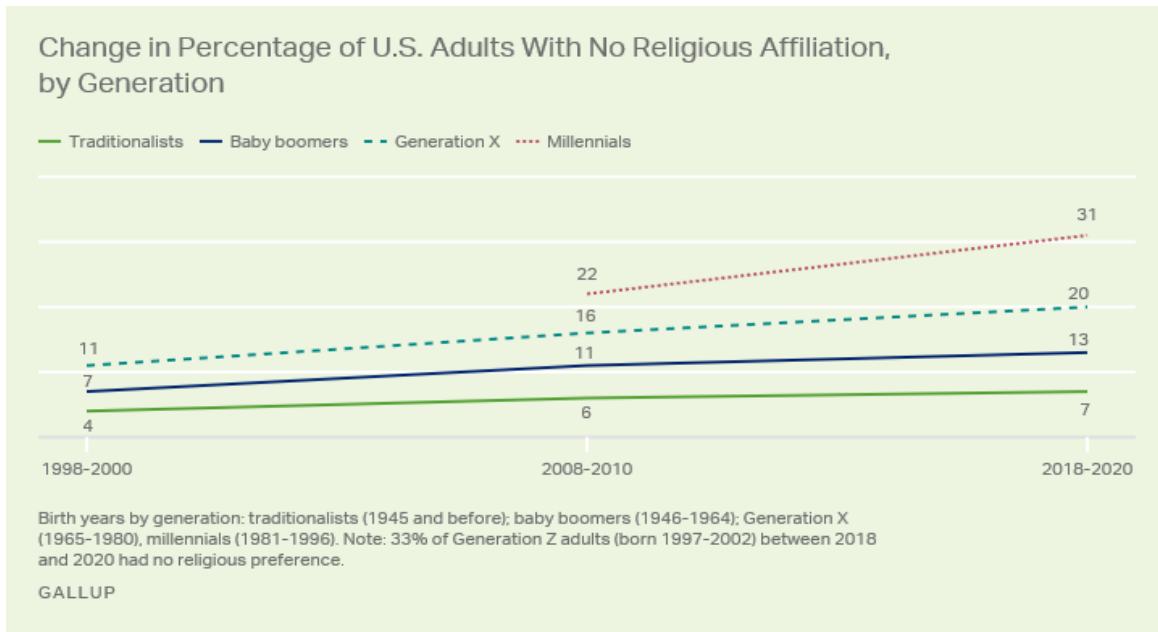
Changes in Church Membership by Generation, Over Time

	1998-2000	2008-2010	2018-2020	Change since 1998-2000
	%	%	%	pct. pts.
Traditionalists (born before 1946)	77	73	66	-11
Baby boomers (born 1946-1964)	67	63	58	-9
Generation X (born 1965-1980)	62	57	50	-12
Millennials (born 1981-1996)	n/a	51	36	n/a

Note: Given that Gallup's polls are based on the 18+ U.S. adult population, the 1980-2000 period would have included only a small proportion of the millennial generation, and the 2018-2020 period includes only a small proportion of Generation Z (born after 1996).

GALLUP

Slide 4:



