

# Church Switcher Study 2023

## Factors in Choosing Current Church Report

REPORT OF STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES IN RESPONSES  
FOR 9 SUBGROUPS OF AMERICAN PROTESTANT CHURCH SWITCHERS

Lifeway **research**

# Significant Differences

Gender

Region

Age

Ethnicity

Education Level

Worship Service Attendance

Evangelical Beliefs

Denomination

Years at Current Church

# 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

# Significant Differences

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

GENDER	REGION	AGE	ETHNICITY	EDUCATION
Male	Northeast	18-29	White	High School graduate or less
Female	Midwest	30-49	African Americans	Some college
	South	50-65	Hispanics	Bachelor's Degree
	West	65+	Other Ethnicities	Graduate Degree

Note: Region is defined by the US Census locations

# Significant Statistical Differences

Comparisons were made to determine if there are any significant statistical differences among worship service attendance, evangelical beliefs, denomination, and years at current church.

WORSHIP SERVICE ATTENDANCE	EVANGELICAL BELIEFS	DENOMINATION	YEARS AT CURRENT CHURCH
2 times a month	Yes	Baptist	Less than a year ago
3 times a month	No	Methodist	1-5 years ago
4 or more times a month		Lutheran	6-10 years ago
		Presbyterian/Reformed	More than 10 years ago
		Christian/Church of Christ	
		Non-denominational	

**“How many different churches have you regularly attended (more than once a month for three or more months) as an adult?”**

- Those age 30-49 (67%) and 50-64 (66%) are more likely to select “2-3” than those 65+ (56%)
- Those who are High School Graduates or less (69%) or with some college (66%) are more likely to select “2-3” than those with a Graduate Degree (54%)
- Those who attend a worship service 2 times a month are the most likely to select “2-3” (72%)
- Lutherans (77%) are more likely to select “2-3” than Methodists (56%), Presbyterian/Reformed (56%), Christian/Church of Christ (60%), and Non-denominational (60%)

## ““Is your decision to attend your current church at all related to a residential move?”

- Those age 18-29 (73%) and 30-49 (68%) are more likely to select “Yes” than those 50-64 (52%) and 65+ (54%)
- Those with a Bachelor’s Degree (62%) or a Graduate Degree (65%) are more likely to select “Yes” than those with some college (52%)
- Those who started attending their current church 6-10 years ago (67%) are more likely to select “Yes” than those who started attending more than 10 years ago (57%)

## **“How long ago did you begin attending your current church?”**

- Those in the Northeast (23%) are more likely to select “Less than a year ago” than those in the Midwest (14%) and West (12%)
- Those age 18-29 (39%) and 30-49 (39%) are more likely to select “1-5 years ago” than those 65+ (28%)
- Those of Other Ethnicities (30%) are more likely to select “6-10 years ago” than African Americans (16%)
- Non-denominational (25%) are more likely to select “Less than a year ago” than Baptists (14%), Lutherans (13%), and Presbyterian/Reformed (12%)



## **“Did you stop attending church for more than three months in between attending your previous church and your current church?”**

- Those in the Northeast (46%) and West (46%) are more likely to select “Yes” than those in the Midwest (34%)
- Those age 65+ are the most likely to select “No” (70%)
- African Americans (49%) are more likely to select “Yes” than Whites (38%)
- Those who attend a worship service 4 or more times a month are the most likely to select “No” (67%)
- Christian/Church of Christ (49%) are more likely to select “Yes” than Baptists (37%), Lutherans (25%), and Presbyterian/Reformed (32%)
- Those who started attending their current church more than 10 years ago are the most likely to select “No” (66%)

## **“In switching from your previous church to your current church, did you actively search for a new church...?”**

- Those age 30-49 (38%) are more likely to select “Before leaving your previous church” than those 50-64 (26%) and 65+ (29%)
- Those age 50-64 (23%) and 65+ (27%) are more likely to select “Don’t recall an active search on my part” than those 18-29 (14%) and 30-49 (15%)
- Those with a Graduate Degree are the most likely to select “Before leaving your previous church” (43%)
- Those who are High School Graduates or less (29%) are more likely to select “Don’t recall an active search on my part” than those with a Bachelor’s Degree (18%) and Graduate Degree (13%)
- Non-denominational (57%) are more likely to select “After leaving your previous church” than Lutherans (36%) and Christian/Church of Christ (42%)
- Those who started attending their current more than 10 years ago are the most likely to select “Don’t recall an active search on my part” (30%)

