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Americans Oppose Religious Exemptions From Coronavirus-Related Restrictions

Few regular worshippers say their congregations are operating normally, and most support the precautions being taken

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How we did this

Pew Research Center conducted this survey to help understand how the coronavirus outbreak has impacted the worship habits of Americans. For this report, we surveyed 10,211 U.S. adults from July 13 to 19, 2020. All respondents to the survey are part of Pew Research Center's American Trends Panel (ATP), an online survey panel that is recruited through national random sampling of residential addresses. This way nearly all U.S. adults have a chance of selection. The survey is weighted to be representative of the U.S. adult population by gender, race, ethnicity, partisan affiliation, education and other categories. For more, see the [ATP's methodology](#) and the [methodology for this report](#).

The questions used in this report can be found [here](#) and [here](#).

Acknowledgments

This report is a collaborative effort based on the input and analysis of the following individuals. Find related reports online at pewresearch.org/religion.

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Americans Oppose Religious Exemptions From Coronavirus-Related Restrictions

Few regular worshippers say their congregations are operating normally, and most support the precautions being taken

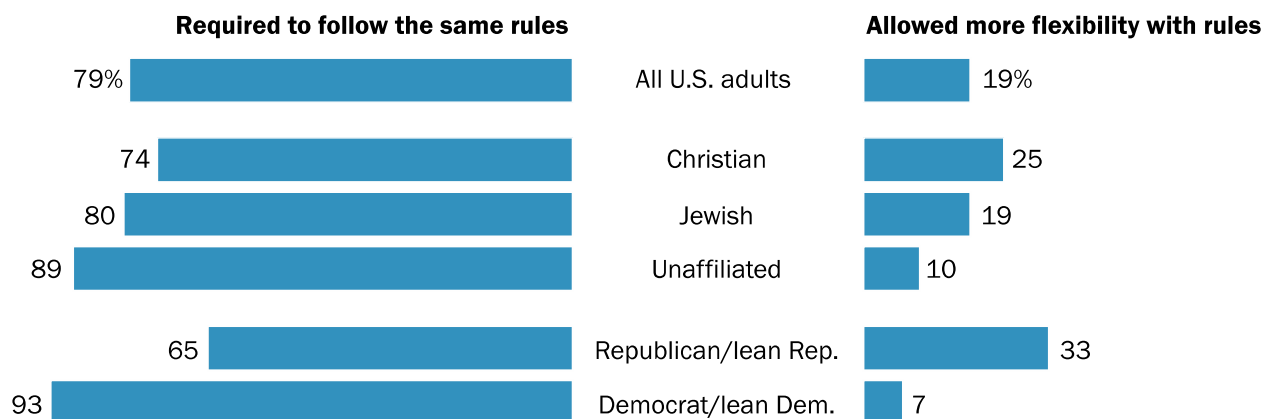
A new Pew Research Center survey finds that U.S. adults overwhelmingly say houses of worship should be required to follow the same rules about social distancing and large gatherings as other organizations or businesses in their local area. About eight-in-ten Americans (79%) take this position, four times the share who think houses of worship should be allowed more flexibility than other kinds of establishments when it comes to rules about social distancing (19%).

On this question, Americans seem to align with two recent [Supreme Court orders](#), which rejected lawsuits claiming that state restrictions on worship violated the First Amendment's guarantee of religious freedom. At the same time, many state and local governments have carved out [exemptions for religious institutions](#) from pandemic-related restrictions.

Among U.S. Christians, about three-quarters say churches should be subject to the same rules as other businesses. Evangelical Protestants express the most support for giving houses of worship

Eight-in-ten Americans, including three-quarters of Christians, say houses of worship should be subject to same social distancing rules as other organizations

% of U.S. adults who say houses of worship should be ___ about social distancing and large gatherings as other organizations or businesses in their local area



Note: Those who did not answer are not shown.

Source: Survey conducted July 13-19, 2020, among U.S. adults.

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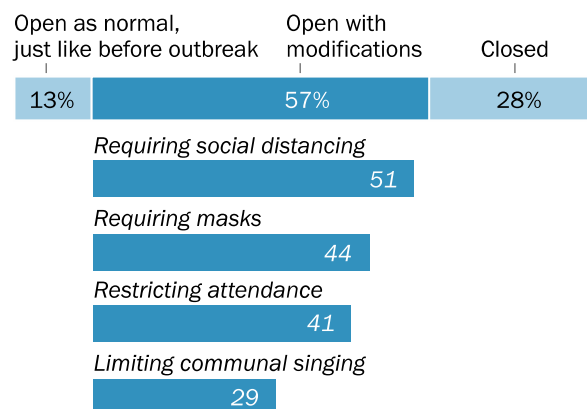
more flexibility, but even in this group, a 62% majority says houses of worship should be held to the same standards as other businesses and organizations (see Chapter 1 for more details). And while Democrats and those who lean toward the Democratic Party are substantially more likely than Republicans and Republican leaners to say houses of worship should be required to follow the same social distancing rules as other organizations, a two-thirds majority of Republicans also express this view.

In addition, amid reports that [some clusters of the virus have been tied to religious gatherings](#), many Americans who regularly attend religious services express support for instituting a variety of restrictions and modifications at their own places of worship. At the time the survey was conducted (July 13 to 19), only 13% said their house of worship should be open to the public just as it was before the outbreak.¹

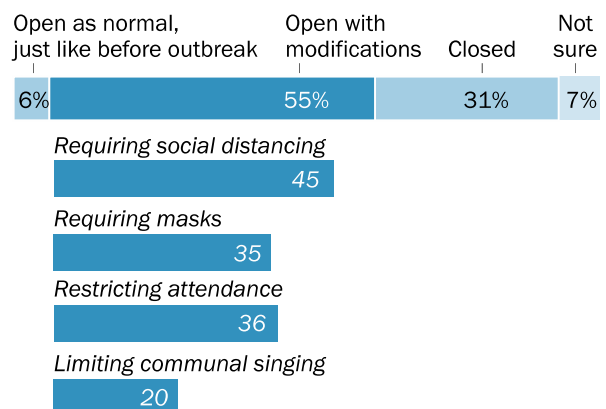
Among U.S. adults who regularly attend religious services, most think their house of worship should be open with modifications as a result of COVID-19

Based on U.S. adults who typically attend religious services at least monthly or attended in person in the last month

What do you think the current operating status of your congregation SHOULD be?



What is the current operating status of your congregation?



Note: Those who did not answer the question about the current operating status of their congregation or the question about what the operating status of their congregation should be are not shown. Nested figures do not sum to subtotals indicated because respondents could say "yes" to multiple questions. See topline for full question wording.

Source: Survey conducted July 13-19, 2020, among U.S. adults.

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¹ In this case, those who regularly attend religious services are adults who said in a 2019 survey that they typically attend religious services at least once a month or who say in the new survey that they attended in-person religious services in the last month. There is a large overlap between these groups; the vast majority of those who say they attended in-person religious services in the last month also described themselves as regular attenders last year (84%). In the new survey, however, most people who described themselves as regular attenders last year say they have *not* gone to in-person services in the past month (see page 19).

More than eight-in-ten attenders think their own congregation should either be closed altogether (28%) or open only on a modified basis (57%), with this latter group broadly endorsing precautions such as requiring people to stay 6 feet away from each other (51%), requiring masks (44%), limiting the number of people in attendance at any one time (41%) and limiting communal singing (29%).

These figures are largely in line with what religious attenders say is actually going on at their congregations. Just 6% say their congregation is open to the public in the same way it was before the coronavirus outbreak. A majority (55%) say that the house of worship they attend most often is open to the public for religious services on a modified basis as a result of the coronavirus outbreak, while three-in-ten (31%) say their house of worship is closed altogether.

Meanwhile, the vast majority of religious attenders (79%) say their house of worship is streaming or recording its religious services so people can watch online or on TV.

Among those who attend religious services, mainline Protestants and members of the historically Black Protestant tradition are more likely than Catholics and evangelical Protestants to say they think their congregations should be closed. Most Catholics and evangelicals think their churches should be open, albeit with restrictions in place (see Chapter 1 for details). Similar patterns are reflected in the current operating status of churches across these Christian traditions. (The survey

Catholics, evangelical Protestants less likely to say their churches remain fully closed

Based on U.S. adults who typically attend religious services at least monthly or attended in person in the last month

	What do you think the current operating status of your congregation SHOULD be?			
	Open as normal, just like before outbreak	Open with modifications	Closed	
Evangelical Prot.	18%	64%	18%	
Mainline Protestant	9	49	40	
Historically Black Protestant	10	46	41	
Catholic	8	62	27	

	What is the current operating status of your congregation?			
	Open as normal, just like before outbreak	Open with modifications	Closed	Not sure
Evangelical Prot.	7%	64%	24%	4%
Mainline Protestant	4	45	45	6
Historically Black Protestant	9	35	41	15
Catholic	3	65	23	9

Note: Those who did not answer are not shown. The survey did not obtain enough interviews with members of non-Christian religious groups who said in a 2019 survey that they typically attend religious services monthly or more often or who said in the new survey that they attended religious services in person in the last month to analyze those groups' answers separately. See topline for full question wording.

Source: Survey conducted July 13-19, 2020, among U.S. adults.

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included too few interviews with members of other religious groups who attend services regularly to permit separate analysis of their answers to these questions.)

Most regular attenders say they are either “very” (34%) or “somewhat” (29%) confident they could safely attend religious services in person right now, without spreading or catching the coronavirus. About one-third are “not too” (19%) or “not at all” (16%) confident they could safely attend in-person services.

Majorities of regularly attending evangelical Protestants (75%) and Catholics (59%), along with 56% of mainline Protestants, say they feel safe attending church right now. Protestants in the historically Black tradition and Hispanic Catholics, meanwhile, are more evenly divided between those who are confident it is safe to return to in-person services and those who are not.

The survey also finds broader racial and ethnic divisions on

these and many other coronavirus-related questions. While nearly three-quarters of white Americans say they are confident they could safely attend in-person religious services right now, far fewer Black (49%) and Hispanic (51%) adults say the same. A previous Pew Research Center survey [found that health concerns about the coronavirus outbreak](#) are much higher among Black and Hispanic adults than among white adults, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has reported that people from racial and ethnic minority groups are at [increased risk of getting sick and dying from COVID-19](#).

More than six-in-ten regular attenders at least somewhat confident they can safely attend religious services without catching, spreading COVID-19

Among U.S. religious attenders, % who say they are ___ confident that they could safely attend in-person religious services right now without spreading or catching the coronavirus

	NET Very/ somewhat	Very	Somewhat	Not too	Not at all	NET Not too/ not at all
Total	64%	34%	29%	19%	16%	35%
Christian	65	35	29	19	15	35
Protestant	67	37	30	19	14	32
<i>Evangelical</i>	75	42	32	16	9	25
<i>Mainline</i>	56	26	30	23	20	43
<i>Historically Black</i>	50	30	20	22	27	49
Catholic	59	31	28	24	16	40
<i>White Catholic</i>	71	39	32	17	11	29
<i>Hispanic Catholic</i>	47	23	24	30	21	51
White	72	40	32	16	11	27
Black	49	29	20	23	27	49
Hispanic	51	24	27	26	22	48

Note: Religious attenders are those who said, in a 2019 survey, that they typically attend religious services monthly or more often, or who said in the new survey that they attended religious services in person in the last month. The survey did not obtain enough interviews with members of non-Christian religious groups in this category to analyze separately. Those who did not answer are not shown. Figures may not add to subtotals indicated due to rounding. White and Black adults include those who report being only one race and are not Hispanic. Hispanics are of any race.