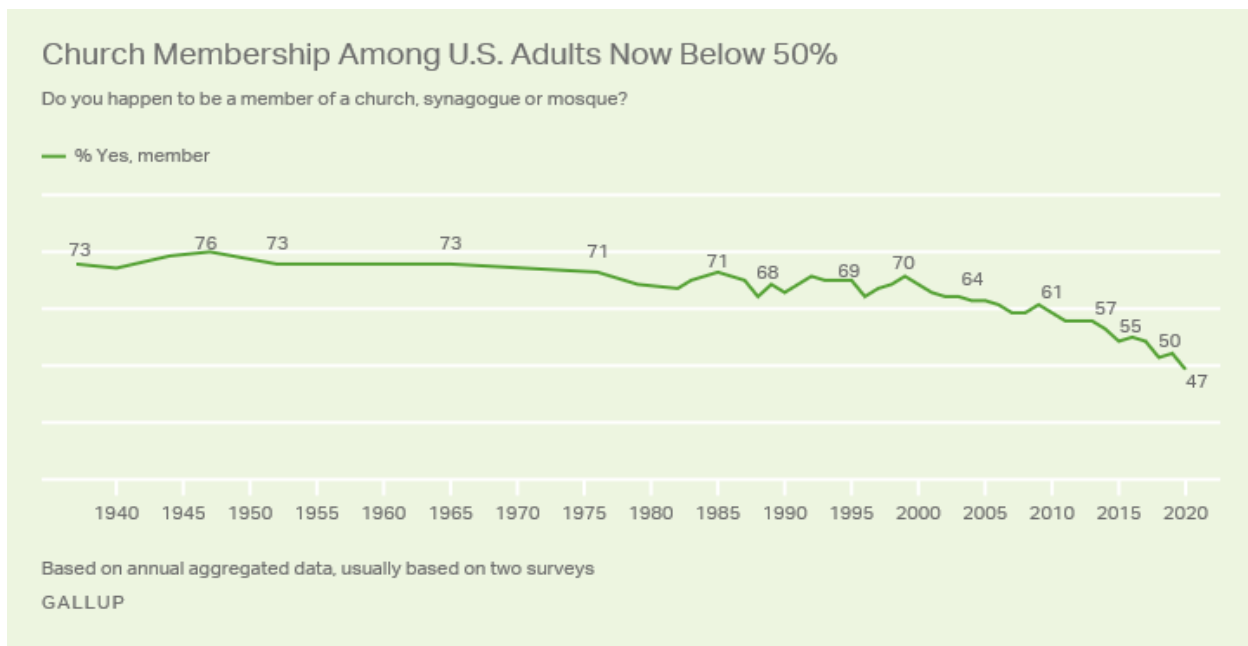
Slide 5:

Changes in Church Membership, by Demographic Subgroup

	1998-2000	2008-2010	2018-2020	Change, 1998-2000 to 2018-2020
	%	%	%	pct. pts.
Men	64	58	46	-18
Women	73	65	53	-20
Non-Hispanic White adults	68	62	52	-16
Non-Hispanic Black adults	78	70	59	-19
College graduate	68	65	54	-14
Not college graduate	69	60	47	-22
Married	71	68	58	-13
Not married	64	55	42	-22
Republican	77	75	65	-12
Independent	59	51	41	-18
Democrat	71	60	46	-25
Conservative	78	73	64	-14
Moderate	66	59	45	-21
Liberal	56	46	35	-21
East	69	58	44	-25
Midwest	72	66	54	-18
South	74	70	58	-16
West	57	51	38	-19
Protestant	73	72	64	-9
Catholic	76	73	58	-18

GALLUP

Slide 6:



The survey and its results identifies church as “church, synagogue or mosque”

The headline - U.S. Church Membership Falls Below Majority for First Time

The primary conclusion drawn by Gallup:

The decline in church membership is primarily a function of the increasing number of Americans who express no religious preference. Over the past two decades, the percentage of Americans who do not identify with any religion that is have no affiliation, no relationship has grown from 8% in 1998-2000 to 13% in 2008-2010 and 21% over the past three years.

A complete presentation regarding the slides can be viewed through the following link:

<https://news.gallup.com/poll/341963/church-membership-falls-below-majority-first-time.aspx>

The word affiliation...what does it mean?

The definition of **affiliation** is the act of connecting or associating with a person or organization.

Another term for an affiliation is a relationship, the state of being connected.

So, when you look at the results again which is more concerning?

Those leaving who had a relationship or those who did not have a relationship.

How can one who identifies as having no affiliation actually leave something that by its very nature requires affiliation, relationship?

I would frame the answer this way.

Those who left the body of Messiah who identified as having an affiliation, were married and thus have since separated from the bridegroom, while others have divorced Messiah, having not only walked away from the affiliation, but from the relationship altogether.

Within this group, you have people who are frustrated and angry with “organized religion” while others simply don't believe anymore. One could even ask, did they every truly believe. But that is a discussion for another day.

Then you have those who left the body of Messiah who identified as having no affiliation, were merely dating. That is they never connected in the first place for whatever reason.

You hear more and more today “I am spiritual, but not religious.”

This identification can take on many nuances, yet in its simplest form the person is saying I believe in God, a god, a higher power...yet, I do not believe in the concept of “organized religion” The “rules” that are being imposed.

