American Views on Church Endorsements

Survey of 1,200 Americans
Methodology

- The online survey of 1,200 Americans was conducted September 9-23, 2020 using a national pre-recruited panel
- Quotas and slight weights were used to balance gender, age, region, ethnicity, education, and religion to more accurately reflect the population
- The sample includes an over-sample of Americans with Evangelical Beliefs providing additional reliability for breakouts of this group. Totals for all Americans reduce these responses to their correct proportion through weighting
- The completed sample is 1,200 surveys
- The sample provides 95% confidence that the sampling error from the panel does not exceed ±3.2% This margin of error accounts for the effect of weighting
- Margins of error are higher in sub-groups
- Data is also shown from phone surveys (random digit dial) conducted by LifeWay Research September 14-28, 2015 and June 12-14, 2008 of 1,000 Americans
Definitions

- **Evangelical Beliefs** are defined using the NAE LifeWay Research Evangelical Beliefs Research Definition based on respondent beliefs.

- Respondents are asked their level of agreement with four separate statements using a four-point, forced choice scale (strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, strongly disagree). Those who strongly agree with all four statements are categorized as having Evangelical Beliefs:
  - The Bible is the highest authority for what I believe.
  - It is very important for me personally to encourage non-Christians to trust Jesus Christ as their Savior.
  - Jesus Christ’s death on the cross is the only sacrifice that could remove the penalty of my sin.
  - Only those who trust in Jesus Christ alone as their Savior receive God’s free gift of eternal salvation.
Survey Responses
43% agree that it is appropriate for pastors to personally endorse candidates outside of their church role.

Q: “I believe it is appropriate for pastors to personally endorse candidates for public office, but only outside of their church role.” n=1,200
The number agreeing that it is appropriate for pastors to endorse candidates outside of their church role is similar to 2015

Comparisons may not be appropriate because of differences in methodology. 2008 and 2015 were conducted by phone and 2020 online.

Q: “I believe it is appropriate for pastors to personally endorse candidates for public office, but only outside of their church role.” n=1,200
24% say that it is appropriate for pastors to publicly endorse candidates during a church service; 61% disagree.

Q: “I believe it is appropriate for pastors to publicly endorse candidates for public office during a church service.” n=1,200
There is less strong disagreement with endorsing candidates during a church service but that is still the most common opinion.

Comparisons may not be appropriate because of differences in methodology. 2008 and 2015 were conducted by phone and 2020 online.

Q: “I believe it is appropriate for pastors to publicly endorse candidates for public office during a church service.” n=1,200
29% believe it appropriate for churches to publicly endorse candidates; 57% disagree

Q: “I believe it is appropriate for churches to publicly endorse candidates for public office.” n=1,200
There is less strong disagreement with churches endorsing candidates but that is still the most common opinion

Comparisons may not be appropriate because of differences in methodology. 2008 and 2015 were conducted by phone and 2020 online.

Q: “I believe it is appropriate for churches to publicly endorse candidates for public office.” n=1,200
24% agree that it is appropriate for churches to use their resources to campaign for candidates; 63% disagree

Q: “I believe it is appropriate for churches to use their resources to campaign for candidates for public office.” n=1,200
Agreement has grown slightly since 2015 that it is appropriate for churches to use resources to campaign for candidates

Comparisons may not be appropriate because of differences in methodology. 2008 and 2015 were conducted by phone and 2020 online.

Q: “I believe it is appropriate for churches to use their resources to campaign for candidates for public office.” n=1,200
45% believe that churches who publicly endorse candidates should lose their tax exemption; 32% disagree

Q: “I believe that churches who publicly endorse candidates for public office should lose their tax exemption.” n=1,200
Agreement is similar to 2015 that churches who publicly endorse candidates should lose their tax exemption

Comparisons may not be appropriate because of differences in methodology. 2008 and 2015 were conducted by phone and 2020 online.

Q: “I believe that churches who publicly endorse candidates for public office should lose their tax exemption.” n=1,200
Significant Differences

Gender
Age
Ethnicity
Region
Education Level
Religion
Evangelical Beliefs
Worship Service Attendance
Political Party
Candidate
Significant Statistical Differences

Comparisons were made to determine if there are any significant statistical differences among gender, age, ethnicity, region, and education.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>18-34</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Northeast</td>
<td>High School graduate or less</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>35-49</td>
<td>African American</td>
<td>Midwest</td>
<td>Some college</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>50-64</td>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>South</td>
<td>Bachelor’s Degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>Other Ethnicities</td>
<td>West</td>
<td>Graduate Degree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Region is defined by US Census locations
Significant Statistical Differences

Comparisons were made to determine if there are any significant statistical differences among religion, evangelical beliefs, worship service attendance, political party, and presidential candidate.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Religion</th>
<th>Evangelical Beliefs</th>
<th>Worship Service Attendance</th>
<th>Political Party</th>
<th>Candidate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Christians who attend once a month or more</td>
<td>Democrat</td>
<td>Joe Biden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protestant</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Other Americans</td>
<td>Republican</td>
<td>Donald Trump</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Religions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>Undecided</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unaffiliated</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
“I believe it is appropriate for pastors to personally endorse candidates for public office, but only outside of their church role.”

