

# 2020 Survey of Independent & Nondenominational Churches

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N=533

Results weighted by region and size based on the 2020 USRC database.

## Your Location, Building and Affiliation

Grouping by Total Attendance at Worship Services

Size	Percent of Churches
1-49	11 %
50-99	18 %
100-149	37 %
150-349	22 %
350-499	4 %
500-999	4 %
1000-1999	2 %
2000 or more	2 %

In what region is your congregation's place of worship physically located?

Northeast	5.5%
South	48%
Northcentral	35%
West	11.3%

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

Have use of a facility for free	6 %
Rent	11 %
Owned by congregation	83 %

Do other churches use the facility where you worship?

Yes 11 %

IF another congregation, is the other congregation different in language or ethnicity?

Yes 81 %

IF another church is it different denominational affiliation or faith than yours?

Yes 16 %

Do schools use the facility where you worship?

Yes 12 %

Do daycare or nursery use the facility where you worship?

Yes 6 %

Do Nonprofits use the facility where you worship?

Yes 15 %

Do support services use the facility where you worship?

Yes 18 %

Do government functions use the facility where you worship?

Yes 9 %

Is your church part of a Network, Fellowship, Association of Churches or Denomination? 75% Yes 25% No

If your church is Nondenominational or Independent, was it founded that way? 73% Yes

## Worship

Please describe the worship services your congregation holds on a **typical weekend**:

How well does the following describe your congregation's **regular weekend worship services**?

<b>✓ ONE ON EACH LINE</b>	Not at all	Slightly	Sometimes	Well	Very Well
Choir.....	52%	16%	8%	8%	16%
Organ.....	64%	8%	6%	5%	17%
Electric guitar.....	39%	12%	12%	11%	34%
Lord's Supper, Communion or Eucharist .....	5%	7%	34%	32%	22%
Reading or performing by children.....	30%	27%	22%	14%	8%
Reading or performing by youth .....	24%	23%	24%	14%	15%

How well do the following describe your congregation's **largest regular weekend worship service**?

<b>✓ ONE ON EACH LINE</b>	Not at all	Slightly	Somewhat	Quite Well	Very Well
Reverent.....	9%	8%	23%	48%	11%
Contemporary.....	13%	24%	15%	18%	30%
Thought-provoking .....	2%	2%	5%	42%	49%
Formal rituals or liturgy .....	49%	34%	12%	2%	3%
Innovative .....	8%	23%	32%	27%	10%
Informal .....	3%	11%	24%	30%	33%

Does your congregation provide: percent saying yes

Wheelchair accommodations?	85%
Sign Language accommodations?	8%
Large Print accommodations?	34%
Hearing Device accommodations?	33%

Other accommodations? - hearing suppression, translation, text on screen, classes, quiet rooms, ADA restrooms, special seating, gluten free, buddies, parking, special ministry.

## Participants

How many persons (including children) **regularly participate** in worship or other religious activities in your church? Ave 567/median 150

So far in 2020, in 2019 and in 2015, estimate the **median attendance at your regular weekend worship services**. If you have more than one weekend worship service, estimate the attendance for all weekend services combined. Do not include special services such as weddings or funerals.

120	2020 Median Attendance
100	2019 Median Attendance
100	2015 Median Attendance

Of these participants, what percent is from the following racial or ethnic group:

<1% American Indian/Alaska Native	5% Black or African American	5% Multiracial
3% Asian	5% Hispanic or Latino/a	0% Other:

<1% Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander 82% White

63% of nondenominational churches did not have 20% racial diversity though almost all of these had some level of race diversity, and 37% of churches were at the 20% or more racial diversity with 5.7% of these having no racial majority in these churches.

Which label comes closest to describing the **theological outlook** of the majority of your regularly participating adults? (**V ONE**)

20% Fundamentalist    14% Pentecostal    4% Moderate    3% Progressive    6% Missional  
 42% Evangelical    10% Charismatic    2% Liberal    .4% Seeker

Of all your regular participants, estimate the **percent** who are: **Median percentage**

21 %	Senior adults, age 65 or older
34 %	Adults, age 35-64
22 %	Younger adults, age 18-34
11 %	Youth, age 13-17
15 %	Children, age 0-12

Of your total regular participants **age 18 and older**, estimate the **percent** who are: **Median percentage**

55 %	Female
50 %	College graduates
22 %	New to this congregation in the past 5 years
25 %	Life-long members of nondenominational church
50 %	Adults who volunteer regularly
12 %	Adults living below the poverty level
75 %	Living within 15 minutes of the church
95 %	Adults who are American born
<1 %	Adults who are recent immigrants (last five years)
5 %	Adults who are persons with Special Needs

Overall, to what extent are your congregation's active participants involved in recruiting new people?