**“Which of the following resources did you use when looking for a new church?”**

**Recommendations from family, friends, neighbors and/or colleagues**

- Those age 30-49 (60%) and 50-64 (61%) are more likely to select than those 65+ (51%)

# “Which of the following resources did you use when looking for a new church?”

## Online search tools

- Those in the West (35%) are more likely to select than those in the Midwest (23%)
- Those age 18-29 (34%) and 30-49 (44%) are more likely to select than those 50-64 (19%) and 65+ (15%)
- Hispanics (42%) are more likely to select than Whites (25%)
- Those with a Graduate Degree (34%) are more likely to select than those who are High School Graduates or less (19%) or with some college (24%)
- Christian/Church of Christ (32%) and Non-denominational (34%) are more likely to select than Baptists (20%)
- Those who started attending their current more than 10 years ago are the least likely to select (18%)

# “Which of the following resources did you use when looking for a new church?”

## Church websites

- Those in the West (46%) are more likely to select than those in the South (33%)
- Those age 30-49 (46%) are more likely to select than those 50-64 (31%) and 65+ (31%)
- Those with a Graduate Degree are the most likely to select (49%)
- Methodists (45%) are more likely to select than Baptists (27%)
- Those who started attending their current more than 10 years ago are the least likely to select (28%)

# “Which of the following resources did you use when looking for a new church?”

## Social media sites (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc.)

- Those age 18-29 (55%) and 30-49 (50%) are more likely to select than those 50-64 (19%) and 65+ (6%)
- African Americans (45%) and Hispanics (58%) are more likely to select than Whites (23%)
- Those with a Graduate Degree (35%) are more likely to select than those who are High School Graduates or less (25%)
- Christian/Church of Christ (38%) are more likely to select than Baptists (27%), Methodists (21%), and Presbyterian/Reformed (12%)
- Those who started attending their current church more than 10 years ago are the least likely to select (20%)

# “Which of the following resources did you use when looking for a new church?”

## Phonebook or local advertisements

- Those in the West (18%) are more likely to select than those in the Midwest (9%) and South (8%)
- Those age 30-49 are the most likely to select (20%)
- Whites are the least likely to select (8%)
- Those with a Bachelor’s Degree (11%) or a Graduate Degree (16%) are more likely to select than those with some college (4%)
- Methodists (17%) and Christian/Church of Christ (14%) are more likely to select than Non-denominational (4%)

# “Which of the following resources did you use when looking for a new church?”

## In-person visits to churches (i.e., attending worship services, Bible studies, etc.)

- Those age 50-64 (72%) and 65+ (76%) are more likely to select than those 18-29 (58%)
- Whites (71%) and African Americans (72%) are more likely to select than Other Ethnicities (41%)
- Those with a Bachelor’s Degree (72%) are more likely to select than those who are High School Graduates or less (62%)
- Those who attend a worship service 4 or more times a month are the most likely to select (74%)



# “How were you *first* introduced to your current church?”

## A family member invited me to attend

- Those age 18-29 (36%) and 30-49 (34%) are more likely to select than those 50-64 (25%) and 65+ (19%)
- Hispanics (41%) are more likely to select than Whites (25%) and Other Ethnicities (19%)
- Christian/Church of Christ (34%) are more likely to select than Presbyterian/Reformed (19%) and Non-denominational (19%)

## A friend/acquaintance invited me to attend

- Those age 18-29 (36%) and 30-49 (40%) are more likely to select than those 65+ (24%)
- Those who started attending their current church 1-5 years ago (36%) are more likely to select than those who started attending 6-10 years ago (25%)

## **“How were you *first* introduced to your current church?”**

**I heard about it through word-of-mouth (friends, colleagues, relatives, etc.)**

- Those with a Bachelor’s Degree (33%) or a Graduate Degree (33%) are more likely to select than those who are High School Graduates or less (23%)

**I found out about it from an ad (e.g., postcard, TV, radio, billboard, sign, etc.)**

- Those age 18-29 (15%) and 30-49 (14%) are more likely to select than those 50-64 (3%) and 65+ (2%)