Source: Survey conducted July 13-19, 2020, among U.S. adults.

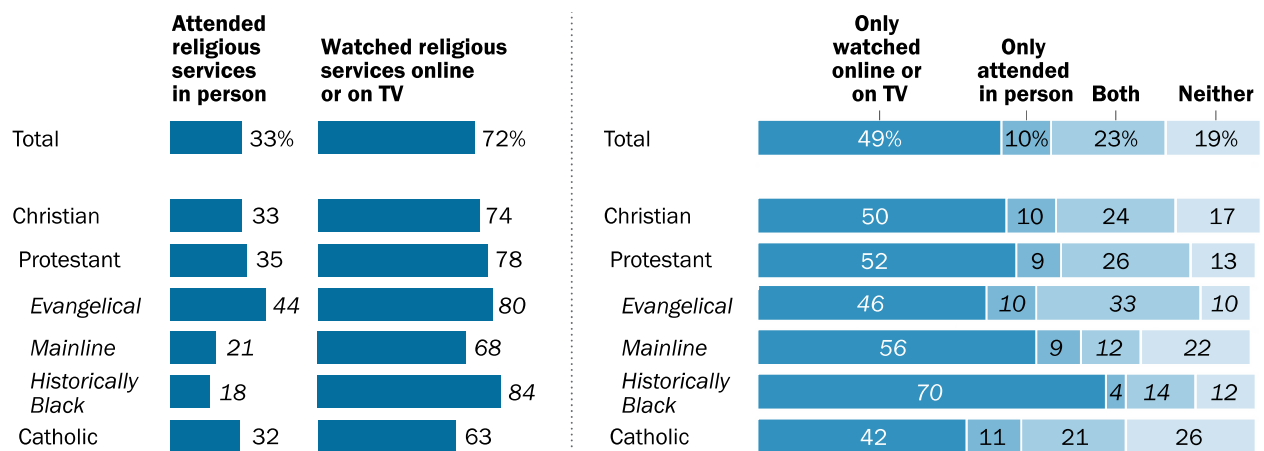
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But while the survey suggests that many people would feel comfortable going, far fewer Americans – 12% of U.S. adults overall – say they actually have gone to services in person in the last month (meaning the month preceding the survey, which was conducted in mid-July). Even among those who say they attend services at least monthly in more normal times, just one-third report that they attended in person during the month preceding the survey, but a far larger share (72%) say they have watched religious services online or on TV in the last month.²

Amid outbreak, online worship much more common than going in person

Among U.S. adults who typically attend religious services at least monthly, % who say in the last month they have ...



Note: Figures may not add to 100% due to rounding. The survey did not obtain enough interviews with members of non-Christian religious groups who regularly attend religious services to analyze separately. The "neither" column includes those who declined to answer both questions as well as those who said "no" to both questions.

Source: Survey conducted July 13-19, 2020, among U.S. adults.

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Taken together, these two questions suggest that about half of U.S. adults who typically attend religious services at least once a month have replaced in-person attendance with virtual participation (at least temporarily); 49% say they have watched religious services online or on TV in the last month, but have *not* attended in-person religious services during this time. Roughly one-quarter (23%) of people who were regular attenders before the pandemic now say they have participated in both in-person and online or televised services in the last month. One-in-ten say they have only attended services in person and have not recently watched services online or on TV,

² A Pew Research Center survey [conducted in March of this year](#) asked similar questions about the worshipping habits of Americans amid the coronavirus outbreak. In that survey, 59% of U.S. adults who typically attend religious services at least monthly said they had attended religious services in person less often and 57% said they had watched religious services online or on TV as a result of the coronavirus outbreak.

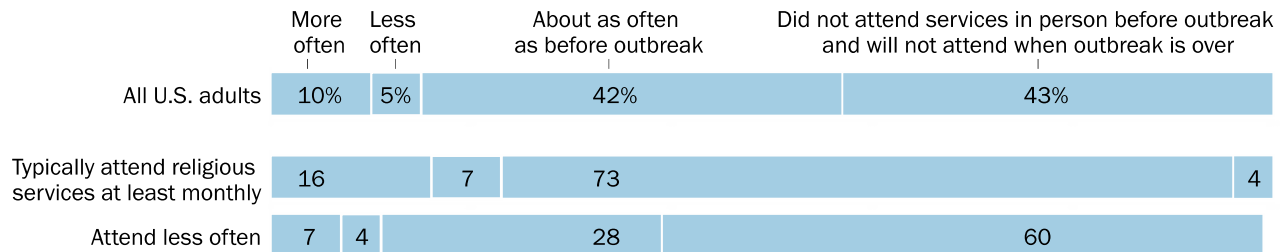
while one-in-five (19%) have neither attended religious services in person nor have they watched online or on television.

Evangelical Protestants are more likely than members of other Christian traditions to say they recently have attended in-person religious services. But still, among evangelicals who typically attend, fewer than half (44%) say they have gone recently, while far more (80%) are watching services virtually.

These are among the key findings of a new Pew Research Center survey conducted July 13 to 19, 2020, among 10,211 U.S. adults on the Center’s online, nationally representative American Trends Panel. For more information on how the survey was conducted, see the Methodology.

When coronavirus outbreak is over, most Americans plan to attend services in person at same rate they did before pandemic

% of U.S. adults who say that when the coronavirus outbreak is over, they will attend religious services in person _____ than before the outbreak



Note: Those who did not answer are not shown.

Source: Survey conducted July 13-19, 2020, among U.S. adults.

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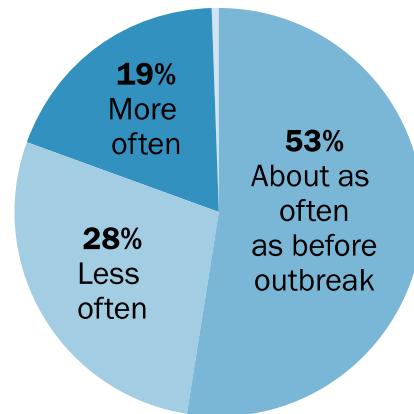
The survey also finds little indication that the coronavirus outbreak will result in large-scale changes in Americans’ religious service habits in the future. More than eight-in-ten U.S. adults say either that when the coronavirus outbreak is over they will attend in-person religious services at about the same rate as they did before the outbreak (42%) or that they did not attend in-person religious services before the outbreak and do not plan to when the pandemic is over (43%). Far fewer say that when the outbreak is over, they plan to attend in-person services more often (10%) or less often (5%) than they did before the outbreak.

Plans to attend religious services more frequently after the pandemic has passed are concentrated among those who attended regularly (at least once a month) to begin with. Among those who did not regularly attend religious services prior to the pandemic, the vast majority indicate that their attendance habits will not change, largely because they did not attend before the outbreak.

The coronavirus outbreak also does not seem primed to usher in a permanent rise in virtual worship. In fact, among U.S. adults who recently watched religious services online or on TV, a larger share say that they intend to watch virtual services *less* often (28%) rather than more often (19%) after the pandemic passes. About half (53%) say they will watch services online at about the same rate as they did before the pandemic.

One-in-five online worshippers say they will watch virtual services more often after pandemic than before it

Among U.S. adults who say they watched religious services online or on TV in the last month, % who say that when the coronavirus outbreak is over, they will watch religious services online or on TV ___ than before the outbreak



Note: Those who did not answer are not shown.

Source: Survey conducted July 13-19, 2020, among U.S. adults.

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Most U.S. adults who recently watched religious services online are satisfied with services

Still, the vast majority of U.S. adults who have watched religious services online or on TV in the last month say they are “very” (54%) or “somewhat” (37%) satisfied with the services they have watched, while just 8% say they are “not too” or “not at all” satisfied.

While most regular attenders say their house of worship is putting its religious services online, the new survey also finds that Americans who are watching services online are not solely watching their own congregations.

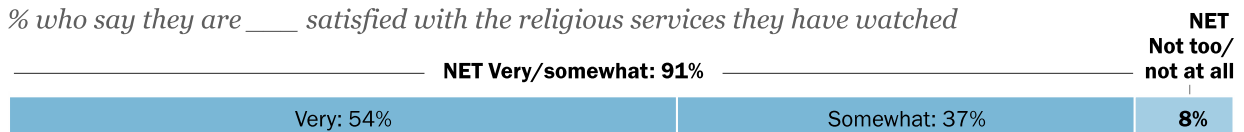
In fact, most in this group say they have watched services offered by a house of worship that is *not* the one they typically attend – whether exclusively (29%) or along with services from their own congregation (30%). Four-in-ten say they have watched only their own house of worship’s services.

While virtual worship has been a new experience for many Americans during the pandemic, nearly half of those who watched religious services online or on TV in the last month (46%) say they also had done so before the outbreak.

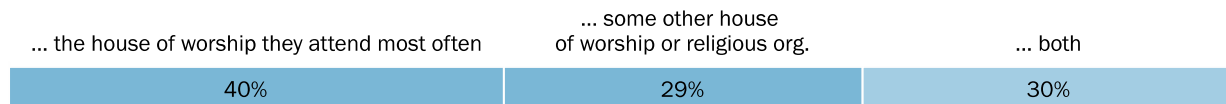
When watching religious services online or on TV, Americans are not exclusively watching their own congregation

Based on U.S. adults who watched religious services online or on TV in the last month

% who say they are ___ satisfied with the religious services they have watched



% who say they have watched services offered by ...



% who say they started watching religious services online or on TV ...



Note: Those who did not answer are not shown. Figures may not add to subtotals indicated due to rounding.

Source: Survey conducted July 13-19, 2020, among U.S. adults.

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Whether hearing sermons in person or online, many have heard about importance of taking steps to limit the virus' spread, support for Black Lives Matter protests, importance of voting

During a year of great upheaval in the U.S., what are Americans hearing from religious leaders? Three-quarters of U.S. adults who recently attended religious services in person or watched online say that in the past few months they have heard sermons that have expressed the importance of taking steps to limit the spread of the coronavirus. At the same time, about three-in-ten have heard opposition from religious leaders to government orders that prevented houses of worship from holding in-person religious services.

Three-quarters of those who recently attended religious services in person or online have heard about importance of taking steps to stop COVID-19

Among U.S. adults who attended religious services in person or watched online or on TV in the last month, % who say they have heard sermons that expressed ...

