Pastors’ Descriptions of In-person Worship Attendance 2022

A SURVEY OF AMERICAN PROTESTANT PASTORS
Methodology

- The phone survey of 1,000 Protestant pastors was conducted September 6-30, 2022
- The calling list was a stratified random sample, drawn from a list of all Protestant churches. Quotas were used for church size
- Each interview 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
- The completed sample is 1,000 surveys
- The sample provides 95% confidence that the sampling error does not exceed ±3.2% This margin of error accounts for the effect of weighting
- Margins of error are higher in sub-groups
- Comparisons are made to the following Lifeway Research surveys: a phone survey of 1,000 Protestant pastors September 1-29, 2021, a mixed mode survey of 1,007 Protestant pastors September 2-October 1, 2020, and an online survey of 430 Protestant pastors February 1-11, 2021
Less than 1% of pastors say their church did not meet in person in August 2022

Among Protestant Pastors

Church met in person

Church did not meet in person

Q: “For August 2022, what was your church’s average worship attendance in-person on a typical weekend (including all ages from babies to adults but not counting anyone twice)?” n=996
Q: “For August 2022, what was your church’s average worship attendance in-person on a typical weekend (including all ages from babies to adults but not counting anyone twice)?”

Among Protestant Pastors

2% more churches met in person in August 2022 than August 2021
August 2022 average attendance for reporting churches

Among Protestant churches that met in person in August 2022

Q: “For August 2022, what was your church’s average worship attendance in-person on a typical weekend (including all ages from babies to adults but not counting anyone twice)?” n=992
August 2022 attendance as a percentage of January 2020 attendance

Among Protestant Pastors

1% <30%
7% 30% to <50%
26% 50% to <70%
31% 70% to <90%
18% 90% to 100%
17% >100%

Q: “For August 2022, what was your church’s average worship attendance in-person on a typical weekend (including all ages from babies to adults but not counting anyone twice)?” n=924

Lifeway research
Attendance for August 2022, August 2021, January 2021, and September 2020 as a percentage of Jan./Feb. 2020 attendance

Among Protestant Pastors

Q: “For August 2022, what was your church’s average worship attendance in-person on a typical weekend (including all ages from babies to adults but not counting anyone twice)?”
Mean and median of attendance as a percentage of Jan./Feb. 2020

Among Protestant Pastors

Mean
- 63% - September 2020
- 60% - January 2021
- 73% - August 2021
- 85% - August 2022

Median
- 62% - September 2020
- 60% - January 2021
- 71% - August 2021
- 78% - August 2022
Significant Differences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pastor</th>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Education Level</th>
<th>Self-identified Evangelical/Mainline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Church</td>
<td>Region</td>
<td>Denomination</td>
<td>Average Attendance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Lifeway research
Significant 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>AGE</th>
<th>GENDER</th>
<th>ETHNICITY</th>
<th>EDUCATION</th>
<th>Self-Identified</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18-44</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>No College Degree</td>
<td>Evangelical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-54</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>African American</td>
<td>Bachelor’s Degree</td>
<td>Mainline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55-64</td>
<td></td>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>Graduate Degree</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65+</td>
<td></td>
<td>Other Ethnicities</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 pre-COVID attendance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REGION</th>
<th>DENOMINATION GROUP</th>
<th>Pre-COVID 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>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non-Denominational</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Region is defined by the US Census locations
“For August 2022, what was your church’s average worship attendance in-person on a typical weekend (including all ages from babies to adults but not counting anyone twice)?”

- Pastors age 65+ are more likely to select “0-49” (47%)
- Female pastors are more likely to select “0-49” than males (37% v. 30%)
- White pastors (32%) are more likely to select “0-49” than Hispanic pastors (20%)
- Mainline pastors are more likely to select “0-49” than Evangelical pastors (38% v. 26%)
- Pastors in the Northeast are the most likely to select “0-49” (45%)
- Presbyterian/Reformed (50%) and Methodists (42%) are the more likely to select “0-49” than Baptists (22%) and Pentecostals (27%)
August 2022 Attendance as a percentage of January 2020 Attendance

- Pastors age 65+ (16%) are more likely to report August 2022 attendance between 30 to <50% of January 2020 than pastors age 18-44 (8%) and 45-55 (9%)
- Pastors age 18-44 (33%) and 45-55 (25%) are more likely to report August 2022 attendance >100% of January 2020 than pastors age 65+ (16%)
- Female pastors are more likely to report August 2022 attendance between 30 to <50% of January 2020 than males (18% v. 9%)
- White pastors are the most likely to report August 2022 attendance between 50 to <70% of January 2020 (30%)
- African American pastors are the most likely to report August 2022 attendance between 30 to <50% of January 2020 (46%)
- Pastors with a Bachelor’s degree (27%) are more likely to report August 2022 attendance between 70 to <90% of January 2020 than pastors with no college degree (18%)

Lifeway research
August 2022 Attendance as a percentage of January 2020 Attendance continued

- Mainline pastors are more likely to report August 2022 attendance between 50 to <70% of January 2020 than Evangelical pastors (32% v. 24%)
- Evangelical pastors are more likely to report August 2022 attendance >100% of January 2020 than Mainline pastors (29% v. 16%)
- Pastors in the Northeast (17%) are more likely to report August 2022 attendance between 30 to <50% of January 2020 than those in the Midwest (8%)
- Pastors in the Midwest (26%) and South (25%) are more likely to report August 2022 attendance >100% of January 2020 than those in the Northeast (14%)
August 2022 Attendance as a percentage of January 2020 Attendance continued

- Non-denominational are the most likely to report August 2022 attendance between <30% of January 2020 (14%)
- Methodists (20%) and Presbyterian/Reformed (24%) are more likely to report August 2022 attendance between 30 to <70% of January 2020 than Baptists (8%), Lutherans (5%), and Pentecostals (9%)
- Methodists (41%) are more likely to report August 2022 attendance between 50 to <70% of January 2020 than Baptists (25%), Pentecostals (26%), and Non-denominational (18%)
- Baptists (28%), Pentecostals (33%), and Non-denominational (30%) are more likely to report August 2022 attendance between >100% of January 2020 than Lutherans (13%), Methodists (8%), Presbyterian/Reformed (14%), and Christian/Church of Christ (10%)
August 2022 Attendance as a percentage of January 2020 Attendance *continued*

- Pastors of churches with pre-COVID attendance of 50-99 (30%) and 100-249 (30%) are more likely to report August 2022 attendance between 50 to <70% of January 2020 than those with attendance of 0-49 (18%) and 250+ (19%)
- Pastors of churches with pre-COVID attendance of 0-49 (27%) are more likely to report August 2022 attendance between 90 to 100% than those with attendance of 50-99 (18%) and 100-249 (11%)
Pastors’ Descriptions of In-person Worship Attendance 2022

A SURVEY OF AMERICAN PROTESTANT PASTORS