# “How were you *first* introduced to your current church?”

**I found out about it on the internet (Google Maps, Yelp, denominational search page, list of churches, etc.)**

- Those age 18-29 (22%) and 30-49 (29%) are more likely to select than those 50-64 (9%) and 65+ (7%)
- Those with a Graduate Degree are the most likely to select (25%)
- Lutherans (25%) and Christian/Church of Christ (22%) are more likely to select than Baptists (9%) and Non-denominational (11%)
- Those who started attending their current church 6-10 years ago (22%) are more likely to select than those who started attending 1-5 years ago (13%) and more than 10 years ago (12%)

# “How were you *first* introduced to your current church?”

## I found the church website

- Those age 30-49 are the most likely to select (25%)
- Hispanics (24%) are more likely to select than African Americans (12%)
- Those with a Graduate Degree are the most likely to select (24%)
- Methodists (21%), Presbyterian/Reformed (17%), Christian/Church of Christ (17%), and Non-denominational (19%) are more likely to select than Baptists (8%)

## I found out about it through a media story (e.g., TV story, newspaper article, etc.)

- Those age 18-29 (11%) and 30-49 (14%) are more likely to select than those 50-64 (1%) and 65+ (1%)
- Hispanics (16%) are more likely to select than Whites (4%)

# “How were you *first* introduced to your current church?”

## I had driven by the church before

- Those in the South (27%) are more likely to select than those in the Northeast (16%) and Midwest (18%)
- Baptists (27%) and Methodists (29%) are more likely to select than Non-denominational (15%)

## I had always been familiar with the church (due to proximity, reputation, etc.)

- Christian/Church of Christ (36%) are more likely to select than Baptists (24%), Methodists (22%), Presbyterian/Reformed (17%), and Non-denominational (17%)

# “How were you *first* introduced to your current church?”

## I saw it on social media

- Those age 18-29 (15%) and 30-49 (23%) are more likely to select than those 50-64 (5%) and 65+ (1%)
- Those a Graduate Degree are the most likely to select (17%)
- Christian/Church of Christ (15%) are more likely to select than Baptists (6%) and Lutheran (5%)

## I asked for recommendations online (Facebook, Nextdoor, etc.)

- Those age 18-29 (15%) and 30-49 (21%) are more likely to select than those 50-64 (2%) and 65+ (1%)
- Whites are the least likely to select (6%)

## **“What was the first event/activity you attended at your current church?”**

- Those age 50-64 (75%) and 65+ (84%) are more likely to select “A worship service” than those 18-29 (44%) and 30-49 (52%)
- Those age 18-29 (16%) and 30-49 (10%) are more likely to select “A Bible study class or small group at the church” than those age 50-64 (5%) and 65+ (1%)
- Whites are the most likely to select “A worship service” (72%)
- Those who are High School Graduates or less are the least likely to select “A worship service” (58%)
- Methodists (74%), Lutherans (81%), Presbyterian/Reformed (78%), and Non-denominational (74%) are more likely to select “A worship service” than Christian/Church of Christ (60%)
- Those who started attending their current church more than 10 years ago (74%) are more likely to select “A worship service” than those who started attending less than a year ago (64%) or 1-5 years ago (65%)

## **“How many times did you visit your current church (attend a worship service) before deciding to regularly attend?”**

- Those age 18-29 (63%) are more likely to select “Two or three times” than those 50-64 (52%) and 65+ (39%)
- Whites (24%) are more likely to select “One time” than African Americans (10%) and Hispanics (8%)
- Hispanics (30%) are more likely to select “Four or five times” than Whites (15%)
- Those who attend a worship service 2 times a month (55%) or 3 times a month (58%) are more likely to select “Two or three times” than those who attend 4 or more times a month (46%)
- Christian/Church of Christ (56%) are more likely to select “Two or three times” than Presbyterian/Reformed (39%)



## **“When you were a visitor at your current church, what approach did the church take in welcoming you?”**

**I was formally recognized during the service (i.e., asked to stand up/raise hand, etc.)**

- Those age 30-49 (29%) are more likely to select than those 50-64 (18%) and 65+ (10%)
- African Americans (34%) are more likely to select than Whites (15%)
- Those with a Graduate Degree (25%) are more likely to select than those with some college (15%)
- Methodists (27%) are more likely to select than Lutherans (11%), Presbyterian/Reformed (10%), and Non-denominational (12%)
- Those who started attending their current church less than a year (28%) are more likely to select than those who started attending 1-5 years ago (17%) or more than 10 years ago (17%)

