

Church Switcher Study 2023

Reasons for Switching Churches Report

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

Lifewayresearch

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

Gender

Region

Age

Ethnicity

Education Level

Worship Service Attendance

Evangelical Beliefs

Denomination

Years at Current Church

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%)

“What are ALL the reasons that you no longer attend your previous church?” *Among Church Switchers whose Change was not Related to a Residential Move*

I became disenchanted in some way(s) with the Pastor

- Those age 65+ (37%) are more likely to select than those 18-29 (17%) and 30-49 (14%)
- Whites (31%) are more likely to select than African Americans (17%)
- Those with a Graduate Degree (35%) are more likely to select than those who are High School Graduates or less (20%)
- Those who attend a worship service 4 or more times a month (33%) are more likely to select than those who attend 2 times a month (17%)

“What are ALL the reasons that you no longer attend your previous church?” *Among Church Switchers whose Change was not Related to a Residential Move*

I became disenchanted in some way(s) with the church

- Those in the Midwest (37%) are more likely to select than those in the South (22%) and West (18%)
- Those with a Bachelor’s Degree (34%) or a Graduate Degree (35%) are more likely to select than those who are High School Graduates or less (19%) or with some college (18%)
- Those who started attending their current church More than 10 years ago are the least likely to select (15%)

Some thing(s) changed about the church I did not like

- Those in the Northeast (40%) and Midwest (35%) are more likely to select than those in the South (24%)
- Those with a Graduate Degree (36%) are more likely to select than those who are High School Graduates or less (22%)

“What are ALL the reasons that you no longer attend your previous church?” *Among Church Switchers whose Change was not Related to a Residential Move*

I could not agree with some of the church’s teachings or positions on issues or politics

- Those with some college (25%) or a Graduate Degree (30%) are more likely to select than those who are High School Graduates or less (14%)

I felt out of place at the church

- Those age 18-29 are the most likely to select (37%)
- Hispanics (45%) are more likely to select than Whites (19%) and African Americans (17%)
- Those with a Bachelor’s Degree (24%) are more likely to select than those with some college (13%)

The church was not fulfilling my needs or reasons for attending church

- Those age 18-29 (43%) and 65+ (35%) are more likely to select than those 30-49 (22%) and 50-64 (24%)

“What are ALL the reasons that you no longer attend your previous church?” *Among Church Switchers whose Change was not Related to a Residential Move*

I had problems or conflicts with other church members, staff or clergy or the church had a conflict

- Those age 18-29 (23%) are more likely to select than those 50-64 (8%) and 65+ (7%)

Changes in my life situation caused me to stop attending that church

- Those age 30-49 (24%) are more likely to select than those 65+ (13%)
- Those who attend a worship service 2 times a month are the most likely to select (26%)

My beliefs or attitudes toward church and religion changed

- Those age 18-29 (20%) are more likely to select than those 50-64 (5%) and 65+ (8%)

“What are ALL the reasons that you no longer attend your previous church?” *Among Church Switchers whose Change was not Related to a Residential Move*

COVID-19 issues

- Those age 18-29 (31%) and 30-49 (20%) are more likely to select than those 50-64 (8%) and 65+ (9%)
- African Americans (23%) and Hispanics (36%) are more likely to select than Whites (10%)

Church closed

- No meaningful significant differences

I stopped attending the church for some other reason(s)

- Those who attend a worship service 4 or more times a month (25%) are more likely to select than those who attend 3 times a month (14%)
- Those who started attending their current church 1-5 years ago are the least likely to select (26%)

“My decision to switch churches was most impacted by...”

- Those age 50-64 (55%) and 65+ (54%) are more likely to select “My need/desire to join my current church” than those 18-29 (43%)
- Those age 18-29 (57%) are more likely to select “My need/desire to leave my previous church” than those 50-64 (45%) and 65+ (46%)
- Those who attend a worship service 4 or more times a month (55%) are more likely to select “My need/desire to join my current church” than those who attend 2 times a month (46%)
- Those who attend a worship service 2 times a month (54%) are more likely to select “My need/desire to leave my previous church” than those who attend 4 or more times a month (45%)

“Which of the following best describes the style of Worship Service at your previous/current churches?”