	Total	Rep./lean Rep.	Dem./lean Dem.
The importance of taking steps to limit the spread of the coronavirus	76%	72%	81%
Support for the recent Black Lives Matter protests	41	29	59
The importance of voting, protesting or other forms of political engagement	40	33	52
Opposition to abortion	35	42	28
Opposition to government orders that prevented houses of worship from holding in-person religious services	31	31	30
Opposition to the recent Black Lives Matter protests	25	22	28
Support for legal abortion	11	9	16

Source: Survey conducted July 13-19, 2020, among U.S. adults.
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In the wake of George Floyd's killing by police in Minneapolis, about four-in-ten U.S. adults who have recently watched or attended religious services say they have heard sermons that have expressed support for the recent Black Lives Matter protests, while a quarter have heard opposition to the protests. And with a presidential election looming, four-in-ten say they have heard from clergy about the importance of voting, protesting or other forms of political engagement.

Houses of worship also continue to express their views on abortion. About one-third of Americans who have watched or attended services in the last month say they heard sermons that have expressed opposition to abortion (35%), while one-in-ten (11%) heard support for legal abortion.

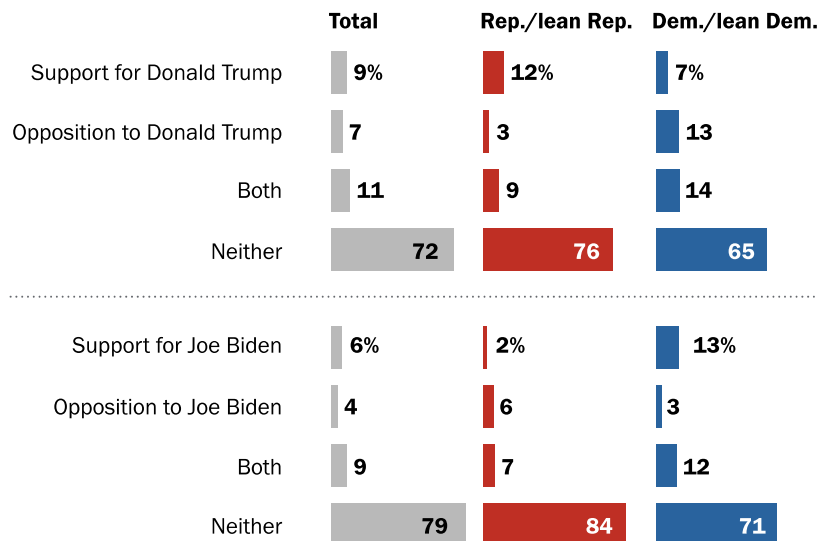
Judging by their answers to the survey, Democrats and Republicans are not hearing all of the same messages at their congregations. For instance, Democrats and those who lean Democratic are substantially more likely than Republicans and adults who lean toward the GOP to say they have heard sermons that expressed support for the recent Black Lives Matter protests (59% vs. 29%) and the importance of voting (52% vs. 33%). And more Republicans than Democrats say they have heard sermons that express opposition to abortion in the past few months (42% vs. 28%).

While many people who attend religious services say they have heard about social and political issues in sermons recently, fewer say they have heard much positive or negative talk about President Donald Trump or former Vice President Joe Biden, the presumptive Democratic nominee. The vast majority of Americans who have engaged with religious services recently say they haven't heard either support for, or opposition to, Trump (72%), and 79% haven't heard either sentiment about Biden.

Many religious leaders may avoid discussing the candidates directly due to [restrictions on involvement in political campaigns](#) by tax-exempt organizations, including religious institutions.

Most say their clergy have expressed neither support nor opposition to Trump, Biden

Among U.S. adults who attended religious services in person or watched online or on TV in the last month, % who say they have heard sermons that expressed ...



Note: Those who did not answer are not shown.

Source: Survey conducted July 13-19, 2020, among U.S. adults.

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Other key findings from the survey include:

- Partisans hold diverging opinions about whether and how houses of worship should be reopening, if at all. Among religious attenders, more than six-in-ten Republicans and Republican leaners (64%) say their house of worship should be open to the public for in-person services with modifications in place, compared with 48% of Democrats who say this. In fact, Democrats and Democratic leaners are roughly divided between those who think their congregation should be closed entirely (44%) and those who think it should be open with modifications (48%). The survey also shows that Republicans who typically attended worship services before the pandemic are much more likely than Democrats in the same category to have recently gone to in-person services (42% vs. 19%). Because this analysis only looks at the segments of each party that normally engage in regular religious practice, these differences are *not* just because Republicans in general are more religious than Democrats.
- Although older adults are at a [higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19](#), the survey finds that older religious attenders are no more or less likely than their younger counterparts to say they feel safe attending in-person services right now. And among Americans who said in a 2019 survey that they typically attend religious services at least once a month, older adults are no less likely than their younger counterparts to say they attended in-person religious services during the past month.
- Religious attenders who are living in counties hit hardest by the outbreak (that is, counties with 100 or more COVID-19 deaths) are much less likely than those living in counties that have not been as hard hit (counties where fewer than 10 people have died of the virus) to say they have attended in-person religious services within the last month (26% vs. 47%). See Chapter 1 for details.
- Most U.S. religious attenders say they have not changed the amount of money they donate to their house of worship since the start of the coronavirus outbreak. More than half (54%) say they have donated the same amount of money they normally would have, and 17% say they do not usually donate. But among those who have changed their behavior, twice as many say they have donated less money than they normally would (18% of all religious attenders) rather than more (8%).
- About four-in-ten U.S. adults say they have helped friends or neighbors by delivering groceries, running errands or caring for their children as a result of the coronavirus outbreak. About three-in-ten say they have volunteered or made a donation through a nonreligious charitable organization, and 18% say they have done the same through a religious organization. By

comparison, fewer U.S. adults say they have asked for help from others during the coronavirus outbreak. Nearly one-in-five (17%) say they have turned to family or friends for help with bills, housing or food. About one-in-ten say they have asked for help with bills, housing or food from a nonreligious charitable organization. And 6% report that they have sought help from a religious organization. See Chapter 2 for details.

- To help cope with the coronavirus outbreak, nearly three-quarters of U.S. adults (73%) say they watch TV or movies, and 57% say they spend time outdoors on a daily basis. Smaller shares say they pray (43%), talk on the phone or by videoconference with friends or family (34%), or exercise daily (34%) to help cope with the outbreak. About one-in-six say they read scripture (17%) or meditate (16%), while 2% say they do yoga (see Chapter 2).

1. Attending and watching religious services in the age of the coronavirus

Most U.S. religious attenders – that is, Americans who said last year that they typically go to religious services at least once or twice a month, plus those who report having gone in person in the past month – said their congregation was open and holding religious services at the time the survey was conducted in mid-July. This includes 55% who say their congregation is open with certain coronavirus-related modifications in place and 6% who say their congregation is open and operating normally, just as it did before the outbreak began. Many houses of worship appear to have opened since [April](#), when 91% of people who said in a 2019 survey that they attend religious services regularly indicated that their congregations were closed entirely.

A majority of attenders also say they feel at least somewhat confident that they could safely attend religious services at their congregation without contracting or spreading the coronavirus. Still, just one-third of respondents who typically attend religious services at least once a month say they have done so in the past month. Far higher numbers say they have watched religious services online or on television.

Looking ahead, however, most people indicate they plan to resume their pre-pandemic religious attendance routines once the outbreak is over. The remainder of this chapter explores Americans' religious behaviors amid the pandemic in more depth, including congregants' opinions about the precautions being taken.

How many Americans are attending religious services in person or online?

Roughly one-in-eight U.S. adults (12%) say they attended religious services in person during the last month, and one-in-three say they have watched religious services online or on television.

Participation in both activities is most common among those who said *prior* to the outbreak (as part of a 2019 survey) that they attend religious services at least once a month.

Among those who typically attend religious services at least monthly, one-third say they have done so in person during the last month, and nearly three-quarters (72%) say they have watched religious services online or on TV. Among those who said (prior to the onset of the pandemic) that they do not regularly attend religious services, just 3% say they have attended worship services during the past month and 17% say they have watched virtually.

Evangelical Protestants report having attended in-person

Among regular worshippers, one-third say they have attended religious services in person in last month, nearly three-quarters have watched virtually

% of U.S. adults who say they have ____ in the last month

	Attended religious services in person	Watched religious services online or on TV
	%	%
All U.S. adults	12	33
Typically attend at least monthly	33	72
Attend less often	3	17
<i>Among those who typically attend at least monthly</i>		
Christian	33	74
Protestant	35	78
Evangelical	44	80
Mainline	21	68
Historically Black	18	84
Catholic	32	63
White Catholic	42	63
Hispanic Catholic	22	61
White	39	71
Black	19	77
Hispanic	24	68
Northeast	35	68
Midwest	34	75
South	32	72
West	31	71
Republican/lean Republican	42	73
Democrat/lean Democratic	19	70
Counties with high COVID-19 impact	26	73
Counties with medium COVID-19 impact	31	72
Counties with low COVID-19 impact	47	70

Note: White and Black adults include those who report being only one race and are not Hispanic. Hispanics are of any race. Counties are categorized as having a high, medium or low COVID-19 impact based on the deaths attributed to COVID-19 in each respondent's county. Counties are classified as "high" if they had 100 or more deaths as of July 15, 2020. "Low" counties had fewer than 10. The remaining counties are classified as "medium" impact. The survey did not obtain enough interviews with members of non-Christian religious groups who regularly attend services to analyze separately.

Source: Survey conducted July 13-19, 2020, among U.S. adults.

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religious services during the last month at higher rates than members of other Christian traditions. And white Americans who typically attend worship services have recently gone in person at higher rates than Black and Hispanic attenders. For example, among Catholic Mass-goers, whites are almost twice as likely as Hispanics (42% vs. 22%) to say they have attended in-person Mass recently.

Overall, Black and Hispanic Americans who typically attend religious services on at least a monthly basis are no less likely than their white counterparts to say they have recently watched religious services online or on TV.

The survey finds only modest differences across regions of the country on these questions. However, people living in counties where the outbreak has had a smaller impact (that is, counties in which fewer than 10 people have died of the virus) are about twice as likely as those living in high-impact counties (counties with 100 or more coronavirus deaths) to say they have attended in-person religious services in the past month (47% vs. 26%).

Among attenders, Republicans and those who lean toward the Republican Party are much more likely than Democrats to say they have recently gone in person to a religious service (42% vs. 19%), but there is no difference between the two parties in the share who say they have recently watched religious services online or on television.

Correction (Aug. 10, 2020): In the chart “Among regular worshippers, one-third say they have attended religious services in person in last month, nearly three-quarters have watched virtually,” the number for white Catholics who have attended religious services in person has been corrected, as has the text about that finding. The change was very small – 1 percentage point – and does not affect the report’s substantive findings.

These two questions (about in-person religious attendance and viewership of virtual services) can be combined to provide a rough sense of how many Americans have replaced in-person religious attendance with virtual attendance, at least temporarily. Overall, about half of U.S. adults who typically attended religious services at least once a month in 2019 (49%) appear to have substituted virtual participation for in-person attendance: They have recently watched services online or on television and have *not* attended in person.