## **“When you were a visitor at your current church, what approach did the church take in welcoming you?”**

### **I was asked to fill out an information card by hand**

- Those in the South (38%) are more likely to select than those in the Northeast (27%)
- Those age 30-49 (37%) and 65+ (41%) are more likely to select than those 18-29 (26%)
- Those with a Graduate Degree (43%) are more likely to select than those who are High School Graduates or less (30%) or with some college (33%)

### **I was asked to fill out an information card electronically**

- Those age 65+ are the least likely to select (4%)
- Hispanics (30%) are more likely to select than Whites (10%) and African Americans (16%)
- Methodists (18%) and Christian/Church of Christ (21%) are more likely to select than Presbyterian/Reformed (3%)

## **“When you were a visitor at your current church, what approach did the church take in welcoming you?”**

### **I was asked to text the church**

- Those age 18-29 (15%) and 30-49 (12%) are more likely to select than those age 50-64 (3%) and 65+ (<1%)
- Whites are the least likely to select (4%)

### **I was personally welcomed by congregants before and/or after service**

- Females are more likely to select than males (61% v. 51%)
- Those age 50-64 (59%) and 65+ (64%) are more likely to select than those 18-29 (40%) and 30-49 (51%)
- Whites are the most likely to select (61%)
- Those who are High School Graduates or less are the least likely to select (47%)
- Those who attend a worship service 3 times a month (55%) or 4 or more times a month (61%) are more likely to select than those who attend 2 times a month (44%)

## **“When you were a visitor at your current church, what approach did the church take in welcoming you?”**

### **I was personally welcomed by pastors or ministers before and/or after service**

- Those age 65+ (55%) are more likely to select than those 18-29 (37%) and 50-64 (46%)
- Whites (53%) are more likely to select than African Americans (32%) and Other Ethnicities (37%)
- Those who attend a worship service 4 or more times a month are the most likely to select (53%)
- Those with evangelical beliefs are more likely to select than those without evangelical beliefs (54% v. 43%)

### **I was invited to attend social events outside of service**

- Those age 30-49 (31%) are more likely to select than those 50-64 (21%) and 65+ (17%)
- Christian/Church of Christ are the most likely to select (37%)

## **“When you were a visitor at your current church, what approach did the church take in welcoming you?”**

**I was contacted by a welcoming team outside of service (in-person visit, phone call, mailing, etc.)**

- Those age 18-29 (27%) and 30-49 (27%) are more likely to select than those 50-64 (16%) and 65+ (17%)

**I was not formally welcomed but was encouraged to introduce myself**

- Those age 18-29 (17%) and 30-49 (14%) are more likely to select than those 50-64 (8%) and 65+ (6%)
- African Americans (19%) are more likely to select than Whites (8%)
- Methodists (14%) and Christian/Church of Christ (13%) are more likely to select than Non-denominational (4%)

## **“The church’s approach to welcoming visitors positively impacted my decision to start regularly attending the church.”**

- Those age 30-49 (87%) are more likely to Agree than those 50-64 (79%) and 65+ (71%)
- Those of Other Ethnicities are the least likely to Agree (66%)
- Those who attend a worship service 3 times a month (85%) or 4 or more times a month (80%) are more likely to Agree than those who attend 2 times a month (73%)
- Christian/Church of Christ are the most likely to Agree (91%)

## **“Is your current church of a different denomination than your previous church?”**

- Those age 18-29 (61%) and 30-49 (50%) are more likely to select “Yes” than those age 50-64 (34%) and 65+ (36%)
- Whites are the most likely to select “No” (61%)
- Those with a Graduate Degree are the most likely to select “Yes” (53%)
- Lutherans (72%) are more likely to select “No” than Methodists (55%) and Presbyterian/Reformed (53%)
- Those who started attending their current church more than 10 years ago (64%) are more likely to select “No” than those who started attending 1-5 years ago (56%) or 6-10 years ago (49%)

**“Please rate how important each of the following attributes of your current church were in your decision to attend your current church.”**