Previous Church

- Those age 18-29 (55%), 50-64 (48%), and 65+ (58%) are more likely to select “Traditional” than those 30-49 (38%)
- Whites (50%) and African Americans (50%) are more likely to select “Traditional” than Other Ethnicities (33%)
- Those who attend a worship service 2 times a month (58%) are more likely to select “Traditional” than those who attend 4 or times a month (47%)
- Those without evangelical beliefs are more likely to select “Traditional” than those with evangelical beliefs (55% v. 45%)
- Methodists (62%) are more likely to select “Traditional” than Christian/Church of Christ (44%) and Non-denominational (36%)
- Those who started attending their current church more than 10 years ago are the most likely to select “Traditional” (60%)

“Which of the following best describes the style of Worship Service at your previous/current churches?”

Current Church

- Those in the West (45%) are more likely to select “A Mix of Contemporary and Traditional Styles” than those in the Northeast (32%)
- Those age 65+ (45%) are more likely to select “Traditional” than those 18-29 (35%) and 30-49 (29%)
- African Americans (48%) are more likely to select “A Mix of Contemporary and Traditional Styles” than Whites (37%) and Hispanics (30%)
- Those who are High School Graduates or less (44%) are more likely to select “Traditional” than those with some college (33%)
- Baptists (39%), Christian/Church of Christ (45%), and Non-denominational (44%) are more likely to select “A Mix of Contemporary and Traditional Styles” than Methodists (26%)
- Those who started attending their current church 1-5 years ago are the most likely to select “Contemporary” (29%)

“Compared to your previous church, how well does your current church meet your needs in each of the following areas?”

My church provides me with opportunities to use my talents to serve

- Those age 30-49 are the most likely to select “Much MORE or More than Previous Church” (64%)
- African Americans (57%) are more likely to select “Much MORE or More than Previous Church” than Whites (48%) and Other Ethnicities (40%)
- Those with a Graduate Degree (55%) are more likely to select “Much MORE or More than Previous Church” than those with some college (44%)
- Those who attend a worship service 2 times a month are the least likely to select “Much MORE or More than Previous Church” (38%)
- Those with evangelical beliefs are more likely to select “Much MORE or More than Previous Church” than those without evangelical beliefs (56% v. 40%)
- Methodists (51%) and Christian/Church of Christ (52%) are more likely to select “Much MORE or More than Previous Church” than Lutherans (34%)

“Compared to your previous church, how well does your current church meet your needs in each of the following areas?”

My church fosters spiritual growth/maturity

- Those age 30-49 (63%) are more likely to select “Much MORE or More than Previous Church” than those 50-64 (54%) and 65+ (50%)
- Whites (55%) and African Americans (62%) are more likely to select “Much MORE or More than Previous Church” than Other Ethnicities (40%)
- Those who attend a worship service 4 or more times a month (59%) are more likely to select “Much MORE or More than Previous Church” than those who attend 2 times a month (47%)
- Those with evangelical beliefs are more likely to select “Much MORE or More than Previous Church” than those without evangelical beliefs (63% v. 48%)
- Presbyterian/Reformed (64%) are more likely to select “Much MORE or More than Previous Church” than Methodists (47%)

“Compared to your previous church, how well does your current church meet your needs in each of the following areas?”

I have developed deep relationships with my fellow church members

- Those age 18-29 (59%) and 30-49 (65%) are more likely to select “Much MORE or More than Previous Church” than those 50-64 (46%) and 65+ (43%)
- Those who attend a worship service 2 times a month are the most likely to select “Much LESS or Less than Previous Church” (23%)
- Baptists (50%), Methodists (51%), Presbyterian/Reformed (59%), and Christian/Church of Christ (61%) are more likely to select “Much MORE or More than Previous Church” than Lutherans (34%)
- Those who started attending their current church 6-10 years ago (59%) are more likely to select “Much MORE or More than Previous Church” than those who started attending less than a year ago (47%) or 1-5 years ago (48%)

“Compared to your previous church, how well does your current church meet your needs in each of the following areas?”