Roughly a quarter of regular worship attenders (23%)

appear to be supplementing in-person attendance with virtual participation: They have both attended religious services and watched them online or on TV in the last month. Just one-in-ten regular worship attenders say they are still attending services in person and have not recently watched services virtually, while one-in-five (19%) have neither attended in person nor watched religious services online in recent weeks.

Evangelical Protestant churchgoers are more likely than other Christians to say they have both attended church services and watched them online or on TV in the past month. Churchgoers in the historically Black Protestant tradition, meanwhile, are more likely than others to say they have recently watched religious services online or on TV instead of attending in person. Roughly one-quarter of churchgoing Catholics (26%) and mainline Protestants (22%) say they have neither attended nor watched church services in recent weeks.

Half of regular worshippers have replaced in-person attendance with virtual services amid pandemic

% of U.S. adults who say they ____ in the last month

	Watched religious services online/on TV %	Attended in person %	Both %	Neither %
All U.S. adults	25	4	8	63=100
Typically attend at least monthly	49	10	23	19
Attend less often	15	1	1	82
<i>Among those who typically attend religious services at least monthly</i>				
Christian	50	10	24	17
Protestant	52	9	26	13
<i>Evangelical</i>	46	10	33	10
<i>Mainline</i>	56	9	12	22
<i>Historically Black</i>	70	4	14	12
Catholic	42	11	21	26

Note: Figures may not add to 100% due to rounding. The survey did not obtain enough interviews with members of non-Christian religious groups who regularly attend religious services to analyze separately.

Source: Survey conducted July 13-19, 2020, among U.S. adults.

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Many Americans experiencing virtual services for the first time, experimenting with different congregations

Slightly more than half of U.S. adults who have watched religious services online or on TV in the last month say that this is something they started doing during the coronavirus outbreak (54%), while 46% say they watched virtual services even before the onset of the pandemic.

Among those who have recently watched religious services online or on TV, majorities of Catholics (68%) and mainline Protestants (62%) say watching virtual church services has been a new experience for them as a result of the outbreak, while most people in the historically Black Protestant tradition (59%) and half of evangelical Protestants say they had done this before.

Just over half of U.S. adults who have recently watched virtual services had not done so before outbreak

Among U.S. adults who watched religious services online or on TV in the last month, % who say they started doing this ...

	Before the coronavirus outbreak %	During the outbreak %	No answer %
Total	46	54	1=100
Christian	44	55	1
Protestant	49	50	1
<i>Evangelical</i>	50	49	1
<i>Mainline</i>	37	62	1
<i>Historically Black</i>	59	39	2
Catholic	31	68	1
<i>White Catholic</i>	32	68	1
<i>Hispanic Catholic</i>	28	71	1

Note: Figures may not add to 100% due to rounding. White Catholics include those who report being only one race and are not Hispanic. Hispanic Catholics are of any race. The survey did not obtain enough interviews with members of non-Christian religious groups who watched religious services online or on TV in the last month to analyze separately.

Source: Survey conducted July 13-19, 2020, among U.S. adults. "Americans Oppose Religious Exemptions From Coronavirus-Related Restrictions"

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With a wide variety of virtual services available to anyone with an internet connection, many Americans appear to be taking advantage of them and are trying something new.

Fewer than half of those who have watched religious services online or on TV in the past month (40%) say they have watched services offered *only* by the congregation that they typically attend, while three-in-ten (30%) say they have watched services both from their own congregation and from others. An additional three-in-ten (29%) say they have exclusively watched services offered by congregations or religious organizations other than the one they typically attend.

There are few differences across most Christian groups on this question, although members of the historically Black Protestant tradition are less likely than others to exclusively watch their own congregation.

Most virtual worshippers have watched congregations other than their own

Among U.S. adults who watched religious services online or on TV in the last month, % who say they have watched services offered by ...

	The house of worship they attend most often	Some other house of worship or religious organization	Both	No answer
	%	%	%	%
Total	40	29	30	1=100
Christian	42	27	30	1
Protestant	40	26	33	1
<i>Evangelical</i>	42	24	34	1
<i>Mainline</i>	45	23	31	1
<i>Historically Black</i>	28	38	33	2
Catholic	42	35	23	1
<i>White Catholic</i>	44	31	24	<1
<i>Hispanic Catholic</i>	44	37	18	1

Note: Figures may not add to 100% due to rounding. White Catholics include those who report being only one race and are not Hispanic. Hispanic Catholics are of any race. The survey did not obtain enough interviews with members of non-Christian religious groups who watched religious services online or on TV in the last month to analyze separately.

Source: Survey conducted July 13-19, 2020, among U.S. adults.

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Overall, nine-in-ten U.S. adults who have recently watched religious services online say they have been satisfied with what they have seen, including 54% who have been “very” satisfied and 37% who have been “somewhat” satisfied.

Though upward of nine-in-ten Christians are at least somewhat satisfied with the religious services they have watched, mainline Protestants are somewhat less likely to be “very” satisfied (46%) than other Christian groups. And those who say they have watched religious services offered only by their own house of worship are somewhat more apt to say they have been very satisfied (60%) than those who have watched services offered by some other congregation (46%) or those who have watched both (52%).

Most U.S. adults who have watched religious services online, on TV satisfied with what they have seen

Among U.S. adults who watched religious services online or on TV in the last month, % who say they are ____ satisfied with the religious services they have watched

	NET Very/ somewhat	Very	Somewhat	NET Not too/ not at all
	%	%	%	%
Total	91	54	37	8
Christian	93	57	36	6
Protestant	93	56	37	6
<i>Evangelical</i>	93	57	36	6
<i>Mainline</i>	92	46	46	7
<i>Historically Black</i>	95	64	32	3
Catholic	91	58	33	8
<i>White Catholic</i>	91	58	33	9
<i>Hispanic Catholic</i>	91	61	30	9

When watching services online/on TV, have watched services offered by...

Congregation one normally attends	92	60	32	8
Another congregation/organization	89	46	43	10
Both	92	52	39	8

Note: Those who did not answer are not shown. Figures may not add to subtotals indicated due to rounding. White Catholics include those who report being only one race and are not Hispanic. Hispanic Catholics are of any race. The survey did not obtain enough interviews with members of non-Christian religious groups who watched religious services online or on TV in the last month to analyze separately.

Source: Survey conducted July 13-19, 2020, among U.S. adults.

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Most say donations to houses of worship have not changed, although more have decreased than increased

As many people have become physically distanced from their religious congregation, how is this [affecting houses of worship financially?](#)

About seven-in-ten U.S. religious attenders indicate that the donations they make to their congregation have not changed much since the start of the coronavirus outbreak, including 54% who say they have donated about the same amount of money as they normally would have and 17% who say that they do not make financial donations to their congregation.

Nearly one-in-five (18%) say they have donated less money to their congregation since the start of the pandemic, which is nearly twice the number who say they have donated more than they normally would have

(8%). The disparity between those who have increased and decreased their donations is most pronounced among Catholics, 28% of whom have donated less than they otherwise would have, compared with 5% who have donated more.

Roughly one-in-five religious attenders say they have donated less money to their congregation than usual during outbreak, one-in-ten say they've donated more

Among U.S. adults who typically attend religious services at least monthly or attended in person in the last month, % who say since the start of the coronavirus outbreak, they have donated _____ than they normally would have to the house of worship they attend most often

	More money	Less money	About the same amount of money	Do not donate	No answer
	%	%	%	%	%
Total	8	18	54	17	2=100
Christian	8	19	56	16	2
Protestant	8	16	60	14	2
Evangelical	8	14	62	14	2
Mainline	9	20	55	14	1
Historically Black	9	18	58	13	3
Catholic	5	28	42	22	2
White Catholic	7	27	53	12	1
Hispanic Catholic	4	25	30	37	5

Note: Figures may not add to 100% due to rounding. White Catholics include those who report being only one race and are not Hispanic. Hispanic Catholics are of any race. The survey did not obtain enough interviews with members of non-Christian religious groups who said, in a 2019 survey, that they typically attend religious services monthly or more often, or who said in the new survey that they attended religious services in person in the last month, to analyze separately.

Source: Survey conducted July 13-19, 2020, among U.S. adults.

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Most say their religious attendance habits will revert to pre-pandemic norms

While some have wondered whether the pandemic will permanently [change the way people practice religion](#), most U.S. adults say that once the coronavirus outbreak is over, their religious attendance habits will revert to what they were before. This includes 42% who say they will attend in-person religious services about as often as they did before the outbreak, and an additional 43% who say they did not attend religious services before the outbreak and will not do so once it is over.

Among those who expect their religious attendance habits to change, a greater number say they anticipate going in person more often than they did before (10% of all U.S. adults), rather than less often (5%).

Both respondents who reported attending religious services regularly before the

pandemic (as part of a 2019 survey) and respondents who were not regular attenders mostly project a return or continuation of their normal habits following the crisis. But people who say they attended religious services at least monthly before the pandemic are more likely than those who attended less often to say they anticipate increasing their attendance once the crisis has passed (16% vs. 7%).

More than eight-in-ten U.S. adults anticipate no lasting changes to their in-person religious attendance habits

% of U.S. adults who say that when the coronavirus outbreak is over, they will attend religious services in person ____ than before the outbreak

	More often	Less often	About as often	Did not attend services in person before outbreak and will not attend when outbreak is over
	%	%	%	%
All U.S. adults	10	5	42	43
Christian	13	6	59	21
Protestant	15	5	61	18
<i>Evangelical</i>	16	5	66	13
<i>Mainline</i>	9	5	57	29
<i>Historically Black</i>	23	8	53	15
Catholic	10	8	52	29
<i>White Catholic</i>	9	4	55	31
<i>Hispanic Catholic</i>	12	13	49	26
Jewish	10	3	48	38
Unaffiliated	4	3	13	80
Atheist	<1	0	2	98
Agnostic	3	1	6	89
Nothing in particular	5	5	18	72
Typically attend religious services at least monthly	16	7	73	4
Attend less often	7	4	28	60

Note: Those who did not answer are not shown. White Catholics include those who report being only one race and are not Hispanic. Hispanic Catholics are of any race.

Source: Survey conducted July 13-19, 2020, among U.S. adults.

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Just as most people foresee returning to pre-pandemic rates of in-person attendance once the coronavirus outbreak is over, the survey finds little evidence to predict a large-scale increase in engagement with virtual services.

Overall, 6% of U.S. adults say they anticipate watching religious services online or on TV more often after the pandemic than they did before the pandemic, while 9% say they will watch religious services less often. Nearly one-in-five (18%) envision no change, and 66% were not asked this question because they did not report watching religious services in the last month.