3% Not at all    15% A little    38% Some    34% Quite a bit    9% A lot

**Programs**

Does your congregation have any of the following programs or activities? **If yes**, how much emphasis is given to the activity?

<b>V ONE ON EACH LINE</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Some</b>	<b>Yes</b>	
			<b>Emphasis</b>	<b>A lot of emphasis</b>
Religious education for children .....	7%	14%	78%	
Adult religious education. ....	3%	27%	70%	
Prayer or meditation groups .....	11%	36%	54%	
Sports and exercise groups .....	67%	29%	4%	
Special interest groups (e.g., crafts, hobbies).....	50%	42%	8%	
Music program.....	20%	30%	50%	
Spiritual retreats .....	32%	56%	12%	
Support groups (bereavement, job loss, 12-step) ....	55%	26%	14%	
Community service activities .....	7%	50%	44%	

Parenting or marriage enrichment activities .....	30%	45%	21%
Youth activities or programs.....	11%	37%	52%
Young adult activities or programs .....	22%	59%	19%
Seniors activities or programs.....	28%	57%	15%
International/global ministry activities.....	25%	40%	35%
Social justice/advocacy groups.....	67%	30%	3%
Preschool and/or daycare center.....	90%	2%	9%
Elementary (Primary) school.....	87%	1%	12%
High (Secondary) school.....	85%	4%	12%
Special Needs Ministry.....	69%	24%	7%

**During the past 12 months**, did your congregation provide any of the following services for your own members or for people in the community? **If yes**, did you provide these services directly or together with another congregation or group?

	NO	YES	
		Provided directly	Together with another group
<b>✓ ALL THAT APPLY</b>			
Food pantry or soup kitchen.....	38%	36%	26%
Cash assistance for individuals or families.....	12%	75%	13%
Day care, pre-school, before or after-school programs .....	86%	11%	3%
Tutoring or literacy programs.....	88%	9%	3%
Health education, clinics, parish nurse .....	87%	8%	6%
Community organizing, organized social issue advocacy .....	80%	10%	10%
Job placement, job training, employment counseling.....	87%	11%	2%
Financial counseling or education .....	52%	44%	4%
Elderly or home-bound programs.....	65%	32%	4%
Voter education or registration .....	77%	21%	3%
Programs for migrants or immigrants.....	94%	4%	1%

How much does your congregation emphasize the following **personal and family religious practices**?

<b>✓ ONE ON EACH LINE</b>	Not at all	A little	Some	Quite a bit	A lot
Personal prayer, devotions or other spiritual practices .....	0%	0%	9%	22%	69%
Fasting.....	14%	34%	42%	6%	4%
Talking about your faith with those outside the church.....	1%	3%	6%	31%	59%
Observing special practices or restrictions on holy days.....	30%	30%	26%	10%	4%
Living out one's faith in all aspects of one's daily life.....	0%	0%	3%	10%	87%
Parents talking with their children about faith .....	1%	1%	15%	23%	61%
Regular worship attendance .....	0%	2%	10%	24%	65%

## Mission and Identity

Do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements? **✓ ONE ON EACH LINE**

### **Our congregation:**

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral/ Unsure	Agree	Strongly agree
Is spiritually vital and alive .....	2%	1%	7%	38%	53%
Has a clear mission and purpose .....	2%	0%	2%	35%	62%
Is willing to change to meet new challenges .....	3%	4%	11%	47%	35%
Is good at incorporating newcomers.....	2%	3%	5%	43%	47%
Is actively involved doing local service projects.....	4%	8%	13%	30%	44%
Is striving to be diverse (racially, ethnically, SES) .....	2%	1%	18%	25%	55%
Is actively looking for new members .....	1%	2%	19%	23%	55%