It is simply amazing how we have gotten to this point. The history of the body of Messiah poses a reality check for all believers, yet it tends to be this history that is used to justify one's position in leaving either the body of believers or simply and flat out rejecting Yeshua altogether.

I find that what has occurred and is currently happening, that is the falling away of believers is attributable to a lack of true understanding of Adonai's Word. Over the last several weeks, on Tuesday nights I have shared with you the concept of Progressive Christianity, where the emphasis is placed on what has been identified as the “social gospel” ignoring the totality of the gospel message. It is about doing good works, which is part of the Gospel message, but not the totality of what Yeshua conveys.

Luk 10:25 An expert in Torah stood up to try and trap him by asking, "Rabbi, what should I do to obtain eternal life?"

Luk 10:26 But Yeshua said to him, "What is written in the Torah? How do you read it?"

Luk 10:27 He answered, "You are to love Adonai your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength and with all your understanding; and your neighbor as yourself."

Luk 10:28 "That's the right answer," Yeshua said. "Do this, and you will have life."

And the one asking the initial question asks another based on Yeshua's answer...

Luk 10:29 But he, wanting to justify himself, said to Yeshua, "And who is my 'neighbor'?"

Thus Progressive Christianity's focus is placed more on the neighbor than on Adonai. They do not identify Scripture as the Word of God, but as...

- It is the source for the formation of Christian tradition.
- It causes pain and grief while opening wounds to past hurts.
- It offers troubling passages that we may not understand fully. Examples such as God sanctioned genocides and other atrocities.
- We can find a verse in the Bible to justify just about anything.
- Bible has issues based on our expectations.

How many people who have left the body have been taught such things?

So when we look at why you are here and what it is you seek, let me establish a foundation for you.

Our affiliation is not as part of a denomination, but as part of an alliance of other like minded congregations whose identity is based on the affiliation Adonai has established.

That affiliation, that relationship begins with Avraham.

Gen 12:1 Now Adonai said to Avram, "Get yourself out of your country, away from your kinsmen and away from your father's house, and go to the land that I will show you.

Gen 12:2 I will make of you a great nation, I will bless you, and I will make your name great; and you are to be a blessing.

Gen 12:3 I will bless those who bless you, but I will curse anyone who curses you; and by you all the families of the earth will be blessed."

It is through an affiliation established by Adonai with Avraham that is the basis for the affiliation this congregation promotes. It is a relationship Adonai established with Avraham that would lead to the establishment of a nation – Isra'el.

It is through this affiliation that Adonai would operate towards the rest of the world. It would be through this nation, a nation Adonai identifies as...

Deu 7:6 For you are a people set apart as holy for Adonai your God. Adonai your God has chosen you out of all the peoples on the face of the earth to be his own unique treasure.

Deu 7:7 Adonai didn't set his heart on you or choose you because you numbered more than any other people—on the contrary, you were the fewest of all peoples.

Greatness is not always measured by number of people, but in responsibility. That is great responsibility.

It would be through this affiliation, Adonai would reveal Himself.

Exo 34:6 Adonai passed before him and proclaimed: "YUD-HEH-VAV-HEH!!! Yud-Heh-Vav-Heh (יהוה)
[Adonai] is God, merciful and compassionate, slow to anger, rich in grace and truth;

Exo 34:7 showing grace to the thousandth generation, forgiving offenses, crimes and sins; yet not exonerating the guilty, but causing the negative effects of the parents' offenses to be experienced by their children and grandchildren, and even by the third and fourth generations."

He would reveal the requirements of the affiliation, the relationship based on the concept of covenant...

Exo 19:3 Moshe went up to God, and Adonai called to him from the mountain: "Here is what you are to say to the household of Ya'akov, to tell the people of Isra'el:

Exo 19:4 'You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I carried you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself.

Exo 19:5 Now if you will pay careful attention to what I say and keep my covenant, then you will be my own treasure from among all the peoples, for all the earth is mine;

Exo 19:6 and you will be a kingdom of cohanim for me, a nation set apart.' These are the words you are to speak to the people of Isra'el."

The conditional promises (If you will...) made to the children of Isra'el by Adonai, as documented by Scripture. The basis of this covenant would lead to other covenants made by Adonai and with Israel that would further impact the world.

Adonai's affiliation, that is His covenantal relationship was one of exclusivity. It would be through this relationship that Adonai would redeem the world.