## **Denomination**

- Those in the Midwest (68%) are more likely to select “Extremely Important/Important” than those in the Northeast (57%)
- Those age 30-49 (68%) are more likely to select “Extremely Important/Important” than those 18-29 (57%)
- Those age 18-29 (18%) are more likely to select “Extremely Unimportant/Unimportant” than those 65+ (8%)
- Lutherans (78%) and Christian/Church of Christ (76%) are more likely to select “Extremely Important/Important” than Methodists (61%) and Non-denominational (50%)

## **Location**

- Those age 30-49 (70%) and 65+ (69%) are more likely to select “Extremely Important/Important” than those 18-29 (60%)



**“Please rate how important each of the following attributes of your current church were in your decision to attend your current church.”**

## **Worship Times**

- Whites (26%) are more likely to select “Neutral” than African Americans (15%)
- Baptists (69%), Methodists (75%), and Christian/Church of Christ (71%) are more likely to select “Extremely Important/Important” than Presbyterian/Reformed (51%)

**“Please rate how important each of the following attributes of your current church were in your decision to attend your current church.”**

## **Worship Style**

- Those age 18-29 are the least likely to select “Extremely Important/Important” (67%)
- Whites (82%) and African Americans (76%) are more likely to select “Extremely Important/Important” than Other Ethnicities (58%)
- Those with a Bachelor’s Degree (84%) or a Graduate Degree (85%) are more likely to select “Extremely Important/Important” than those who are High School Graduates or less (71%)
- Those who attend a worship service 4 or more times a month are the most likely to select “Extremely Important/Important” (83%)

**“Please rate how important each of the following attributes of your current church were in your decision to attend your current church.”**

## **Preaching**

- Those age 18-29 are the least likely to select “Extremely Important/Important” (73%)
- Whites (87%) and African Americans (84%) are more likely to select “Extremely Important/Important” than Other Ethnicities (70%)
- Those with a Bachelor’s Degree (89%) or a Graduate Degree (89%) are more likely to select “Extremely Important/Important” than those who are High School Graduates or less (78%)
- Those who attend a worship service 4 or more times a month are the most likely to select “Extremely Important/Important” (89%)
- Those with evangelical beliefs are more likely to select “Extremely Important/Important” than those without evangelical beliefs (92% v. 78%)
- Non-denominational (95%) are more likely to select “Extremely Important/Important” than Baptists (84%), Methodists (84%), Lutherans (86%), and Christian/Church of Christ (82%)

**“Please rate how important each of the following attributes of your current church were in your decision to attend your current church.”**

## **Music**

- Those age 30-49 (75%) are more likely to select “Extremely Important/Important” than those 18-29 (57%) and 50-64 (65%)
- Hispanics (19%) are more likely to select “Extremely Unimportant/Unimportant” than Whites (7%)
- Those who attend a worship service 4 or more times a month (71%) are more likely to select “Extremely Important/Important” than those who attend 2 times a month (61%)

**“Please rate how important each of the following attributes of your current church were in your decision to attend your current church.”**

**Church members with whom I could build relationships**

- Those age 30-49 (79%) and 65+ (78%) are more likely to select “Extremely Important/Important” than those 18-29 (67%)
- Whites (78%) and Hispanics (84%) are more likely to select “Extremely Important/Important” than Other Ethnicities (61%)
- Those who attend a worship service 4 or more times a month are the most likely to select “Extremely Important/Important” (79%)
- Those with evangelical beliefs are more likely to select “Extremely Important/Important” than those without evangelical beliefs (81% v. 70%)

**“Please rate how important each of the following attributes of your current church were in your decision to attend your current church.”**

**Church members similar to me (interests, background, etc.)**

- Those age 30-49 are the most likely to select “Extremely Important/Important” (66%)
- African Americans (20%) and Other Ethnicities (26%) are more likely to select “Extremely Unimportant/Unimportant” than Whites (10%)
- Those with evangelical beliefs are more likely to select “Extremely Important/Important” than those without evangelical beliefs (65% v. 52%)
- Baptists (59%), Methodists (64%), and Lutherans (64%) are more likely to select “Extremely Important/Important” than Non-denominational (48%)

**“Please rate how important each of the following attributes of your current church were in your decision to attend your current church.”**