The church members and pastor seem authentic/real/down-to-earth

- Those age 30-49 (64%) are more likely to select “Much MORE or More than Previous Church” than those 50-64 (56%) and 65+ (53%)
- Those age 18-29 (18%) are more likely to select Much LESS or Less than Previous Church” than those 50-64 (6%) and 65+ (3%)
- Whites (59%) and African Americans (60%) are more likely to select “Much MORE or More than Previous Church” than Other Ethnicities (28%)
- Those with a Graduate Degree (65%) are more likely to select “Much MORE or More than Previous Church” than those who are High School Graduates or less (54%) or with some college (52%)
- Baptists (57%), Methodists (58%), Presbyterian/Reformed (61%), and Non-denominational (57%) are more likely to select “Much MORE or More than Previous Church” than Lutherans (42%)
- Those who started attending their current church 1-5 years ago (62%) are more likely to select “Much MORE or More than Previous Church” than those who started attending less than a year ago (52%) or more than 10 years ago (52%)

“Compared to your previous church, how well does your current church meet your needs in each of the following areas?”

The sermons at my church are consistently engaging/enlightening

- Those in the Midwest (39%) are more likely to select “The SAME as Previous Church” than those in the Northeast (28%)
- Those age 18-29 (66%) are more likely to select “Much MORE or More than Previous Church” than those 50-64 (57%) and 65+ (53%)
- Whites (59%) and African Americans (61%) are more likely to select “Much MORE or More than Previous Church” than Other Ethnicities (42%)
- Those with evangelical beliefs are more likely to select “Much MORE or More than Previous Church” than those without evangelical beliefs (63% v. 53%)

“Compared to your previous church, how well does your current church meet your needs in each of the following areas?”

I find it easy to worship because of the style and elements of my church’s worship services

- Those age 18-29 (60%) and 30-49 (60%) are more likely to select “Much MORE or More than Previous Church” than those 50-64 (49%)
- Whites (42%) are more likely to select “The SAME as Previous Church” than African Americans (31%) and Hispanics (24%)
- Those with evangelical beliefs are more likely to select “Much MORE or More than Previous Church” than those without evangelical beliefs (59% v. 47%)
- Baptists (52%), Methodists (55%), and Non-denominational (57%) are more likely to select “Much MORE or More than Previous Church” than Lutherans (36%)

“Compared to your previous church, how well does your current church meet your needs in each of the following areas?”

My church’s worship services are convenient for me to attend (time, location, etc.)

- Those age 30-49 are the most likely to select “Much MORE or More than Previous Church” (58%)
- Whites (47%) are more likely to select “The SAME as Previous Church” than African Americans (32%) and Other Ethnicities (23%)
- Those with some college are the most likely to select “The SAME as Previous Church” (51%)
- Those with evangelical beliefs are more likely to select “Much MORE or More than Previous Church” than those without evangelical beliefs (54% v. 40%)

“Compared to your previous church, how well does your current church meet your needs in each of the following areas?”

I agree with the teachings/beliefs/doctrine of my church

- Those age 30-49 (62%) are more likely to select “Much MORE or More than Previous Church” than those 50-64 (45%) and 65+ (48%)
- Those age 18-29 are the most likely to select “Much LESS or Less than Previous Church” (18%)
- Whites are the least likely to select “Much LESS or Less than Previous Church” (4%)
- Those with a Graduate Degree (57%) are more likely to select “Much MORE or More than Previous Church” than those who are High School Graduates or less (47%)
- Those who attend a worship service 4 or more times a month (54%) are more likely to select “Much MORE or More than Previous Church” than those who attend 2 times a month (44%)
- Those with evangelical beliefs are more likely to select “Much MORE or More than Previous Church” than those without evangelical beliefs (58% v. 45%)

“Compared to your previous church, how well does your current church meet your needs in each of the following areas?”

I see God at work in people’s lives at my church

- Those age 18-29 (63%) and 30-49 (64%) are more likely to select “Much MORE or More than Previous Church” than those 65+ (51%)
- African Americans (62%) are more likely to select “Much MORE or More than Previous Church” than Other Ethnicities (44%)
- Those with evangelical beliefs are more likely to select “Much MORE or More than Previous Church” than those without evangelical beliefs (64% v. 49%)
- Baptists (61%) and Christian/Church of Christ (60%) are more likely to select “Much MORE or More than Previous Church” than Lutherans (42%)

“Compared to your previous church, how well does your current church meet your needs in each of the following areas?”