In the past decade did your congregation do the following:	No	Yes (2010-15)	Yes (2016-19)
Merged with another church(es)	96%	1%	3%
Split into two or more separate church(es)	96%	3%	1%
Opened satellite or branch location(s)	92%	2%	3%
Helped start or planted a new church(es)	64%	13%	20%
Changed the name of the church	87%	8%	5%
Changed the denominational affiliation of the church	99%	0.5%	0.5%
Left a denomination (to become unaffiliated)	96%	4%	0.3%

*During the past 12 months, has your church been involved in any of the following ecumenical or interfaith activities?*

*✓ ALL THAT APPLY ON EACH LINE*

	No	Yes	
		With other Christian Groups	With other faith traditions
Worship services.....	32%	39%	6%
Educational or fellowship activities .....	27%	47%	4%
Community service activities.....	19%	52%	7%

## Leadership

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

There is no clergy at present	2%
There is one clergy leader	45%
There are co-leaders	4%
There is a senior clergy leader with one or more assistant or associate clergy	49%

Please describe the principal leader of your church (if co-leaders, answer about your oldest leader).

Age: 54 Years old (median)

Became Pastor in 2008 (median)

Gender: 100% Male 0% Female

Race/Ethnicity:

White	85%
African American	6%

Hispanic/Latino	.3%
Asian American	0%
Multiracial	8%

#### Employment status

89%	Full-time leader
11%	Part-time leader

#### Compensation status

94%	Paid leader
6%	Unpaid leader

#### The leader:

Serves another church?	1%
Functions as chaplain?	9%
Has bivocational ministry	19%
Was previously retired	0.2%
Has an M.Div.	28%
Is first gen immigrant	0.7%

#### In the past 5 years, have you had conflict? (Check all that apply)

No	31%
Yes, but it/they were not serious incidents	18%
Yes, and some people left	23%
Yes, and some people withheld donations	5%
Yes, and clergy leader or staff member left	14%

### Finances

What was the approximate dollar amount of your congregation's total budget for **2019**? (Do not count funds for capital improvements or primary/secondary schools) \$225,000 median

#### What percentage of annual expenditures for:

Total staff salaries and benefits (clergy and non-clergy)	45 %
Buildings and operations (e.g. utilities, mortgage, insurance)	20 %
Program support and materials (e.g. education, evangelism)	10 %
Mission and benevolence (include Network assessments)	15 %
All other budgetary categories	10 %

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

<b>Today</b>	<b>2015</b>
2% In serious difficulty	7% In serious difficulty
5% In some difficulty	11% In some difficulty
13% Tight, but we manage	18% Tight, but we managed
36% Good	31% Good
44% Excellent	33% Excellent

### Technology

How much does the Church use the following technology?

	None	A Little	Some	A Lot
Email	0%	3%	26%	71%
Enewsletter	45%	17%	16%	22%
Website	5%	6%	14%	76%
Online Giving	34%	12%	10%	44%
Facebook	6%	2%	23%	69%
Instagram	52%	14%	16%	18%
Twitter	60%	15%	17%	9%
Podcasts	55%	9%	13%	23%
Texting	10%	9%	20%	61%
Blogging	72%	11%	10%	7%
Apps	53%	6%	12%	29%
Live Stream service/sermon	40%	5%	16%	39%
Video Projection	24%	5%	7%	64%
Online archive of sermons	8%	11%	5%	76%
Online meeting software	78%	11%	6%	5%
Wifi in church building	7%	8%	8%	77%

## Safety and Security

To what extent is your congregation (when together for worship) concerned about personal safety and security when you gather?

Not at all concerned	14%
A little concerned	29%
Somewhat concerned	26%
Very concerned	31%

Does your church use any of the following:

	No	Yes, before 2015	Yes, since 2015
Alarm systems	36%	28%	16%
Security cameras	31%	18%	29%
Locked doors during service	35%	10%	36%
Volunteer security team/ministry from church	11%	16%	50%
Paid, professional security personnel	68%	4%	5%
Check-in procedures for infants and children	24%	42%	17%
Background checks for volunteers with children	14%	46%	25%
Safe conduct training for those working with children	22%	38%	19%
Training on general safety and security	17%	36%	26%