Two weeks ago I had shared with you the dynamics of the five offerings Adonai had established in Vayikra (Leviticus) chapters 1 – 5.

I had shared with you two words...

Zevach which is Hebrew for sacrifice and Korban which is Hebrew for offering. There is a distinct difference between the two.

With Zevach, this was truly a sacrifice for the children of Isra'el were take from their own flocks and thus make a sacrifice to Adonai. Their actions were intended to affirm their willingness to listen to Him through His servant Moshe.

The Hebrew word *korbon*, which the Torah uses to describe animal offerings, is not a sacrifice (as in, giving something up), and it is not an offering (as in, bringing a gift to the gods). Rather, *korbon* means "to come near." These help a person get closer to God.

Thus Adonai's desire is for us to come near to Him. He has made a way thorough the sacrificial system that affords us a means to approach, even in spite of that which separates us.

It is through His affiliation with Isra'el that Adonai would make that path known. He instructed the nation to be a light to the other nations.

Isa 42:1 "Here is my servant, whom I support, my chosen one, in whom I take pleasure. I have put my Spirit on him; he will bring justice to the Goyim.

Isa 42:2 He will not cry or shout; no one will hear his voice in the streets.

Isa 42:3 He will not snap off a broken reed or snuff out a smoldering wick. He will bring forth justice according to truth;

Isa 42:4 he will not weaken or be crushed until he has established justice on the earth, and the coastlands wait for his Torah."

Isa 42:5 Thus says God, Adonai, who created the heavens and spread them out, who stretched out the earth and all that grows from it, who gives breath to the people on it and spirit to those who walk on it:

Isa 42:6 "I, Adonai, called you righteously, I took hold of you by the hand, I shaped you and made you a covenant for the people, to be a light for the Goyim,

Isa 42:7 so that you can open blind eyes, free the prisoners from confinement, those living in darkness from the dungeon.

Isa 42:8 I am Adonai; that is my name. I yield my glory to no one else, nor my praise to any idol.

Isa 42:9 See how the former predictions come true; and now new things do I declare—before they sprout I tell you about them."

Some will say this speaks of Yeshua while others will say this is about the nation of Isra'el. My response is yes and yes. It is about the nation for which Messiah, the epitome, that is the perfect example of the nation, the representation and fulfillment of the covenantal relationship Adonai made with Avram, promising a nation and that through that nation all the families of the earth would be blessed...blessed with the gift of Messiah Yeshua.

To say that one is unaffiliated is to say that one does not have a relationship, thus no foundation. Thus, the one's

who identify as being "spiritual but not religious" lack a foundation to their faith. It opens the door to the "many paths" approach to God for which we know is a lie and thus a deception.

Joh 14:6 Yeshua said, "I AM the Way—and the Truth and the Life; no one comes to the Father except through me.

Further, we know that the gate is narrow, not broad...

Mat 7:13 "Go in through the narrow gate; for the gate that leads to destruction is wide and the road broad, and many travel it;

Mat 7:14 but it is a narrow gate and a hard road that leads to life, and only a few find it.

This is not the world vs. the believer but is a warning to the believer that not all that is conveyed is true. We know that there will be those who claim to have an affiliation, a relationship with Adona, yet it is their intent to deceive those with an affiliation, a relationship with Adonai...

Mat 7:15 "Beware of the false prophets! They come to you wearing sheep's clothing, but underneath they are hungry wolves!

Mat 7:16 You will recognize them by their fruit. Can people pick grapes from thorn bushes, or figs from thistles?

Mat 7:17 Likewise, every healthy tree produces good fruit, but a poor tree produces bad fruit.

Mat 7:18 A healthy tree cannot bear bad fruit, or a poor tree good fruit.

Mat 7:19 Any tree that does not produce good fruit is cut down and thrown in the fire!

Mat 7:20 So you will recognize them by their fruit.

The deception is more dangerous from within the body of Messiah, those who claim affiliation, who claim to have a relationship with Adonai, who call Yeshua Lord, than any external deception. Why? Because you have put your faith, your trust in those who identify as being led by Adonai, yet they are wolves disguised as sheep.

Deception is one thing, deception and pride is something else...

Pro 11:2 First comes pride, then disgrace; but with the humble is wisdom.

