

NEWS RELEASE

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New online survey helps Christians define their faith

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WATERLOO, ON. — If you identify yourself as Christian, what kind of Christian are you? That's the question being asked by researchers in an online survey designed to give participants personalized insight into their faith.

The Rev. Marsha Cutting of the Waterloo Lutheran Seminary heads a team of researchers from Wilfrid Laurier University, Liberty University and Boston University in developing the research instrument, called the Inclusive Christian Scale.

After responding to questions about their faith, participants will receive a score showing where their beliefs lie across six different emphases that an individual Christian might have: Congregational Involvement, Evangelical, Christian Conservative, Golden Rule, Activist, and Mystical. Participants are then asked how accurately they feel these scores reflect their own understanding of their faith.

"We need to have a good instrument that accurately represents the people we're trying to study," said Cutting, an associate professor of pastoral care and counselling at Laurier. "Our research on religion and its relationship to other issues is undercut if we can't do a good job of defining who is religious."

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Researchers hope to attract participants representing different ages, genders and ethnicities. Those interested in participating can visit www.religiosityscalesproject.com.

The instrument being tested in the study will be used in research that examines how religion relates to specific subjects such as health, prejudice or voting behaviour.

The Inclusive Christian Scale is the second part of the larger Religiosity Scales Project. It is designed to address the limitations of previous scales, which tended to be more conservative in nature and didn't accurately capture the full range of Christian faith.

All responses are completely anonymous. For questions regarding the survey, please contact Cutting at 519-884-0710 ext. 3576 or mcutting@gmail.com.