Few expect an increase in their engagement with virtual services after the pandemic

% of U.S. adults who say that when the coronavirus outbreak is over, they will watch religious services online or on TV ____ than before the outbreak

	More often	Less often	About as often	Have not watched online/ on TV in last month
	%	%	%	%
All U.S. adults	6	9	18	66
Christian	9	14	26	51
Protestant	10	14	31	45
<i>Evangelical</i>	11	16	35	38
<i>Mainline</i>	7	11	20	62
<i>Historically Black</i>	13	12	42	33
Catholic	7	13	16	63
<i>White Catholic</i>	6	11	16	67
<i>Hispanic Catholic</i>	9	13	17	59
Jewish	5	2	10	83
Unaffiliated	2	2	4	91
Atheist	<1	0	1	98
Agnostic	<1	1	2	96
Nothing in particular	3	3	6	88

Note: Those who did not answer are not shown. White Catholics include those who report being only one race and are not Hispanic. Hispanic Catholics are of any race.

Source: Survey conducted July 13-19, 2020, among U.S. adults.

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Combining these two questions – about whether respondents anticipate changes to their in-person or virtual religious behavior after the pandemic, compared with before – can shed light on a discussion observers of American religion have raised about the long-term impact of the pandemic on U.S. religious life.

Will the pandemic leave regular religious attenders wary of large gatherings and less likely to attend in-person religious services? Will people appreciate the convenience and safety of “virtual” attendance and seek to continue practicing that way? Or will Americans miss the social connections associated with a religious congregation? Furthermore, could the crisis brought on by the pandemic lead to a revival of religious interest and observance among those who did not regularly attend religious services before the pandemic? Or will the forced [separation from religious communities](#) hasten the [rise of the religious “nones”](#) in America?

While the outbreak is not over, the survey suggests that the pandemic will not produce widespread, lasting changes in patterns of attendance at religious services. More than nine-in-ten people who were regular religious attenders before the outbreak (92%) say they intend to resume their previous level of religious attendance or plan to attend religious services even more often once the outbreak is over. And within this group, most say they will watch virtual services either at the same rate or less often than they did before the outbreak.

Meanwhile, just 2% of regular religious attenders indicate that they may substitute online or televised religious services for in-person attendance (by saying both that they intend to go to in-

Just 2% of regular religious attenders anticipate watching more services remotely, attending less in person once outbreak is over

Among U.S. adults who said, in a 2019 survey, that they attend religious services at least once or twice a month, % who say they ____ after the outbreak as before it

Will attend in-person services at same rate/higher rate	92
Will watch more online/on TV than before outbreak	10
Will watch less online/on TV than before outbreak	22
Will watch online/on TV at same rate as before outbreak	35
No answer/did not receive question about online attendance	26
Will attend in-person services less often	7
Will watch more online/on TV than before outbreak	2
Will watch less online/on TV than before outbreak	1
Will watch online/on TV at same rate as before outbreak	1
No answer/did not receive question about online attendance	2
No answer	<1
	100

Note: Figures may not add to 100% or to subtotals indicated due to rounding. The “will attend at same/higher rate” categories include 4% of respondents who said in 2019 that they attended religious services at least once or twice a month and who say in the current survey that they do not attend in-person religious services and also do not intend to go after the outbreak.

Source: Survey conducted July 13-19, 2020, among U.S. adults. “Americans Oppose Religious Exemptions From Coronavirus-Related Restrictions”

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person religious services less often than they did before the pandemic and that they plan to watch virtual services *more* often).

Nor is there much evidence of a renewed desire to attend or watch religious services among those who did not regularly do so before the pandemic. Among those who reported in a 2019 survey that they typically attend religious services a few times a year or less often, 85% foresee no change to their religious attendance or viewing habits after the pandemic has passed, while 8% indicate they will either attend or watch religious services more often and 7% say they will attend or watch less often than they did to begin with.

Among those who did not attend religious services regularly before outbreak, few say they will do so more often after the outbreak

Among U.S. adults who said, in a 2019 survey, that they attend religious services a few times a year or less often, % who say they _____ after the outbreak is over

Will not change their religious attendance habits	85
Do not intend to change in-person attendance; have not watched virtual services in last month	77
Do not intend to change in-person attendance, but will watch virtual services at same rate as before outbreak	8
Will attend or watch (or both) more after the outbreak than before the outbreak	8
Will attend in-person more than before outbreak	5
Will watch online/on TV more than before outbreak	2
Both	1
Will attend or watch (or both) less after the outbreak than before (and will not do either more)	7
Will attend in-person less than before outbreak	4
Will watch online/on TV less	3
Both	<u><1</u>
No answer	<u><1</u>
	100

Note: Figures may not add to 100% or to subtotals indicated due to rounding.

Source: Survey conducted July 13-19, 2020, among U.S. adults. "Americans Oppose Religious Exemptions From Coronavirus-Related Restrictions"

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What people think about modifications to in-person religious attendance, and what their house of worship is doing

Among those who said in a 2019 survey that they attend religious services at least monthly or who say in the current survey that they attended in the last month, eight-in-ten say their congregation is now streaming or recording its services so that they can be viewed online or on TV. Protestants are more likely than Catholics to say this about their congregation. Still, two-thirds of Catholics say their parish now provides this kind of electronic outreach.

More broadly, the survey finds that few U.S. adults who typically attend religious services (6%) say their congregations are open and operating normally, just as they were before the onset of the pandemic. Among religious attenders, 31% say their congregation is closed altogether, while 55% say their house of worship is open and holding religious services, but with modifications as a result of the outbreak.

Among four possible modifications mentioned in the survey, the most common one that congregants encounter is mandatory social distancing: 45% of religious attenders say congregants at their house of worship are required to stay at least 6 feet apart from each other during services. (When limiting the analysis to people who say that their house of worship is open with modifications, 82% say their house of worship requires people to stay at least 6 feet apart.)

Another 36% of attenders say there are restrictions on the number of people who can gather at any one time in their congregation, and 35% say those attending religious services are required to wear masks (in both cases, upward of six-in-ten attenders whose congregations are open but modified say this). Fewer say their congregation has limited or prohibited communal singing (20% of all religious attenders, 37% of all those at open-but-modified congregations).

Most regular religious attenders say their congregation is now streaming or recording its services

Among U.S. adults who typically attend religious services at least monthly or attended in person in the last month, % who say the house of worship they attend most often is currently streaming or recording its services so that people can watch them online or on TV

	Yes %	No %	No answer %
Total	79	20	1=100
Christian	80	19	1
Protestant	86	13	1
<i>Evangelical</i>	88	11	<1
<i>Mainline</i>	82	17	1
<i>Historically Black</i>	83	16	1
Catholic	68	31	2
<i>White Catholic</i>	74	25	1
<i>Hispanic Catholic</i>	62	35	3

Note: Figures may not add to 100% due to rounding. White Catholics include those who report being only one race and are not Hispanic. Hispanic Catholics are of any race.
Source: Survey conducted July 13-19, 2020, among U.S. adults. "Americans Oppose Religious Exemptions From Coronavirus-Related Restrictions"

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Mainline Protestants and those in the historically Black Protestant tradition are more likely than those in other Christian groups to say their congregation is currently closed. Evangelical Protestants and Catholics, by contrast, are more likely than other Christians to say that their churches are open in a modified way. Few people in any Christian tradition say their congregations are operating normally.

Four-in-ten religious attenders who reside in the West and 33% of those who live in the South say their congregation is now closed, which is higher than the shares who say this in the Midwest and Northeast (24% each). And those who live in parts of the country where the virus has hit hardest (in terms of death toll) are more likely than those who live in the least severely affected areas to say their places of worship are closed entirely. But across the country, from the Northeast to the West and from the hardest-hit areas to the least affected, fewer than one-in-ten attenders say their congregations are open and functioning normally.

Among religious attenders, Democrats and those who lean toward the Democratic Party are more likely than Republicans and Republican leaners to say their congregation is closed, while Republicans are more likely than Democrats to say their congregation is open in a modified way.

Few religious attenders in U.S. say their congregation is operating normally

Among U.S. adults who typically attend religious services at least monthly or attended in person in the last month, % who say the house of worship they attend most often is currently ...

-- Changes include ... --

	Open to the public and holding services in same way that it did before coronavirus outbreak	Open to the public for services, but with changes as a result of the coronavirus outbreak	Requiring people to stay at least 6 feet away from each other	Restricting the number of people who can attend at any one time	Requiring people to wear masks	Limiting or prohibiting communal singing	NOT open to the public for in-person religious services	Not sure
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Total	6	55	45	36	35	20	31	7
Christian	5	57	47	38	36	20	31	7
Protestant	7	56	45	33	30	16	31	6
Evangelical	7	64	52	38	32	16	24	4
Mainline	4	45	35	26	30	21	45	6
Historically Black	9	35	28	22	23	12	41	15
Catholic	3	65	58	53	54	32	23	9
White Catholic	2	79	73	67	64	40	11	8
Hispanic Catholic	3	45	40	35	40	22	38	13
White	5	65	54	42	38	23	25	4
Black	7	37	31	25	28	15	42	14
Hispanic	6	41	33	29	33	16	41	12
Northeast	4	67	60	51	55	26	24	4
Midwest	5	64	51	41	33	22	24	7
South	7	51	41	31	31	19	33	9
West	5	47	39	33	32	17	40	7
Republican/lean Rep.	7	66	55	42	38	21	23	5
Democratic/lean Dem.	5	43	34	30	32	20	42	10
<i>In counties with ___ COVID-19 impact</i>								
High	4	49	41	35	37	19	36	10
Medium	6	57	47	39	37	21	31	7
Low	8	66	52	35	28	22	23	3

Note: Those who did not answer are not shown. White and Black adults include those who report being only one race and are not Hispanic. Hispanics are of any race. Nested figures do not sum to subtotals indicated because respondents could say "yes" to multiple questions. Counties are categorized as having a high, medium or low COVID-19 impact based on the deaths attributed to COVID-19 in each respondent's county. Counties are classified as "high" if they had 100 or more deaths as of July 15, 2020. "Low" counties had fewer than 10. The remaining counties are classified as "medium" impact. The survey did not obtain enough interviews with members of non-Christian religious groups who said, in a 2019 survey, that they typically attend religious services monthly or more often, or who said in the new survey that they attended religious services in person in the last month, to analyze separately. Source: Survey conducted July 13-19, 2020, among U.S. adults.

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U.S. congregants generally are on board with implementing restrictions at their congregations. Nearly three-in-ten religious attenders (those who said in a 2019 survey that they attend services at least monthly or those who say in the current survey that they attended in person in the last month) say they think their congregation should be fully closed, and 57% think their congregation should be operating on a modified basis. Far fewer people think their congregations should be open and operating as normal. However, there are about twice as many religious attenders who think their congregation *should be* operating normally (13%) as there are who say their congregation *currently is* operating normally (6%).

Mainline Protestants, members of the historically Black Protestant tradition and Hispanic Catholics are more likely than other Christian subgroups to say their congregation should be closed. White Catholics are more likely than other Christian groups to say their parishes should be open and holding services, but with various modifications in place. And evangelical Protestants are more inclined than any other group to say their congregation should be open and operating normally, although this is a minority opinion even among evangelicals (18%).