My church cares for the community in tangible ways

- Those in the Midwest (42%) are more likely to select “The SAME as Previous Church” than those in the Northeast (29%) and South (33%)
- Those age 30-49 are the most likely to select “Much MORE or More than Previous Church” (64%)
- Hispanics are the least likely to select “The SAME as Previous Church” (14%)
- Those with a Graduate Degree (62%) are more likely to select “Much MORE or More than Previous Church” than those with some college (52%)
- Christian/Church of Christ (63%) are more likely to select “Much MORE or More than Previous Church” than Lutherans (47%)

“Compared to your previous church, how well does your current church meet your needs in each of the following areas?”

The preaching at my church is relevant to my life

- Those in the Northeast (66%) are more likely to select “Much MORE or More than Previous Church” than those in the Midwest (54%)
- Those age 30-49 (65%) are more likely to select “Much MORE or More than Previous Church” than those 65+ (53%)
- Those with a Bachelor’s Degree (62%) or a Graduate Degree (64%) are more likely to select “Much MORE or More than Previous Church” than those who are High School Graduates or less (54%) or with some college (52%)
- Those with evangelical beliefs are more likely to select “Much MORE or More than Previous Church” than those without evangelical beliefs (64% v. 52%)
- Non-denominational (65%) are more likely to select “Much MORE or More than Previous Church” than Methodists (52%) and Lutherans (45%)
- Those who started attending their current church 6-10 years ago (63%) are more likely to select “Much MORE or More than Previous Church” than those who started attending more than 10 years ago (53%)

“Compared to your previous church, how well does your current church meet your needs in each of the following areas?”

There is unity among members at my church

- Those in the Midwest (46%) are more likely to select “The SAME as Previous Church” than those in the South (37%) and West (35%)
- Those age 18-29 (57%) and 30-49 (64%) are more likely to select “Much MORE or More than Previous Church” than those 65+ (47%)
- African Americans (58%) are more likely to select “Much MORE or More than Previous Church” than Other Ethnicities (40%)
- Those with a Graduate Degree (59%) are more likely to select “Much MORE or More than Previous Church” than those who are High School Graduates or less (49%)
- Those with evangelical beliefs are more likely to select “Much MORE or More than Previous Church” than those without evangelical beliefs (59% v. 49%)
- Christian/Church of Christ (59%) are more likely to select “Much MORE or More than Previous Church” than Lutherans (42%)

“Compared to your previous church, how well does your current church meet your needs in each of the following areas?”

My church is welcoming/friendly

- Those in the Northeast (64%) and West (64%) are more likely to select “Much MORE or More than Previous Church” than those in the Midwest (52%)
- Those age 65+ are the most likely to select “The SAME as Previous Church” (50%)
- Those age 18-29 (66%) and 30-49 (68%) are more likely to select “Much MORE or More than Previous Church” than those 50-64 (55%) and 65+ (47%)
- Whites (39%) are more likely to select “The SAME as Previous Church” than African Americans (29%)
- Lutherans (50%) are more likely to select “The SAME as Previous Church” than Baptists (34%) and Christian/Church of Christ (34%)

“Compared to your previous church, how well does your current church meet your needs in each of the following areas?”

My church does things with excellence

- Those age 30-49 (66%) are more likely to select “Much MORE or More than Previous Church” than those 50-64 (50%) and 65+ (48%)
- African Americans (63%) are more likely to select “Much MORE or More than Previous Church” than Whites (53%) and Other Ethnicities (57%)
- Those with evangelical beliefs are more likely to select “Much MORE or More than Previous Church” than those without evangelical beliefs (60% v. 49%)
- Baptists (56%) and Christian/Church of Christ (59%) are more likely to select “Much MORE or More than Previous Church” than Lutherans (41%)

“Compared to your previous church, how well does your current church meet your needs in each of the following areas?”

