Pastors’ Views on Political Endorsements

Survey of American Protestant Pastors
Methodology

● The mixed mode survey of 1,007 Protestant pastors was conducted September 2–October 1, 2020 using both phone and online interviews

● Phone: The calling list was a stratified random sample, drawn from a list of all Protestant churches. Quotas were used for church size

● Online: Invitations were emailed to the LifeWay Research Pastor Panel followed by three reminders. This probability sample of Protestant churches was created by phone recruiting by LifeWay Research using random samples selected from all Protestant churches. Pastors who agree to be contacted by email for future surveys make up this LifeWay Research Pastor Panel.

● Each survey was completed by the senior or sole pastor or a minister at the church

● Responses were weighted by region and church size to more accurately reflect the population
Methodology

● The completed sample is 1,007 surveys (502 by phone, 505 online)
● The sample provides 95% confidence that the sampling error does not exceed ±3.4%. This margin of error accounts for the effect of weighting.
● Margins of error are higher in sub-groups.
● Comparisons are made to a phone survey of 1,000 pastors conducted by LifeWay Research August 22 – September 16, 2016.
● The 2016 survey used the same methodology as the phone portion of the 2020 survey.
Survey Responses
98% say they have not publicly endorsed candidates for public office during a church service this year.

Among Protestant Pastors

Q: “Have you publicly endorsed candidates for public office during a church service this year?”
The 1% of pastors endorsing candidates during a church service is unchanged from 2016

Among Protestant Pastors

Q: “Have you publicly endorsed candidates for public office during a church service this year?”
32% say they have endorsed candidates outside of their church role this year

Among Protestant Pastors

Q: “Have you personally endorsed candidates for public office this year outside of your church role?”
More pastors say they have endorsed candidates outside of their church role this year than in 2016

Among Protestant Pastors

Q: “Have you personally endorsed candidates for public office this year outside of your church role?”
26% say their church has worked to get people registered to vote in this year’s election

Among Protestant Pastors

- **Yes**: 26%
- **No**: 72%
- **Not sure**: 2%

Q: “Has your church worked to get people to register and vote in this election?”
Significant Differences

- **Pastor**
- Ethnicity
- Age
- Gender
- Education Level
- Self-identified Evangelical/Mainline
- Political Party
- Presidential Candidate

**Church**
- Region
- Denomination
- Average Attendance
Significant Statistical Differences

Comparisons were made to determine if there are any significant statistical differences among the pastor’s ethnicity, age, gender, education, self-identified Evangelical or Mainline.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Self-Identified</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>18-44</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>No College Degree</td>
<td>Evangelical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>45-54</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Bachelor’s Degree</td>
<td>Mainline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Ethnicity</td>
<td>55-64</td>
<td></td>
<td>Master’s Degree</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>65+</td>
<td></td>
<td>Doctoral Degree</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Significant Statistical Differences

Comparisons were made to determine if there are any significant statistical differences among the church’s region, denomination, and attendance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Denominational Groups</th>
<th>Attendance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Northeast</td>
<td>Baptist</td>
<td>0-49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South</td>
<td>Lutheran</td>
<td>50-99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midwest</td>
<td>Methodist</td>
<td>100-249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West</td>
<td>Pentecostal</td>
<td>250+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Presbyterian/Reformed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Christian/Church of Christ</td>
<td></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 presidential candidate and political party.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Candidate</th>
<th>Political Party</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Joe Biden (Democrat)</td>
<td>Democratic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donald Trump (Republican)</td>
<td>Republican</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Independent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undecided</td>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“Have you publicly endorsed candidates for public office during a church service this year?”

• White pastors (99%) are more likely to select “No” than Pastors of Other Ethnicities (93%)
• Pastors age 18-44 (99%) are more likely to select “No” than pastors age 65+ (96%)
• Pastors in the South (98%) and Midwest (99%) are more likely to select “No” than those in the West (95%)
• Lutherans (100%) are more likely to select “No” than Pentecostals (96%)
• Pastors of churches with attendance of 250+ (100%) are more likely to select “No” than those with attendance of 50-99 (97%) and 100-249 (98%)
“Have you personally endorsed candidates for public office this year outside of your church role?”

- Pastors age 65+ are the most likely to select “Yes” (47%) and pastors age 18-44 are most likely to select “No” (77%)
- Pastors with no college degree (47%) or a Bachelor’s degree (44%) are more likely to select “Yes” than those with a Master’s degree (26%) or a Doctoral degree (32%)
- Pastors in the Northeast (41%) are more likely to select “Yes” than those in the South (31%)
- Pentecostals (39%) are more likely to select “Yes” than Lutherans (26%) and Methodists (23%)
- Democrats (39%) and Republicans (40%) are more likely to select “Yes” than Independents (20%) and Others (23%)
- Pastors voting for Donald Trump are more likely to select “Yes” (45%) than those voting for Joe Biden (34%) and those who are Undecided (10%)
“Has your church worked to get people to register and vote in this election?”

- African American pastors are the most likely to select “Yes” (82%)
- Pastors age 18-44 are the most likely to select “No” (84%)
- Pastors with no college degree (33%) are more likely “Yes” to select than those with a Bachelor’s degree (22%) or a Master’s degree (23%)
- Pentecostals (43%) are more likely to select “Yes” than Baptists (27%), Lutherans (13%), Presbyterian/Reformed (21%), and Christian/Church of Christ (20%)
- Pastors of churches with attendance of 250+ (32%) are more likely to select “Yes” than those with attendance of 50-99 (23%)
- Democrats are the most likely to select “Yes” (39%)
- Pastors voting for Joe Biden (34%) are more likely to select “Yes” than those voting for Donald Trump (22%)