



EXPLORING THE PANDEMIC IMPACT ON CONGREGATIONS

2023 Key Informant Survey Questionnaire and General Frequencies Exploring the Pandemic Impact on Congregations Study Spring 2023

N=4,809

Background/Demographics

Which of the following best describes your congregation's faith group?

- 5% Catholic & Orthodox Christian
- 68% Evangelical Protestant Christian
- 27% Mainline Protestant Christian

In what ZIP code is this congregation's primary place of worship physically located?

- 13% Northeast
- 47% South
- 24% Northcentral
- 16% West

Which best describes your congregation's relationship to its primary place of worship?

- 2% Have use of a facility for free
- 9% Rent
- 63% Owned by congregation
- 24% Owned by denomination
- 2% Other arrangement

Do one or more other organizations (beyond your congregation) use space at the facility where you worship?

- 41% Yes
- 59% No

[Branch (if yes)]

Do any of the following types of other organizations also use the facility where you worship? *(Check all that apply.)*

- 33% Another congregation(s)
- 12% A school (K-6, K-12)
- 21% A day care or preschool
- 52% Nonprofit organization(s), e.g., Boy Scouts, food shelf, credit union, fraternal organizations
- 36% Support group(s), e.g., A.A., Al-Anon, Alzheimer's
- 16% Government, e.g., voting, town hall meetings
- 8% For-profit organizations
- 22% Other (please describe):

How do these organizations provide compensation for the space? (Choose all that apply.)

- 41% Rent
- 64% Free use
- 17% Expense sharing
- 9% Other

How adequate are the following for the current needs of your congregation?

	Space for religious services/worship	Space for parking
Much less than we need	4%	8%
Slightly less than we need	12%	16%
Just about right	45%	46%
Slightly more than we need	25%	20%
Much more than we need	14%	10%

In-Person Worship

Please estimate the total average attendance at all of your regular weekend (Friday, Saturday, Sunday) worship service(s): 202 Mean **60 Median**

Please estimate the total average attendance at all of your regular weekend (Friday, Saturday, Sunday) worship service(s) in 2018: 222 Mean **75 Median**

Online/Virtual Worship

Does your church hold online/virtual worship? (Includes in-person worship services being broadcast/live-streamed/recorded and available to watch later)

- 75% Yes
- 25% No

[Branch (if yes)]

Do you track online attendance for these services?

- 48% Yes
- 52% No

[Branch (if yes)]

What is your estimated total average attendance? 121 Mean **25 Median**

What is your total average number of devices connected? 35 Mean **10 Median**

Did you offer online/virtual worship in 2019 or before?

- 20% Yes
- 80% No

[Branch (if yes)]

In 2019, what was your estimated total average online/virtual attendance? 96 Mean **22 Median**

In 2019, what was your total average number of devices connected? 29 Mean **10 Median**

Combined in-person and virtual attendance now: 247 Mean **75 Median**

Attendance Size Groups now:

1-50	38%
51-100	29%
101-250	20%
251 or more	13%

Combined in-person and virtual attendance pre-pandemic: 234 Mean **80 Median**

Attendance Size Groups pre-pandemic:

1-50	34%
51-100	27%
101-250	25%
251 or more	14%

Percent of worship attendance change (Growth or Decline) in five years – **median 9.09% Decline**

30%	Decline -25% or more
24%	Decline btw. -5.0% & -24.9%
12%	Stable btw. -4.9% & +4.9%
11%	Growth btw. +5.0% & +24.9%
22%	Growth +25% or more

How often does your church offer online/virtual worship opportunities?

1%	Once or twice a year
1%	Once every month or two
1%	About every month
1%	Two or three times a month
78%	Every week
18%	More than once a week

Select the type(s) of platforms you have used for online/virtual worship in the last year:

32%	Video Conferencing (e.g., Zoom)
53%	Social Media (e.g., Facebook)
47%	Video Hosting Platform (e.g., YouTube)
6%	Audio Platform (e.g., podcast, radio broadcast)
1%	Television (e.g., local broadcast TV)
4%	Other

Do you imagine that you will still be offering an online/virtual worship option in 5 years?

81%	Yes
3%	No
17%	Unsure

Leadership

Which statement best describes the (religious) leadership of this congregation?

- 3% There is no clergy at present (we are between clergy leaders).
- 48% There is one clergy leader (no assistant or associate clergy).
- 6% There are co-leaders (two or more clergy sharing leadership equally).
- 27% There is a senior clergy leader with one or more assistant or associate clergy.
- 11% We are lay led and do not have formal clergy.
- 5% None of the above descriptions apply to our situation. (Please describe.):

[Branch (if clergy leader present)]

Please describe the **senior** or **sole clergy leader** of this congregation (if co-leaders, answer about the oldest co-leader).