I don't want to miss services at my church

- Those age 30-49 (61%) are more likely to select “Much MORE or More than Previous Church” than those 50-64 (45%) and 65+ (42%)
- Whites (45%) are more likely to select “The SAME as Previous Church” than African Americans (35%)
- Those who attend a worship service 2 times a month are the most likely to select “The SAME as Previous Church” (54%) and the least likely to select “Much MORE or More than Previous Church” (35%)
- Those with evangelical beliefs are more likely to select “Much MORE or More than Previous Church” than those without evangelical beliefs (56% v. 42%)
- Presbyterian/Reformed (53%), Christian/Church of Christ (51%), and Non-denominational (50%) are more likely to select “Much MORE or More than Previous Church” than Lutherans (33%)

“Compared to your previous church, how well does your current church meet your needs in each of the following areas?”

I am actively involved in my church

- Those in the Northeast (53%) and South (51%) are more likely to select “Much MORE or More than Previous Church” than those in the Midwest (41%)
- Those age 18-29 (59%) and 30-49 (65%) are more likely to select “Much MORE or More than Previous Church” than those 50-64 (42%) and 65+ (38%)
- African Americans (55%) and Hispanics (65%) are more likely to select “Much MORE or More than Previous Church” than Whites (47%)
- Those who attend a worship service 2 times a month are the least likely to select “Much MORE or More than Previous Church” (39%)
- Christian/Church of Christ (59%) are more likely to select “Much MORE or More than Previous Church” than Methodists (39%) and Lutheran (34%)
- Those who started attending their current church 6-10 years ago (57%) are more likely to select “Much MORE or More than Previous Church” than those who started attending less than a year ago (44%) and 1-5 years ago (47%)

“Which of the following best describe the preaching at your previous/current churches?” Previous Church

Was relevant to my life

- Those age 65+ are the most likely to select (60%)
- Those with a Bachelor’s Degree (52%) or a Graduate Degree (54%) are more likely to select than those who are High School Graduates or less (40%)
- Lutherans (61%) are more likely to select than Baptists (45%) and Non-denominational (44%)

“Which of the following best describe the preaching at your previous/current churches?” Current Church

Is relevant to my life

- Those age 50-64 (88%) and 65+ (91%) are more likely to select than those 18-29 (71%) and 30-49 (80%)
- Whites are the most likely to select (89%)
- Non-denominational (93%) are more likely to select than Baptists (85%), Methodists (82%), and Christian/Church of Christ (79%)

“Which of the following best describe the preaching at your previous/current churches?” Previous Church

Was clear and understandable

- Those age 65+ are the most likely to select (59%)
- Those who are High School Graduates or less are the least likely to select (38%)
- Those who attend a worship service 3 times a month are the least likely to select (39%)
- Lutheran (59%) and Presbyterian/Reformed (58%) are more likely to select than Baptists (43%) and Christian/Church of Christ (36%)

“Which of the following best describe the preaching at your previous/current churches?” Current Church

Is clear and understandable

- Those age 65+ are the most likely to select (95%)
- Whites (91%) are more likely to select than African Americans (80%)

“Which of the following best describe the preaching at your previous/current churches?” Previous Church

Challenged me to live and think as Scripture teaches

- Those in the Midwest (50%) are more likely to select than those in the South (39%)
- Those age 65+ (49%) are more likely to select than those 30-49 (39%) and 50-64 (41%)
- Those who started attending their current church less than a year (49%) are more likely to select than those who started attending 6-10 years ago (37%)

“Which of the following best describe the preaching at your previous/current churches?” Current Church

Challenges me to live and think as Scripture teaches

- Those age 65+ (90%) are more likely to select than those 18-29 (73%) and 30-49 (81%)
- Whites (88%) are more likely to select than African Americans (76%) and Other Ethnicities (67%)
- Those who are High School Graduates or less are the least likely to select (77%)
- Those who attend a worship service 4 or more times a month are the most likely to select (88%)
- Baptists (87%) and Non-denominational (89%) are more likely to select than Methodists (75%) and Lutherans (75%)

“Which of the following best describe the preaching at your previous/current churches?” Previous Church

Interested me enough to hold my attention

- Those age 65+ are the most likely to select (52%)
- Presbyterian/Reformed (58%) are more likely to select than Baptists (39%) and Christian/Church of Christ (34%)

“Which of the following best describe the preaching at your previous/current churches?” Current Church

