

ŽUPLJAN: parishioner vs. congregant

<https://english.stackexchange.com/questions/87093/parishioner-vs-congregant>

Parishioner and *congregant* refer to *members* of a particular local faith community.

Parishioner is older by a good measure. A parish is an ecclesiastical territory, a section of an episcopal see (e.g. a diocese or archdiocese). Traditionally, any inhabitant of that territory would have been expected to attend services at the local parish church, and all would have been parishioners. ***Congregant*** is broader, in that it refers to the regular members of any local congregation. That local congregation may be a parish, but it might also be a local church or meeting house of a tradition that does not use the term *parish*, such as the Baptists or Mormons— or for that matter, Muslims or Jews.

To refer more generally to those attending services at a particular time, you could simply say ***worshippers*** or ***attendees***; for all adherents, there are a variety of terms employed, such as *the brethren* or *the faithful*, or the more mundane ***churchgoers*** or *the observant*; *communicants* captures the sense of those in communion with the Church as opposed to outsiders.