Roughly four-in-ten Black (42%) and Hispanic (37%) religious attenders think their congregations should currently be closed. By comparison, just 21% of white attenders say the same. White respondents are more likely than Black and Hispanic religious attenders to say their congregations should be open on a modified basis.

Democrats who regularly attend religious services (54% of whom are Black or Hispanic) are more than twice as likely as Republican attenders (who are mostly white) to say their congregation should be closed (44% vs. 16%). By contrast, Republicans are more likely than Democrats to say their congregations should be open and operating normally (19% vs. 6%). A larger share of Republicans than Democrats also say their congregations should be open with modifications (64% vs. 48%).

Little support for business as usual at U.S. congregations

Among U.S. adults who typically attend religious services at least monthly or attended in person in the last month, % who say the house of worship they attend most often should currently be ...

	-- Changes should include ... --						
	Open to the public and holding services in same way that it did before coronavirus outbreak	Open to the public and holding services, but with changes as a result of the coronavirus outbreak	Requiring people to stay at least 6 feet away from each other	Restricting the number of people who can attend at any one time	Requiring people to wear masks	Limiting or prohibiting communal singing	NOT open to the public for in-person religious services
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Total	13	57	51	41	44	29	28
Christian	13	59	53	43	45	29	27
Protestant	15	58	51	38	42	25	26
Evangelical	18	64	55	41	43	23	18
Mainline	9	49	44	32	40	28	40
Historically Black	10	46	44	34	42	32	41
Catholic	8	62	61	56	56	39	27
White Catholic	9	73	71	65	64	46	16
Hispanic Catholic	6	52	51	45	48	32	38
White	15	63	56	44	45	29	21
Black	10	44	40	33	39	29	42
Hispanic	10	51	47	42	46	27	37
Northeast	7	69	65	56	62	37	19
Midwest	16	61	53	43	44	33	22
South	14	53	47	38	40	26	31
West	12	51	47	38	41	24	35
Republican/lean Rep.	19	64	56	43	44	26	16
Democrat/lean Dem.	6	48	46	41	45	33	44
<i>In counties with ___ COVID-19 impact</i>							
High	11	54	50	43	47	30	33
Medium	11	57	51	41	43	27	29
Low	19	62	53	38	39	28	17

Note: Those who did not answer are not shown. White and Black adults include those who report being only one race and are not Hispanic. Hispanics are of any race. Nested figures do not sum to subtotals indicated because respondents could say "yes" to multiple questions. Counties are categorized as having a high, medium or low COVID-19 impact based on the deaths attributed to COVID-19 in each respondent's county. Counties are classified as "high" if they had 100 or more deaths as of July 15, 2020. "Low" counties had fewer than 10. The remaining counties are classified as "medium" impact. The survey did not obtain enough interviews with members of non-Christian religious groups who said, in a 2019 survey, that they typically attend religious services monthly or more often, or who said in the new survey that they attended religious services in person in the last month, to analyze separately. Source: Survey conducted July 13-19, 2020, among U.S. adults.

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Taken together, these questions show that seven-in-ten U.S. religious attenders have preferences that align with the current operating status of their congregation, including 47% who attend congregations that are open with modifications and say that is the proper approach. An additional 21% attend congregations that are fully closed and say they should be, and 4% attend congregations that are operating normally and think this is the right call.

One-in-five religious attenders think their congregation's current status is too restrictive (for example, their congregation is closed and they think it should be open in some way), while fewer (8%) think their congregation's current operating status is too lax.

One-in-five religious attenders think their congregation's current operating status is too restrictive; one-in-ten say it is too relaxed

Among U.S. adults who typically attend religious services at least monthly or attended in person in the last month, % for whom ...

Respondent's preference matches congregation's status	71
Congregation is open on modified basis, respondent supports this	47
Congregation is closed, respondent supports this	21
Congregation is open normally, respondent supports this	4
Respondent thinks congregation's current status is too restrictive	21
Congregation open with changes, respondent thinks should be operating normally	7
Congregation is closed, respondent thinks should be open (normally or with changes)	14
Respondent thinks congregation's status is too relaxed	8
Congregation is open normally, respondent thinks should be closed or open with modifications	2
Congregation is open with modifications, respondent thinks should be closed	6
	100

Note: Figures may not add to 100% or to subtotals indicated due to rounding. Analysis excludes those who declined to answer either question as well as those who said "not sure" in response to the question about their congregations current operating status.

Source: Survey conducted July 13-19, 2020, among U.S. adults.

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Most attenders say they are confident they could worship without catching virus

Overall, two-thirds of regular religious attenders are “very” or “somewhat” confident they could attend services safely without contracting or spreading the coronavirus. Levels of confidence are highest among evangelical Protestants (75%) and white Catholics (71%), and are lower among other Christian groups.

There also are broad racial and ethnic differences: White Americans have been less affected and are [less worried about the effects of the pandemic than are Black and Hispanic Americans](#).

Not surprisingly, the vast majority of people who say they *have* attended religious services in person in the last month (89%) say they are confident they can do so without catching or spreading the virus. But even among those who have not attended in person recently, half say they are at least somewhat confident they could safely do so.

Two-thirds of religious attenders say they are at least somewhat confident they could safely attend services at their congregation

Among U.S. adults who typically attend religious services at least monthly or attended in person in the last month, % who say they are ___ confident that they could safely attend in-person religious services right now without spreading or catching the coronavirus

	NET Very/ somewhat	Very	Some- what	NET Not too/ not at all	Not too	Not at all
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Total	64	34	29	35	19	16
Christian	65	35	29	35	19	15
Protestant	67	37	30	32	19	14
<i>Evangelical</i>	75	42	32	25	16	9
<i>Mainline</i>	56	26	30	43	23	20
<i>Historically Black</i>	50	30	20	49	22	27
Catholic	59	31	28	40	24	16
<i>White Catholic</i>	71	39	32	29	17	11
<i>Hispanic Catholic</i>	47	23	24	51	30	21
Attended in person in last month	89	59	30	11	9	3
Have not attended	50	20	29	49	25	24
White	72	40	32	27	16	11
Black	49	29	20	49	23	27
Hispanic	51	24	27	48	26	22
Northeast	68	34	34	30	20	10
Midwest	69	37	32	31	18	13
South	62	35	27	38	19	19
West	60	31	30	38	21	17
Republican/lean Republican	79	47	32	21	14	7
Democrat/lean Democratic	44	18	26	55	27	28

Note: Those who did not answer are not shown. Figures may not add to subtotals indicated due to rounding. White and Black adults include those who report being only one race and are not Hispanic. Hispanics are of any race. The survey did not obtain enough interviews with members of non-Christian religious groups who said, in a 2019 survey, that they typically attend religious services monthly or more often, or who said in the new survey that they attended religious services in person in the last month, to analyze separately.

Source: Survey conducted July 13-19, 2020, among U.S. adults.

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Little support for religious exemptions from social distancing requirements

Majorities in all religious, demographic and political groups analyzed in the survey say houses of worship should be required to abide by the same social distancing guidelines and restrictions on large gatherings as other establishments in their local area.

Support for this view is higher among self-described atheists and agnostics and among people who typically attend religious services a few times a year or less than it is among religiously affiliated Americans and those who attend regularly. Still, majorities in all religious groups oppose religious exceptions to regulations designed to slow the spread of the outbreak.

Most say houses of worship should be subject to same coronavirus regulations as other establishments

% of U.S. adults who say houses of worship should be ___ about social distancing and large gatherings as other establishments in their local area

	Required to follow the same rules	Allowed more flexibility with rules	No answer
	%	%	%
All U.S. adults	79	19	1=100
Christian	74	25	2
Protestant	70	28	2
<i>Evangelical</i>	62	36	2
<i>Mainline</i>	79	20	1
<i>Historically Black</i>	83	11	6
Catholic	80	19	1
<i>White Catholic</i>	77	23	<1
<i>Hispanic Catholic</i>	85	14	<1
Jewish	80	19	1
Unaffiliated	89	10	1
Atheist	95	5	1
Agnostic	92	7	<1
Nothing in particular	87	12	1
Typically attend at least monthly	71	28	1
Attend less often	83	15	1
White	77	22	1
Black	82	15	3
Hispanic	84	14	1
Northeast	83	15	1
Midwest	79	20	1
South	78	20	2
West	79	20	1
Republican/lean Rep.	65	33	2
Democrat/lean Dem.	93	7	1

Note: Figures may not add to 100% due to rounding. White and Black adults include those who report being only one race and are not Hispanic. Hispanics are of any race.

Source: Survey conducted July 13-19, 2020, among U.S. adults.

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2. U.S. adults regularly turn to a variety of activities to help cope with coronavirus outbreak

The coronavirus outbreak has created unprecedented stress and uncertainty in the lives of many Americans. The survey finds that U.S. adults turn to many different activities on a regular basis to help cope with the pandemic. The vast majority of adults say they watch TV or movies on a daily basis (73%), and a smaller majority (57%) spend time outdoors every day to help make it through the crisis. Fewer say they regularly turn to religious activities like prayer and scripture reading to help them cope, although these activities are more common among certain Christian groups.

The survey also included some questions intended to measure whether U.S. adults are volunteering, making donations or reaching out to offer assistance to friends and neighbors during the pandemic. About four-in-ten U.S. adults say they have offered help to friends or neighbors, while fewer say they have volunteered or donated money to a nonreligious charitable organization (29%) or a religious organization (18%). By comparison, far fewer Americans say they have *sought* financial help from family, friends or charitable organizations.

To help cope with pandemic, majorities of U.S. adults watch TV or movies and spend time outside every day

Large segments of the public are regularly watching TV or movies and spending time outside to help cope with the coronavirus outbreak. Nine-in-ten U.S. adults say they watch TV or movies at least weekly to cope with the outbreak, including roughly three-quarters (73%) who say they do this daily. And more than eight-in-ten say they spend time outdoors on a daily (57%) or weekly (27%) basis to help get through the pandemic.

Smaller majorities are spending time at least weekly talking on the phone or by

videoconference with friends and family (70%) or exercising (64%), with roughly one-third of U.S. adults saying they engage in these activities every day. And 55% of Americans say they pray either daily (43%) or weekly (12%) to help cope with the coronavirus outbreak.

Less common coping activities include reading scripture, meditating and yoga. Three-in-ten U.S. adults say they read scripture at least weekly, and a quarter meditate each week to cope with the pandemic. Smaller numbers are practicing yoga amid the pandemic, with 8% saying they do this at least weekly and about eight-in-ten (79%) saying they never do yoga to help cope with the outbreak.

Large majorities frequently watch TV, movies, spend time outside to cope with pandemic

% of U.S. adults who say they do each of the following to help cope with the coronavirus outbreak

	NET				Less	
	Daily/	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	than	Never
	weekly	Weekly	Monthly	Monthly	monthly	Never
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Watch TV or movies	89	73	16	3	3	5
Spend time outdoors	84	57	27	4	6	6
Talk on the phone or by videoconference with friends or family	70	34	36	10	8	12
Exercise	64	34	30	7	14	16
Pray	55	43	12	4	9	31
Read scripture	29	17	12	5	13	52
Meditate	26	16	10	5	12	57
Yoga	8	2	6	3	9	79

Note: Those who did not answer are not shown.