Interests me enough to hold my attention

- Those age 50-64 (91%) and 65+ (94%) are more likely to select than those 18-29 (79%) and 30-49 (81%)
- Whites (90%) are more likely to select than African Americans (80%) and Hispanics (78%)
- Baptists (91%), Christian/Church of Christ (93%), and Non-denominational (91%) are more likely to select than Methodists (79%)

“Which of the following best describe the preaching at your previous/current churches?” Previous Church

Taught me something I didn't already know

- Those in the Midwest (52%) and West (47%) are more likely to select than those in the South (38%)
- Hispanics are the least likely to select (24%)
- Those with a Bachelor's Degree (48%) or a Graduate Degree (45%) are more likely to select than those who are High School Graduates or less (36%)

“Which of the following best describe the preaching at your previous/current churches?” Current Church

Teaches me something I didn't already know

- Those age 50-64 (90%) and 65+ (86%) are more likely to select than those 18-29 (73%)
- Non-denominational (89%) are more likely to select than Lutherans (77%)

“Which of the following best describe the preaching at your previous/current churches?” Previous Church

Focused on a specific text (verse-by-verse)

- Those in the Midwest (52%) are more likely to select than those in the South (41%)
- Those with some college (50%) or a Bachelor’s Degree (47%) are more likely to select than those who are High School Graduates or less (35%)
- Those who attend a worship service 2 times a month (48%) are more likely to select than those who attend 3 times a month (38%)
- Non-denominational (53%) are more likely to select than Christian/Church of Christ (40%)

“Which of the following best describe the preaching at your previous/current churches?” Current Church

Focuses on a specific text (verse-by-verse)

- Those who attend a worship service 4 or more times a month are the most likely to select (84%)
- Those with evangelical beliefs are more likely to select than those without evangelical beliefs (86% v. 75%)
- Christian/Church of Christ (85%) and Non-denominational (85%) are more likely to select than Lutherans (72%)

“Which of the following best describe the preaching at your previous/current churches?” Previous Church

Focused on a specific topic

- Those in the Midwest (52%) are more likely to select than those in the South (39%)
- Those age 65+ (50%) are more likely to select than those 50-64 (40%)
- Those with some college (47%) or a Bachelor’s Degree (48%) are more likely to select than those who are High School Graduates or less (35%)

“Which of the following best describe the preaching at your previous/current churches?” Current Church

Focuses on a specific topic

- Those age 50-64 (87%) and 65+ (82%) are more likely to select than those 18-29 (72%)
- Whites (84%) are more likely to select than Hispanics (70%) and Other Ethnicities (70%)
- Christian/Church of Christ (86%) and Non-denominational (85%) are more likely to select than Methodists (74%)
- Those who started attending their current church less than a year ago (88%) and 1-5 years ago (81%) are more likely to select than those who started attending 6-10 years ago (77%)

“Which of the following statements best describes your current faith?”

- Those age 18-29 are the most likely to select “I consider myself a Christian, but not particularly devout” (33%) and “I consider myself a Christian, but not currently practicing it” (16%)
- Those with a Graduate Degree (78%) are more likely to select “I consider myself a Christian with a strong faith” than those who are High School Graduates or less (68%)
- Those who attend a worship service 4 or more times a month are the most likely to select “I consider myself a Christian with a strong faith” (85%)
- Those with evangelical beliefs are more likely to select “I consider myself a Christian with a strong faith” than those without evangelical beliefs (90% v. 54%)
- Non-denominational (81%) are more likely to select “I consider myself a Christian with a strong faith” than Methodists (67%), Lutherans (67%), and Christian/Church of Christ (67%)
- Those who started attending their current church less than a year ago (78%) or more than 10 years ago (77%) are more likely to select “I consider myself a Christian with a strong faith” than those who started attending 6-10 years ago (68%)

“In what ways were you/are you involved in your previous and current churches?” Previous Church

Held a leadership position (clergy, deacon, ministry leader, teacher, etc.)

- Those with a Graduates Degree are the most likely to select (43%)
- Baptists (36%) and Methodists (35%) are more likely to select than Non-denominational (22%)

“In what ways were you/are you involved in your previous and current churches?” Current Church

Hold a leadership position (clergy, deacon, ministry leader, teacher, etc.)