Pro 11:3 The integrity of the upright guides them, but the duplicity of the treacherous destroys them.

Pro 16:16 How much better than gold it is to gain wisdom! Yes, rather than money, choose to gain understanding.

Pro 16:17 Avoiding evil is the highway of the upright; he who watches his step preserves his life.

Pro 16:18 Pride goes before destruction, and arrogance before failure.

Pro 16:19 Better to be humble among the poor than share the spoil with the proud.

Pro 16:20 He who has skill in a matter will succeed; he who trusts in Adonai will be happy.

The pride, the ignorance conveys that I will have a relationship with Adonai, but only on my terms. "I am spiritual but not religious" when in reality Adonai does not negotiate, He does not bargain, nor do we see this in Yeshua.

Joh 14:21 Whoever has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me, and the one who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and reveal myself to him."

We do not establish the conditions of the relationship...Adonai does. To think otherwise is to be greatly misled. To pick and choose what you consider to be sufficient is another deception. Justifying what you consider to be sufficient is in essence saying that your wisdom is greater than that of Adonai.

Job 41:7 "His pride is his rows of scales, tightly sealed together—

Job 41:8 one is so close to the next that no air can come between them;

Job 41:9 they are stuck one to another, interlocked and impervious.

Isa 2:12 Yes, Adonai-Tzva'ot has a day in store for all who are proud and lofty, for all who are lifted high to be humiliated;

Isa 2:13 for all cedars of the L'vanon that are high and lifted up, for all the oaks of the Bashan;

Isa 2:14 for all the high mountains, for all the hills that are lifted up;

Isa 2:15 for every high tower, for every fortified wall;

Isa 2:16 for every "Tarshish" ship, for every luxurious vessel.

Isa 2:17 The pride of man will be bowed down, the arrogance of men will be humiliated, and when that day comes, Adonai alone will be exalted.

Ultimately, what applies to us is what our responsibility of the relationship is. To ignore any aspect that you can do is rewriting what Adonai has established.

Affiliation is to be in a defined relationship that offers purpose.

To be unaffiliated is to have no relationship, no definition, no structure, no purpose, only excuses. Is there any reason that this is the primary cause as concluded by Gallup regarding the decline in affiliation, the decline in relationship?

We are in the midst of the great apostasy.

And it will only accelerate.

You have seen the decline in affiliation in Europe to where the revivals of the 18th century are lost to history. Identified as being post-Christian, Europe is but the first wave to which it appears that this nation is the second wave.

In contrast, other countries that are experiencing growth will eventually follow the lead of Europe and America because it will lead to the Day of the Lord...the Return of Yeshua...

2Th 2:1 But in connection with the coming of our Lord Yeshua the Messiah and our gathering together to meet him, we ask you, brothers,

2Th 2:2 not to be easily shaken in your thinking or anxious because of a spirit or a spoken message or a letter supposedly from us claiming that the Day of the Lord has already come.

2Th 2:3 Don't let anyone deceive you in any way. For the Day will not come until after the Apostasy has come and the man who separates himself from Torah has been revealed, the one destined for doom.

2Th 2:13 But we have to keep thanking God for you always, brothers whom the Lord loves, because God chose you as firstfruits for deliverance by giving you the holiness that has its origin in the Spirit and the faithfulness that has its origin in the truth.

2Th 2:14 He called you to this through our Good News, so that you could have the glory of our Lord Yeshua the Messiah.

2Th 2:15 Therefore, brothers, stand firm; and hold to the traditions you were taught by us, whether we spoke them or wrote them in a letter.

2Th 2:16 And may our Lord Yeshua the Messiah himself and God our Father, who has loved us and by his grace given us eternal comfort and a good hope,

2Th 2:17 comfort your hearts and strengthen you in every good word and deed.

Beth Messiah congregation recently introduced their new Rabbi for which one presented the congregation as one of the largest in our alliance. Approximately 400 likeminded Jews and Gentiles have embraced Yeshua as the Jewish Messiah. The congregation resides in Houston, Tx, a city of 2.3 million people. The congregation represents 0.017% of the cities population. Some would see this as being insignificant, while I see this as an enormous opportunity for growth.

Likewise our market is nowhere near saturated either. Greater Portland comprising approximately 270K people, our congregation represents only 0.0185% of the population.