Source: Survey conducted July 13-19, 2020, among U.S. adults.

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Many Christian adults pray and read scripture to help with the stresses of the pandemic, although regular prayer is more common than scripture reading across the board. More than eight-in-ten Protestants in the evangelical (83%) and historically Black (88%) traditions say they pray at least weekly, as do smaller majorities of Catholics (66%) and mainline Protestants (65%). Most members of the historically Black Protestant tradition (59%) and evangelicals (57%) say they read scripture at least weekly to help cope with the pandemic, but far fewer mainline Protestants (29%) or Catholics (27%) say this.

U.S. Jews are less likely than Christians to say they pray (36%) or read scripture (20%) at least weekly to help get by during the outbreak.

Women are more likely than men, Black and Hispanic adults are more likely than white adults, and those over 50 are more likely than their younger counterparts to say they pray or read scripture at least weekly to help them cope with the pandemic.

Fewer than half across religious and demographic groups say they meditate regularly to help cope with the outbreak, although Protestants in the historically Black tradition (and Black Americans more broadly) are more likely than other groups to say they do this.

Across all religious and demographic groups analyzed, majorities say they watch TV or movies, spend time outdoors, talk on the phone or by videoconference with family or friends, and exercise regularly to help cope with the coronavirus outbreak.

Vast majorities across religious, demographic groups turn to TV, movies, outdoors to cope with pandemic; majority of Christians also turn to prayer

% of U.S. adults who say they do each of the following at least weekly to help cope with the coronavirus outbreak

	Watch TV or movies	Spend time outdoors	Pray	Talk on the phone or by video with friends or family	Exercise	Read scripture	Meditate	Yoga
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Christian	90	85	74	72	64	42	28	6
Protestant	89	86	78	72	63	49	31	6
<i>Evangelical</i>	86	87	83	68	62	57	31	6
<i>Mainline</i>	92	87	65	75	68	29	25	6
<i>Historically Black</i>	92	80	88	77	58	59	43	6
Catholic	92	82	66	74	64	27	22	7
<i>White Catholic</i>	91	87	61	70	63	22	18	6
<i>Hispanic Catholic</i>	91	75	72	79	64	35	28	7
Jewish	87	91	36	73	76	20	21	11
Unaffiliated	88	82	23	65	62	7	21	10
Atheist	88	81	2	61	62	2	13	10
Agnostic	90	82	6	66	65	1	16	12
Nothing in particular	87	82	35	67	61	11	24	10
Men	87	84	46	62	66	24	24	6
Women	91	84	63	78	62	34	28	10
Ages 18-29	89	79	38	68	61	19	20	13
30-49	88	82	51	69	62	25	24	10
50-64	89	86	64	70	65	35	27	6
65+	91	87	67	74	67	37	33	6
White	89	87	51	68	64	25	23	8
Black	90	81	77	76	58	46	41	8
Hispanic	90	71	61	72	63	32	28	8

Note: White and Black adults include those who report being only one race and are not Hispanic. Hispanics are of any race.

Source: Survey conducted July 13-19, 2020, among U.S. adults.

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Many U.S. adults have volunteered to help others amid pandemic; fewer say they have asked for help

U.S. adults have spent time or money helping others during the pandemic in a variety of ways. Four-in-ten say they have helped friends or neighbors by delivering groceries, running errands or helping with childcare. Three-in-ten report having volunteered or donated money through a nonreligious charitable organization, and 18% have done the same through a religious organization.

Americans who said in a 2019 survey that they typically attend religious services at least once or twice a month are more likely than those who attend less often to say they have helped out friends or neighbors (44% vs. 36%). And not only are these religious attenders about six times more likely to say they have volunteered or made a donation through a religious organization (43% vs. 7%), they are no less likely to have contributed to a secular charity.

More Americans say they have contributed to a secular charity than a religious one amid pandemic

% of U.S. adults who say they have done each of the following as a result of the coronavirus outbreak

	Helped friends, neighbors by delivering groceries, running errands, helping w/childcare	Volunteered or made a donation through a NONRELIGIOUS charitable organization	Volunteered or made a donation through a RELIGIOUS organization
	%	%	%
All U.S. adults	39	29	18
Christian	40	26	26
Protestant	41	26	29
<i>Evangelical</i>	42	22	32
<i>Mainline</i>	36	34	22
<i>Historically Black</i>	48	25	31
Catholic	38	27	19
<i>White Catholic</i>	36	30	21
<i>Hispanic Catholic</i>	43	22	16
Jewish	36	45	23
Unaffiliated	35	31	4
Atheist	28	36	1
Agnostic	32	41	2
Nothing in particular	38	27	6
Typically attend religious services at least monthly	44	30	43
Attend less often	36	29	7
Less than \$30,000	41	20	16
\$30,000 to \$74,999	36	28	17
\$75,000+	39	39	22
White	38	31	18
Black	42	24	24
Hispanic	40	24	15

Note: White and Black adults include those who report being only one race and are not Hispanic. Hispanics are of any race.

Source: Survey conducted July 13-19, 2020, among U.S. adults.

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While U.S. adults overall are more likely to have volunteered or donated through a secular charity than to have done so through a religious one, Christians are equally likely to have given money or time to religious and nonreligious organizations (26% each). Protestants in the evangelical and historically Black traditions are the only Christian subgroups that are more likely to engage with religious charities (rather than nonreligious ones). Mainline Protestants and Catholics, along with Jews and religiously unaffiliated Americans, all have contributed to secular organizations at higher rates than religious ones.

Adults with a household income of at least \$75,000 are more likely than those with lower incomes to say they have donated or volunteered through nonreligious charitable organizations, although they are no more likely than others to say they have helped friends and neighbors and only modestly more likely to say they have donated or volunteered through religious charitable organizations.

By comparison, far fewer U.S. adults say they have turned to other people or organizations for help with essential expenses like housing, bills or food as a result of the coronavirus outbreak. Nearly one-in-five (17%) say they have turned to family, friends or neighbors for help with these expenses, while 9% say they have turned to a nonreligious charitable organization and 6% have sought help from a religious organization.

Three-in-ten adults under 30 have turned to family, friends or neighbors for help during the coronavirus outbreak, while fewer adults over 30 say they have done this.

Americans with household incomes of less than \$30,000 are more likely than those with higher incomes to say they have gotten help during the pandemic from people they know personally and from both religious and nonreligious charitable organizations. And Black and Hispanic adults are more likely than white adults to say they have turned to all three sources for assistance with housing, bills or food.

Amid pandemic, U.S. adults more likely to turn to family, friends over charitable organizations for help

% of U.S. adults who say they turned to each of the following for help with housing, bills or food as a result of the coronavirus outbreak

	Family, friends or neighbors %	A nonreligious charitable organization %	A religious charitable organization %
All U.S. adults	17	9	6
Christian	16	9	7
Protestant	17	9	8
<i>Evangelical</i>	15	8	8
<i>Mainline</i>	13	5	3
<i>Historically Black</i>	34	19	17
Catholic	15	10	5
<i>White Catholic</i>	8	4	2
<i>Hispanic Catholic</i>	24	21	11
Jewish	14	9	6
Unaffiliated	17	9	5
Atheist	11	3	1
Agnostic	16	6	2
Nothing in particular	18	12	7
Ages 18-29	28	13	8
30-49	18	11	7
50-64	14	8	7
65+	7	4	3
Less than \$30,000	31	18	14
\$30,000 to \$74,999	14	8	5
\$75,000+	7	2	1
White	12	5	4
Black	29	16	13
Hispanic	26	21	12

Note: White and Black adults include those who report being only one race and are not Hispanic. Hispanics are of any race.

Source: Survey conducted July 13-19, 2020, among U.S. adults.

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3. Online or in person, many Americans have heard sermons addressing timely political and social events

The social and political issues that have gripped the country over the past few months also have made their way to the pulpit – both the physical and digital. Among Americans who say they attended or watched religious services in person or online in the month prior to when the survey was conducted in mid-July, three-quarters report having heard sermons that expressed the importance of taking steps to limit the spread of the coronavirus, and a majority of Protestants in the historically Black tradition (68%) heard messages of support for the recent Black Lives Matter protests.

While four-in-ten Americans have heard sermons expressing the importance of voting, protesting and other forms of political engagement, messages of support for – or opposition to – either of the major presidential candidates have been far less common.

Of the specific social and political issues asked about in the survey, mentions of the importance of taking steps to limit the spread of the coronavirus are most prevalent in sermons. Among U.S. adults who say that they have either attended worship services in person or watched services on TV or online in the last month, 76% say that they have heard sermons that expressed the importance of taking steps to limit the outbreak. By comparison, about three-in-ten say they have heard sermons expressing opposition to government orders that prevented houses of worship from holding in-person services.

Large majorities across Christian traditions say that they have heard sermons touching on the importance of limiting the outbreak. Among those who have attended or watched religious services, Democrats and those who lean toward the Democratic Party are somewhat more likely than Republicans and their leaners to say that they have heard content expressing the importance of limiting the virus, and Black and Hispanic respondents are more likely than white respondents to say that they have heard this sentiment expressed. But large majorities of all of these groups have received a similar message of caution about the pandemic.

Respondents also were asked whether they have heard sermons that touched on the recent Black Lives Matter protests that followed the killing of George Floyd by a Minneapolis police officer. Four-in-ten U.S. adults who attended religious services in person or watched services online or on TV in the last month (41%) say that they heard sermons that expressed support for the protests. On the other hand, a quarter say that they heard sermons that have expressed opposition to the Black Lives Matter protests.

Protestants in the historically Black tradition are especially likely to say they have heard sermons in support of the protests (68%), although they also are more likely than most other Christian groups to report hearing opposition (38%). Meanwhile, Democrats are roughly twice as likely as Republicans to have heard sermons that express support for the protests (59% vs. 29%).

A Pew Research Center survey conducted in June posed a related question: Had respondents heard any sermons condemning police violence against Black people? Overall, 37% of U.S. regular attenders (that is, those who said in a 2019 survey that they typically attend religious services at least monthly) reported hearing sermons condemning such violence. Within this group, about half of Black adults (53%) and roughly four-in-ten Hispanics (43%) said that they had heard sermons condemning police violence, while fewer white adults (31%) said the same.

The new survey, conducted in mid-July, also finds large racial and ethnic gaps on the question about Black Lives Matter: 67% of Black worshippers say they have heard support for the protests in sermons, compared with 43% among Hispanics and 32% among whites.

Four-in-ten adults who attended services in person or watched them virtually in the last month say that they have heard sermons that discussed the importance of voting, protesting and other forms of political engagement. Again, Protestants in the historically Black tradition are the only Christian group in which a majority (61%) say they have heard sermons on this topic. In addition, roughly half of Democrats (52%) have heard sermons expressing the importance of political engagement, while just 33% of Republicans say the same.