- Those age 30-49 (47%) are more likely to select than those 50-64 (30%) and 65+ (27%)
- Those with a Graduates Degree (42%) are more likely to select than those who are High School Graduates or less (31%) or with a Bachelor’s Degree (30%)
- Those who attend a worship service 4 or more times a month (37%) are more likely to select than those who attend 2 times a month (26%)
- Methodists (40%), Presbyterian/Reformed (42%), and Christian/Church of Christ (46%) are more likely to select than Lutherans (22%) and Non-denominational (22%)
- Those who started attending their current church more than 10 years ago (41%) are more likely to select than those who started attending less than a year ago (29%) or 1-5 years ago (30%)

“In what ways were you/are you involved in your previous and current churches?” Previous Church

Served on church council or board

- Methodists (31%) are more likely to select than Non-denominational (16%)

“In what ways were you/are you involved in your previous and current churches?” Current Church

Serve on church council or board

- Those age 18-29 (50%) and 30-49 (46%) are more likely to select than those 50-64 (26%) and 65+ (22%)
- Those with a Graduate Degree (41%) are more likely to select than those with some college (30%) or a Bachelor’s Degree (28%)
- Baptists (33%), Methodists (40%), Presbyterian/Reformed (37%), and Christian/Church of Christ (43%) are more likely to select than Lutherans (20%) and Non-denominational (19%)
- Those who started attending their current church 6-10 years ago (36%) or more than 10 years ago (37%) are more likely to select than those who started attending less than a year ago (26%)

“In what ways were you/are you involved in your previous and current churches?” Previous Church

Held a non-leader position with regular responsibility (e.g., sang in choir, greeter, lector, usher, teacher aid, etc.)

- Those with some college (40%) or a Graduate Degree (38%) are more likely to select than those who are High School Graduates or less (27%)
- Baptists (35%), Lutherans (44%), and Presbyterian/Reformed (44%) are more likely to select than Christian/Church of Christ (24%)
- Those who started attending their current church less than a year ago (41%) are more likely to select than those who started attending 1-5 years ago (31%)

“In what ways were you/are you involved in your previous and current churches?” Current Church

Hold a non-leader position with regular responsibility (e.g., sang in choir, greeter, lector, usher, teacher aid, etc.)

- Those age 18-29 (56%) are more likely to select than those 50-64 (43%) and 65+ (45%)
- Those who attend a worship service 4 or more times a month (51%) are more likely to select than those who attend 2 times a month (39%)
- Presbyterian/Reformed (54%) and Christian/Church of Christ (52%) are more likely to select than Non-denominational (38%)
- Those who started attending their current church less than a year ago are the least likely to select (37%)

“In what ways were you/are you involved in your previous and current churches?” Previous Church

Volunteered when individual opportunities arose (i.e., events/fundraisers)

- Those age 65+ (50%) are more likely to select than those 18-29 (33%) and 50-64 (41%)
- Those who are High School Graduates or less are the least likely to select (29%)
- Presbyterian/Reformed are the most likely to select (61%)

“In what ways were you/are you involved in your previous and current churches?” Current Church

Volunteer when individual opportunities arise (i.e. events/fundraisers)

- Those age 30-49 (64%) and 65+ (62%) are more likely to select than those 18-29 (51%)
- Whites are the most likely to select (63%)
- Those with some college (65%) or a Graduate Degree (64%) are more likely to select than those who are High School Graduates or less (54%)
- Those who attend a worship service 4 or more times a month (63%) are more likely to select than those who attend 2 times a month (53%)
- Those who started attending their current church 6-10 years ago (63%) or more than 10 years ago (63%) are more likely to select than those who started attending less than a year ago (53%)

“In what ways were you/are you involved in your previous and current churches?” Previous Church

Was a consistent financial supporter of the church

- Those age 65+ are the most likely to select (72%)
- Whites are the most likely to select (56%)
- Those with a Graduate Degree are the most likely to select (63%)
- Those who are High School Graduates or less are the least likely to select (38%)
- Those who attend a worship service 4 or more times a month are the most likely to select (56%)
- Presbyterian/Reformed (61%) and Non-denominational (58%) are more likely to select than Baptists (45%) and Christian/Church of Christ (37%)