Age: 56.74 Mean **59 Median** years old

Gender:

- 87% Male
- 13% Female
- 0.2% Other

Leader's race/ethnicity (Of those answering the question):

- 0.6% American Indian/Alaska Native (non-Hispanic)
- 7.8% Asian (non-Hispanic)
- 6.1% Black or African American (non-Hispanic)
- 2.5% Hispanic or Latino(a)
- 0.3% Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander (non-Hispanic)
- 77.0% White (non-Hispanic)
- 3.5% Multiracial
- 2.1% Other

Which best describes the clergy leader's employment status at your congregation?

- 79% Full-time
- 21% Part-time

[Branch (if clergy part-time)]

If part-time, how many hours is this person contracted to work each week?

19 Mean **20 Median**

Which best describes the clergy leader's compensation?

- 92% Paid
- 8% Unpaid

Does the clergy leader have paid employment outside of this congregation (e.g., is the clergy leader bivocational)?

22% Yes
77% No
2% Don't know

[Branch (if yes)]

How many hours a week on average does the clergy leader work outside of the congregation?
27 Mean **30 Median**

In what year did the senior leader start serving this congregation? 2012 Mean **2015 Median**

To what extent is there a good "fit" between the senior leader of this congregation and the members?

0.3% Not good
4% Just okay
29% Good
67% Very good

Are you the senior, co-senior, or solo clergy leader of this congregation?

66% Yes
34% No

[Branch (if yes)]

Since the start of 2020, how often have you:

	Never	Once or twice	A few times	Fairly often	Very often
Doubted that you are called by God to ministry	71%	13%	11%	3%	1%
Seriously considered leaving pastoral ministry	49%	25%	17%	6%	3%
Seriously considered leaving this congregation for another one	62%	23%	10%	4%	2%

In general, how would you rate your **physical** health? 7.5 Mean **8 Median**

In general, how would you rate your **mental** health? 8.1 Mean **8 Median**

In general, how would you rate your **spiritual** health? 8.1 Mean **8 Median**

In general, how would you rate your **relational** health? (i.e. your relationships with other people)
8.1 Mean **8 Median**

In general, how would you rate your **financial** health? 7.4 Mean **8 Median**

Participants

How many persons (including children) **regularly participate** (once a month or more) in worship or other religious activities in your congregation? 273 Mean **65 Median**

Of the above regular participants, **what percent** are in each of the following age groups?

21.0%	Children (ages 0-12)
7.2%	Youth (ages 13-17)
13.7%	Young adults (ages 18-34)
31.3%	Middle adults (ages 35-64)
35.8%	Senior adults (ages 65 and older)

Of the above regular participants, **what percent** are in each of the following categories?

0.9%	American Indian/Alaska Native (non-Hispanic)
7.3%	Asian (non-Hispanic)
7.3%	Black or African American (non-Hispanic)
6.6%	Hispanic or Latino(a)
0.8%	Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander (non-Hispanic)
72.3%	White (non-Hispanic)
3.5%	Multiracial
1.5%	Other

What percent of congregations are multiracial congregations (multiracial congregation defined as no one racial group is more than 80% of the congregation)? 22%

Of all **regularly participating adults** (age 18 and over), **what percent** would you estimate (medians):

58%	Are female?
16%	Are new to this congregation since 2020?
41%	Volunteer regularly at the congregation?

Mission and Identity

Do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements? *(Check one on each line.)*

Our congregation:

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Has a clear mission and purpose	2%	6%	13%	48%	31%
Is striving to be diverse (e.g. racially, ethnically, socio-economically)	3%	10%	34%	33%	19%
Is good at incorporating new people into the congregation	2%	7%	15%	49%	28%
Is actively looking for new member	2%	7%	17%	45%	29%
Is spiritually vital and alive	1%	5%	15%	52%	28%
Is willing to change to meet new challenges	2%	9%	23%	46%	20%
Is actively involved in our local community	2%	11%	20%	40%	26%

Programs

Does your congregation have any of the following programs or activities?

(If "Yes," please indicate the format(s) it is offered in, checking all that apply.)

	No	Yes, in person	Yes, online	Yes, in person and online
Prayer or meditation groups	30%	48%	9%	13%
Religious education for children (e.g., Sunday School)	19%	77%	1%	4%
Religious education for adults (e.g., scripture studies)	8%	65%	5%	23%
Youth (13-17) activities or programs	40%	58%	0.2%	2%
Young adult (18-34) activities or programs	48%	47%	1%	3%
Senior (65+) activities or programs	44%	50%	1%	5%
Social justice/advocacy groups	83%	14%	1%	3%
Preschool and/or daycare center	85%	15%	0.3%	0.1%
School (Primary or secondary)	93%	7%	0.0%	0.1%
Fellowship/community-building events	19%	76%	1%	4%
Community service activities (e.g. health clinic or food pantry)	37%	61%	1%	1%
Prison ministry	87%	12%	0.5%	0.3%

Technology

How often does your congregation use the following technology?