- Males are more likely to Agree than Females (49% v. 36%)
- Those age 18-34 are most likely to be Not Sure (27%)
- Those in the West (48%) are more likely to Agree than those in the Midwest (36%)
- Those with a Graduate Degree (51%) are more likely to Agree than those who are High School Graduates or less (39%)
- Those who are religiously Unaffiliated are the most likely to be Not Sure (28%) and the least likely to Agree (32%)
- Those with evangelical beliefs are more likely to Agree than those without evangelical beliefs (57% v. 39%)
- Christians who attend a worship service once a month or more are more likely to Agree than Other Americans (53% v. 37%)
- Republicans are the most likely to Agree (54%)
- Those voting for Donald Trump (52%) are more likely to Agree than those voting for Joe Biden (40%) or Undecided (36%)
“I believe it is appropriate for pastors to publicly endorse candidates for public office during a church service.”

- Males are more likely to Agree than Females (28% v. 19%)
- Those age 18-34 (32%) and 35-49 (26%) are more likely to Agree than those 50-64 (18%) and 65+ (15%)
- Those with a Bachelor’s Degree (27%) or a Graduate Degree (28%) are more likely to Agree than those who are High School Graduates or less (20%)
- Those who are religiously Unaffiliated are the most likely to be Not Sure (24%) and the least likely to Agree (16%)
- Those with evangelical beliefs are more likely to Agree than those without evangelical beliefs (35% v. 21%)
- Christians who attend a worship service once a month or more are more likely to Agree than Other Americans (33% v. 19%)
- Republicans (30%) and Democrats (25%) are more likely to Agree than Independents (16%)
- Those voting for Donald Trump (31%) are more likely to Agree than those voting for Joe Biden (22%) or Undecided (14%)
“I believe it is appropriate for churches to publicly endorse candidates for public office.”

- Males are more likely to Agree than Females (36% v. 23%)
- Those age 18-34 are the most likely to Agree (38%)
- African Americans (38%) are more likely to Agree than Whites (28%) and Other Ethnicities (24%)
- Those with evangelical beliefs are more likely to Agree than those without evangelical beliefs (41% v. 26%)
- Those who are religiously Unaffiliated are the most likely to be Not Sure (23%)
- Catholics (36%) and Other Religions (41%) are more likely to Agree than Protestants (29%) and those who are religiously Unaffiliated (19%)
- Christians who attend a worship service once a month or more are more likely to Agree than Other Americans (38% v. 24%)
- Republicans are the most likely to Agree (38%)
- Those voting for Donald Trump (39%) are more likely to Agree than those voting for Joe Biden (27%) or Undecided (18%)
“I believe it is appropriate for churches to use their resources to campaign for candidates for public office.”

- Males are more likely to Agree than Females (28% v. 20%)
- Those age 18-34 (34%) and 35-49 (29%) are more likely to Agree than those 50-64 (16%) and 65+ (14%)
- Those in the Northeast (26%) and South (25%) are more likely to Agree than those in the Midwest (19%)
- Those with some college (26%) or with a Bachelor’s Degree (28%) are more likely to Agree than those who are High School Graduates or less (20%)
- Those who are religiously Unaffiliated (67%) are more likely to Disagree than Other Religions (55%)
- Those with evangelical beliefs are more likely to Agree than those without evangelical beliefs (33% v. 22%)
- Christians who attend a worship service once a month or more are more likely to Agree than Other Americans (33% v. 20%)
“I believe it is appropriate for churches to use their resources to campaign for candidates for public office.” (Continued)

- Republicans (31%) are more likely to Agree than Democrats (25%) and Independents (17%)
- Those voting for Donald Trump (32%) are more likely to Agree than those voting for Joe Biden (23%) or Undecided (13%)
“I believe that churches who publicly endorse candidates for public office should lose their tax exemption.”

- Males are more likely to Agree than Females (52% v. 38%)
- Those age 65+ are the most likely to Agree (54%)
- Those who are High School Graduates or less (35%) or with some college (34%) are more likely to Disagree than those with a Graduate Degree (25%)
- Those with evangelical beliefs are more likely to Disagree than those without evangelical beliefs (42% v. 30%)
- Catholics (50%) and those who are religiously Unaffiliated (50%) are more likely to Agree than Protestants (41%)
- Christians who attend a worship service once a month or more are more likely to Disagree than Other Americans (37% v. 30%)
- Democrats are the most likely to Agree (53%)
- Those voting for Joe Biden (58%) are more likely to Agree than those voting for Donald Trump (39%) or Undecided (32%)
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