“In what ways were you/are you involved in your previous and current churches?” Current Church

Am a consistent financial supporter of the church

- Those in the Midwest (74%) are more likely to select than those in the South (64%) and West (63%)
- Those age 65+ (80%) are more likely to select than those 18-29 (53%), 30-49 (61%) and 50-64 (63%)
- Whites (71%) are more likely to select than African Americans (56%) and Hispanics (41%)
- Those with a Graduate Degree (76%) are the most likely to select
- Those who attend a worship service 4 or more times a month are the most likely to select (71%)
- Those who started attending their current church less than a year ago are the least likely to select (55%)

“In what ways were you/are you involved in your previous and current churches?” Previous Church

Attended a small group, Sunday School or discipleship class

- Those age 65+ (48%) are more likely to select than those 18-29 (33%) and 50-64 (37%)
- Whites (43%) are more likely to select than African Americans (33%)
- Those who are High School Graduates or less are the least likely to select (29%)
- Those with evangelical beliefs are more likely to select than those without evangelical beliefs (45% v. 35%)
- Baptists (43%) and Non-denominational (45%) are more likely to select than Lutherans (28%)

“In what ways were you/are you involved in your previous and current churches?” Current Church

Attend a small group, Sunday School or discipleship class

- Those with a Graduate Degree (63%) are more likely to select than those who are High School Graduates or less (51%) or a Bachelor’s Degree (53%)
- Those who attend a worship service 4 or more times a month are the most likely to select (61%)
- Those with evangelical beliefs are more likely to select than those without evangelical beliefs (62% v. 50%)
- Baptists (58%), Methodists (58%), Christian/Church of Christ (63%), and Non-denominational (58%) are more likely to select than Lutherans (42%)

“In what ways were you/are you involved in your previous and current churches?” Previous Church

Attended worship services in person

- Those in the Midwest (68%) are more likely to select than those in the South (54%)
- Those age 65+ are the most likely to select (79%)
- Whites are the most likely to select (64%)
- Those who are High School Graduates or less are the least likely to select (40%)
- Those who attend a worship service 4 or more times a month are the most likely to select (64%)
- Christian/Church of Christ are the least likely to select (39%)

“In what ways were you/are you involved in your previous and current churches?” Current Church

Attend worship services in person

- Those age 65+ are the most likely to select (89%)
- Whites are the most likely to select (81%)
- Those who are High School Graduates or less are the least likely to select (64%)
- Those who attend a worship service 2 times a month are the least likely to select (65%)

“Did you formally join/become a member of your current/previous churches?” Previous Church

- Lutherans (81%) are more likely to select “Yes” than Methodists (64%) and Non-denominational (66%)

“Did you formally join/become a member of your current/previous churches?” Current Church

- Those age 30-49 (81%) are more likely to select “Yes” than those 50-64 (69%) and 65+ (71%)
- Hispanics are the most likely to select “Yes” (95%)
- Those who attend a worship service 4 or more times a month (77%) are more likely to select “Yes” than those who attend 2 times a month (65%)
- Baptists (76%), Lutherans (81%), and Christian/Church of Christ (80%) are more likely to select “Yes” than Non-denominational (67%)
- Those who started attending their current church less than a year ago are the most likely to select “No” (40%)

“Which of the following reflects your plans to continue attending church in the future?”

- Those age 65+ are the most likely to select “I plan to continue attending the same church in the foreseeable future” (86%)
- Those age 18-29 are the most likely to select “I plan to continue attending the same church, but I’m open to switching churches in the future” (37%)
- Whites are the most likely to select “I plan to continue attending the same church in the foreseeable future” (82%)
- Those who attend a worship service 4 or more times a month are the most likely to select “I plan to continue attending the same church in the foreseeable future” (84%)
- Those with evangelical beliefs are more likely to select “I plan to continue attending the same church in the foreseeable future” than those without evangelical beliefs (84% v. 71%)
- Baptists (83%) are more likely to select “I plan to continue attending the same church in the foreseeable future” than Methodists (71%) and Presbyterian/Reformed (68%)

Church Switcher Study 2023

Reasons for Switching Churches Report

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

Lifewayresearch