**Opportunities to serve (specific opportunity to serve in a class or ministry team, etc.)**

- Those in the South (66%) are more likely to select “Extremely Important/Important” than those in the Northeast (54%) and Midwest (57%)
- Those age 30-49 are the most likely to select “Extremely Important/Important” (72%)
- Those with a Graduate Degree are the most likely to select “Extremely Important/Important” (71%)
- Those who attend a worship service 4 or more times a month (65%) are more likely to select “Extremely Important/Important” than those who attend 2 times a month (54%)
- Those with evangelical beliefs are more likely to select “Extremely Important/Important” than those without evangelical beliefs (73% v. 50%)
- Baptists (65%) and Christian/Church of Christ (66%) are more likely to select “Extremely Important/Important” than Methodists (52%) and Lutherans (48%)

**“Please rate how important each of the following attributes of your current church were in your decision to attend your current church.”**

**Opportunities to learn biblical truth (specific opportunity to participate in a class, event, etc.)**

- Those age 30-49 (80%) are more likely to select “Extremely Important/Important” than those 18-29 (68%) and 65+ (72%)
- Those who attend a worship service 4 or more times a month are the most likely to select “Extremely Important/Important” (81%)
- Those with evangelical beliefs are more likely to select “Extremely Important/Important” than those without evangelical beliefs (87% v. 60%)
- Baptists (79%), Christian/Church of Christ (78%), and Non-denominational (85%) are more likely to select “Extremely Important/Important” than Methodists (61%) and Lutherans (56%)
- Those who started attending their current church less than a year ago (82%) are more likely to select “Extremely Important/Important” than those who started attending 1-5 years ago (73%) and 6-10 years ago (68%)



**“Please rate how important each of the following attributes of your current church were in your decision to attend your current church.”**

### **Beliefs/Doctrine of the church**

- Those age 65+ are the most likely to select “Extremely Important/Important” (94%)
- Those age 18-29 are the most likely to select “Extremely Unimportant/Unimportant” (14%)
- Whites are the most likely to select “Extremely Important/Important” (88%)
- Those who are High School Graduates or less are the least likely to select “Extremely Important/Important” (77%)
- Those who attend a worship service 4 or more times a month are the most likely to select “Extremely Important/Important” (90%)
- Those with evangelical beliefs are more likely to select “Extremely Important/Important” than those without evangelical beliefs (90% v. 80%)

**“Please rate how important each of the following attributes of your current church were in your decision to attend your current church.”**

### **Evidence of God’s work/changed lives**

- Those age 18-29 (23%) are more likely to select “Neutral” than those 30-49 (14%) and 50-64 (12%)
- Whites are the least likely to select “Extremely Unimportant/Unimportant” (5%)
- Those who attend a worship service 4 or more times a month are the most likely to select “Extremely Important/Important” (83%)
- Those with evangelical beliefs are more likely to select “Extremely Important/Important” than those without evangelical beliefs (89% v. 65%)
- Baptists (80%), Christian/Church of Christ (79%), and Non-denominational (81%) are more likely to select “Extremely Important/Important” than Lutherans (63%)

**“Please rate how important each of the following attributes of your current church were in your decision to attend your current church.”**

### **Care for community**

- Those age 30-49 (84%) and 50-64 (84%) are more likely to select “Extremely Important/Important” than those 18-29 (74%)
- Whites (84%) are more likely to select “Extremely Important/Important” than Other Ethnicities (65%)

**“Please rate how important each of the following attributes of your current church were in your decision to attend your current church.”**

## **Unity among members**

- Those age 30-49 (86%) and 50-64 (85%) are more likely to select “Extremely Important/Important” than those 18-29 (73%)
- Those age 18-29 are the most likely to select “Extremely Unimportant/Unimportant” (13%)
- Those with some college are the most likely to select “Extremely Important/Important” (88%)
- Those with evangelical beliefs are more likely to select “Extremely Important/Important” than those without evangelical beliefs (88% v. 75%)
- Baptists (83%), Christian/Church of Christ (87%), and Non-denominational (87%) are more likely to select “Extremely Important/Important” than Lutherans (70%)
- Those who started attending their current church less than a year (88%) are more likely to select “Extremely Important/Important” than those who started attending 6-10 years ago (79%) or more than 10 years ago (80%)