	Do not use this at all	A little (e.g., use it a few times a year)	Some (e.g., use it monthly)	A lot (e.g., use it weekly)	Check below if you only started using this since the beginning of the pandemic
Email communication	5%	10%	16%	69%	2%
E-newsletter	40%	7%	18%	35%	4%
Texting and/or messaging apps (e.g., WhatsApp, Facebook Messenger)	15%	10%	19%	56%	6%
Electronic/ACH/online giving	33%	7%	13%	48%	10%
Social media for connection and care outside of worship (e.g., Facebook, Instagram)	16%	11%	20%	53%	7%
Social media for event planning and advertisement	19%	16%	22%	43%	5%
Video projection during worship services	24%	7%	5%	64%	7%
Online audio or video archive of sermons (separately from archived worship services)	37%	7%	6%	50%	8%
Holding administrative meetings online (e.g., with Zoom or Skype)	40%	24%	19%	17%	21%
Holding small group/scripture study meetings online (e.g., with Zoom or Skype)	49%	16%	12%	24%	18%

Does your congregation have a web presence? Choose all that apply.

- 9% No
- 23% Yes, with our own web address
- 16% Yes, on Facebook
- 53% Yes, website and Facebook

Do you have Wifi access in your building? Choose all that apply:

- 9% No
- 41% Yes, for public use
- 63% Yes, for congregant use
- 58% Yes, for staff use

[Branch if "Yes" to "Online giving" above]

Approximately what percentage of your regular monthly giving is received through online giving?

40% mean **30% median**

[Branch if "Yes" to "Online giving" above]

Approximately what percentage of your participants donate online?

34% mean **20% median**

Finances

What was the total amount of money your congregation received from all sources in your most recent fiscal year?

\$586,304 mean **\$170,000 median**

Per capita Giving by attendance median \$2,222; by participants median \$2,174

What was the total amount of money your congregation spent in your most recent fiscal year?

\$556,321 mean **\$156,000 median**

Approximately what percentage of your congregation's annual expenditures in your most recent fiscal year were for the following?

- 42% Total staff salaries and benefits (clergy and non-clergy)
- 27% Buildings and operations (e.g., utilities, mortgage, insurance)
- 11% Program support and materials (e.g., education, evangelism)
- 14% Mission and benevolence (include denominational assessments)
- 6% All other expenditures

How would you describe your congregation's financial health today and five years ago?

	In serious difficulty	In some difficulty	Tight, but we manage	Good	Excellent
Today	3%	8%	28%	35%	26%
2018	2%	8%	22%	44%	25%

A Few Final Items

Since the start of 2020, has your congregation experienced any disagreements or conflicts? *(Check all that apply.)*

- 39% No
- 32% Yes, but it/they were not serious
- 30% Yes, and in at least one instance some people left
- 9% Yes, and in at least one instance some people withheld donations
- 7% Yes, and in at least one instance, a clergy leader or staff member left

How would you rate the level of tension in your congregation surrounding social and political issues (excluding COVID-19) now compared to 2018?

	Very high	Moderately high	Average	Relatively low	Nonexistent
Today	1%	12%	30%	40%	17%
2018	1%	7%	30%	45%	17%

What is your current outlook on this congregation’s future?

- 2% Very negative
- 9% Somewhat negative
- 9% Neither positive nor negative
- 36% Somewhat positive
- 44% Very positive

Please rate your level of agreement with each of the following statements about your congregation:

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
Our church is emerging from the pandemic stronger than before.	2%	10%	12%	20%	22%	20%	14%
As a result of the pandemic, we are thinking in new ways about our future mission and direction.	4%	7%	4%	21%	26%	25%	12%
This church has identified and embraced new opportunities for ministry since the pandemic.	3%	6%	6%	19%	24%	27%	15%

What are your top 2 concerns about the future of your congregation? *(max 100 characters)*

What are the top 2 aspects that your congregation does particularly well? *(max 100 characters)*

Contact

Would you like to receive a copy (PDF) of the National Summary Report? 79% Yes

May we contact you if we have questions about your responses or if we would like to know more about your congregation and/or ministry? 69% Yes

If you said yes to either of the above questions, please provide your name and email address below (we will not use your information for any other purpose).

Name: _____

Email: _____