**“Please rate how important each of the following attributes of your current church were in your decision to attend your current church.”**

### **Authenticity of church members/pastor (down-to-earth, etc.)**

- Those age 18-29 are the least likely to select “Extremely Important/Important” (59%)
- Whites are the most likely to select “Extremely Important/Important” (89%)
- Those with a Bachelor’s Degree (88%) or a Graduate Degree (88%) are more likely to select “Extremely Important/Important” than those who are High School Graduates or less (77%)
- Those who attend a worship service 4 or more times a month are the most likely to select “Extremely Important/Important” (88%)
- Those with evangelical beliefs are more likely to select “Extremely Important/Important” than those without evangelical beliefs (89% v. 78%)
- Non-denominational (94%) are more likely to select “Extremely Important/Important” than Baptists (86%), Methodists (83%), and Christian/Church of Christ (79%)

**“Please rate how important each of the following attributes of your current church were in your decision to attend your current church.”**

### **Acquaintances among church members**

- Those in the Northeast (34%) are more likely to select “Neutral” than those in the Southeast (23%) and West (20%)
- Those age 18-29 (68%) and 30-49 (68%) are more likely to select “Extremely Important/Important” than those 65+ (53%)
- African Americans (69%) are more likely to select “Extremely Important/Important” than Whites (59%)
- Those with evangelical beliefs are more likely to select “Extremely Important/Important” than those without evangelical beliefs (66% v. 54%)
- Baptists (64%) and Methodists (65%) are more likely to select “Extremely Important/Important” than Non-denominational (50%)

**“Please rate how important each of the following attributes of your current church were in your decision to attend your current church.”**

## **Size of church**

- Those in the West are the least likely to select “Extremely Unimportant/Unimportant” (19%)
- Those age 30-49 (46%) are more likely to select “Extremely Important/Important” than those 18-29 (33%) and 65+ (38%)
- Those age 65+ are the least likely to select “Extremely Unimportant/Unimportant” (19%)
- Those with a Graduate Degree (47%) are more likely to select “Extremely Important/Important” than those who are High School Graduates or less (37%) or with some college (35%)
- Methodists (48%) and Presbyterian/Reformed (54%) are more likely to select “Extremely Important/Important” than Lutherans (30%) and Non-denominational (34%)
- Those who started attending their current church 6-10 years ago (46%) or more than 10 years ago (43%) are more likely to select “Extremely Important/Important” than those who started attending 1-5 years ago (34%)

**“Please rate how important each of the following attributes of your current church were in your decision to attend your current church.”**

### **Low pressure to commit**

- Those in the Midwest (33%) are more likely to select “Neutral” than those in the Northeast (22%)
- Those age 18-29 are the most likely to select “Extremely Unimportant/Unimportant” (19%)
- Methodists (70%) and Christian/Church of Christ (67%) are more likely to select “Extremely Important/Important” than Lutherans (50%)



**“Please rate how important each of the following attributes of your current church were in your decision to attend your current church.”**

### **Little use of religious jargon**

- Those in the West (43%) are more likely to select “Extremely Important/Important” than those in the Midwest (32%)
- Those age 30-49 are the most likely to select “Extremely Important/Important” (53%)
- African Americans (44%) are more likely to select “Extremely Important/Important” than Whites (34%)
- Christian/Church of Christ (42%) are more likely to select “Extremely Important/Important” than Lutherans (25%)
- Those who started attending their current church 6-10 years ago (%) are more likely to select than those who started attending 1-5 years ago (%)

**“Please rate how important each of the following attributes of your current church were in your decision to attend your current church.”**

### **Age-appropriate programs for my children**

- Those age 30-49 are the most likely to select “Extremely Important/Important” (75%)
- Hispanics (73%) are more likely to select “Extremely Important/Important” than Whites (45%) and Other Ethnicities (47%)
- Baptists (53%) and Christian/Church of Christ (55%) are more likely to select “Extremely Important/Important” than Lutherans (23%) and Presbyterian/Reformed (36%)

# Church Switcher Study 2023

## Factors in Choosing Current Church Report

REPORT OF STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES IN RESPONSES  
FOR 9 SUBGROUPS OF AMERICAN PROTESTANT CHURCH SWITCHERS

Lifeway **research**