Respondents also were asked whether they have heard sermons about abortion in the last month. About a third of adults who have attended services in person or watched them online or on TV in the last month say that they have heard sermons opposing abortion, with Republicans more likely than Democrats to have heard such messages (42% vs. 28%). A smaller share of adults who have attended or watched services in the last month say that they have heard sermons expressing support for legal abortion (11%).

Many Americans have heard sermons that touched on the importance of limiting the spread of the coronavirus

Among U.S. adults who have attended religious services in person or watched religious services online or on TV in the last month, % who say they have heard sermons that have expressed ...

	The importance of taking steps to limit the spread of the coronavirus	Support for recent Black Lives Matter protests	The importance of voting, protesting, other forms of political engagement	Opposition to abortion	Opposition to govt. orders preventing houses of worship from holding in-person services	Opposition to recent Black Lives Matter protests	Support for legal abortion
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
U.S. adults who attended religious services in person or watched services online/on TV in last month	76	41	40	35	31	25	11
Christian	76	39	38	35	29	22	9
Protestant	74	38	38	33	30	21	8
<i>Evangelical</i>	70	30	33	39	31	18	7
<i>Mainline</i>	79	41	34	23	22	17	9
<i>Historically Black</i>	82	68	61	24	38	38	12
Catholic	81	39	38	44	27	24	12
<i>White Catholic</i>	74	34	29	46	23	18	8
<i>Hispanic Catholic</i>	87	42	46	42	29	30	16
White	72	32	32	37	27	18	8
Black	83	67	60	27	37	36	17
Hispanic	81	43	42	40	35	31	17
Republican/lean Republican	72	29	33	42	31	22	9
Democrat/lean Democratic	81	59	52	28	30	28	16

Note: White and Black adults include those who report being only one race and are not Hispanic. Hispanics are of any race. The survey did not obtain enough interviews with members of non-Christian groups who attended religious services in person or watched religious services online or on TV in the last month to analyze separately.

Source: Survey conducted July 13-19, 2020, among U.S. adults.

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Though sermons have contained content on salient political and social issues, specific mentions of the two candidates in the upcoming presidential election are much less common. (There are [restrictions on involvement in political campaigns](#) by tax-exempt organizations, including religious institutions.)

About one-in-ten U.S. adults who have attended religious services in person or watched them digitally in the last month (9%) say that they have heard sermons that expressed support for incumbent President Donald Trump, while a similar share (7%) say that they have heard opposition to the president. About one-in-ten (11%) report hearing both sentiments in sermons.

Sermons that expressed support for (6%) or opposition to (4%) the presumptive Democratic nominee, Joe Biden, also are relatively uncommon, although again, one-in-ten (9%) say they have heard multiple perspectives on Biden in sermons. However, Protestants in the historically Black tradition are more likely than other Christians to report having heard sermons that expressed opposition to Trump or support for Biden.

Most Americans have not heard sermons that take positions on presidential race

Among U.S. adults who have attended religious services in person or watched religious services online or on TV in the last month, % who say they have heard sermons that have expressed ...

	Donald Trump				Joe Biden			
	Support for	Opposition to	Both	Neither	Support for	Opposition to	Both	Neither
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
U.S. adults who attended religious services in person or watched services online/on TV in last month	9	7	11	72	6	4	9	79
Christian	9	6	10	75	5	4	8	82
Protestant	10	7	8	74	5	4	7	83
<i>Evangelical</i>	12	3	6	78	1	5	6	87
<i>Mainline</i>	6	6	6	81	2	3	6	89
<i>Historically Black</i>	7	22	18	53	23	2	12	64
Catholic	5	5	14	75	4	4	12	78
<i>White Catholic</i>	6	1	10	82	3	4	7	86
<i>Hispanic Catholic</i>	5	8	15	68	4	5	15	72
White	11	3	7	80	2	5	6	87
Black	5	18	17	59	18	1	12	67
Hispanic	10	7	14	67	7	5	14	71
Republican/lean Republican	12	3	9	76	2	6	7	84
Democrat/lean Democratic	7	13	14	65	13	3	12	71

Note: Those who did not answer are not shown. White and Black adults include those who report being only one race and are not Hispanic. Hispanics are of any race. The survey did not obtain enough interviews with members of non-Christian groups who attended religious services in person or watched religious services online or on TV in the last month to analyze separately.

Source: Survey conducted July 13-19, 2020, among U.S. adults.

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Methodology

The American Trends Panel survey methodology

The American Trends Panel (ATP), created by Pew Research Center, is a nationally representative panel of randomly selected U.S. adults. Panelists participate via self-administered web surveys. Panelists who do not have internet access at home are provided with a tablet and wireless internet connection. The panel is being managed by Ipsos.

Data in this report is drawn from the panel wave conducted July 13 to July 19, 2020. A total of 10,211 panelists responded out of 12,981 who were sampled, for a response rate of 79%. There were no panelists who were

removed from the data due to extremely high rates of refusal or straightlining. The cumulative response rate accounting for nonresponse to the recruitment surveys and attrition is 4.3%. The break-off rate among panelists who logged on to the survey and completed at least one item is 1%. The margin of sampling error for the full sample of 10,211 respondents is plus or minus 1.5 percentage points.

American Trends Panel recruitment surveys

Recruitment dates	Mode	Invited	Joined	Active panelists remaining
Jan. 23 to March 16, 2014	Landline/ cell RDD	9,809	5,338	2,304
Aug. 27 to Oct. 4, 2015	Landline/ cell RDD	6,004	2,976	1,335
April 25 to June 4, 2017	Landline/ cell RDD	3,905	1,628	684
Aug. 8 to Oct. 31, 2018	ABS/web	9,396	8,778	6,405
Aug. 19 to Nov. 30, 2019	ABS/web	5,900	4,720	4,682
	Total	35,014	23,440	15,410

Note: Approximately once per year, panelists who have not participated in multiple consecutive waves or who did not complete an annual profiling survey are removed from the panel. Panelists also become inactive if they ask to be removed from the panel.

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This study featured a stratified random sample from the ATP. The sample was allocated according to the following strata, in order: tablet households, Mexican-born Hispanics, U.S. born Hispanics, other foreign-born Hispanics, Cuban-born Hispanics, non-internet, high school education or less, not registered to vote, nonvolunteers, people ages 18 to 34, non-Hispanic Black adults, and all other categories not already falling into any of the above.

The ATP was created in 2014, with the first cohort of panelists invited to join the panel at the end of a large, national, landline and cellphone random-digit-dial survey that was conducted in both English and Spanish. Two additional recruitments were conducted using the same method in 2015 and 2017, respectively. Across these three surveys, a total of 19,718 adults were invited to join the ATP, of which 9,942 agreed to participate.

In August 2018, the ATP switched from telephone to address-based recruitment. Invitations were sent to a random, address-based sample (ABS) of households selected from the U.S. Postal Service's Delivery Sequence File. In each household, the adult with the next birthday was asked to go online to complete a survey, at the end of which they were invited to join the panel. For a random half-sample of invitations, households without internet access were instructed to return a postcard. These households were contacted by telephone and sent a tablet if they agreed to participate. A total of 9,396 were invited to join the panel, and 8,778 agreed to join the panel and completed an initial profile survey. The same recruitment procedure was carried out in 2019, from which a total of 5,900 were invited to join the panel and 4,720 agreed to join the panel and completed an initial profile survey. Of the 23,440 individuals who have ever joined the ATP, 15,410 remained active panelists and continued to receive survey invitations at the time this survey was conducted.

The U.S. Postal Service's Delivery Sequence File has been estimated to cover as much as 98% of the population, although some studies suggest that the coverage could be in the low 90% range.³ The American Trends Panel never uses breakout routers or chains that direct respondents to additional surveys.

³ AAPOR Task Force on Address-based Sampling. 2016. "[AAPOR Report: Address-based Sampling](#)."

Weighting

The ATP data was weighted in a multistep process that begins with a base weight incorporating the respondents' original selection probability. The next step in the weighting uses an iterative technique that aligns the sample to population benchmarks on the dimensions listed in the accompanying table.

Sampling errors and tests of statistical significance take into account the effect of weighting. Interviews are conducted in both English and Spanish.

In addition to sampling error, one should bear in mind that question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of opinion polls.

Weighting dimensions

Variable	Benchmark source
Gender	2018 American Community Survey
Age	
Education	
Race/Hispanic origin	
Born inside vs. outside the U.S. among Asians	
Country of birth among Hispanics	
Years lived in the United States	
Home internet access	
Region x Metropolitan status	2019 CPS March Supplement
Volunteerism	2017 CPS Volunteering & Civic Life Supplement
Voter registration	2018 CPS Voting and Registration Supplement
Party affiliation	Average of the three most recent Pew Research Center telephone surveys.

Note: Estimates from the ACS are based on non-institutionalized adults. Voter registration is calculated using procedures from Hur, Achen (2013) and rescaled to include the total US adult population.

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The following tables show the unweighted sample sizes and the error attributable to sampling that would be expected at the 95% level of confidence for different groups in the survey:

Group	Unweighted sample size	Plus or minus ...	
All U.S. adults	10,211	1.5 percentage points	
Christian	6,429	1.8 percentage points	
Protestant	3,914	2.3 percentage points	
<i>Evangelical</i>	2,085	3.1 <i>percentage points</i>	
<i>Mainline</i>	1,371	3.9 <i>percentage points</i>	
<i>Historically Black</i>	458	6.5 <i>percentage points</i>	
Catholic	2,228	3.2 percentage points	
<i>White Catholic</i>	1,149	4.0 <i>percentage points</i>	
<i>Hispanic Catholic</i>	964	5.8 <i>percentage points</i>	
Jewish	250	8.8 percentage points	
Unaffiliated	3,079	2.7 percentage points	
Atheist	651	6.0 percentage points	
Agnostic	652	5.9 percentage points	
Nothing in particular	1,776	3.5 percentage points	
White	6,589	1.7 percentage points	
Black	872	4.7 percentage points	
Hispanic	2,059	4.0 percentage points	
<i>COVID-19 county deaths as of July 15:</i>			
High	5,534	2.0 percentage points	
Medium	2,886	2.7 percentage points	
Low	1,791	3.3 percentage points	
	Unweighted sample size	Weighted %	
Republican/lean Rep.	4,110	45	2.2 percentage points
Democrat/lean Dem.	5,761	50	2.0 percentage points

Group	Unweighted sample size	Plus or minus ...
<i>Among U.S. adults who typically attend religious services at least monthly or attended in-person in the last month</i>		
Total	3,756	2.4 percentage points
Christian	3,468	2.5 percentage points
Protestant	2,287	3.0 percentage points
<i>Evangelical</i>	1,411	3.8 <i>percentage points</i>
<i>Mainline</i>	580	5.9 <i>percentage points</i>
<i>Historically Black</i>	296	8.2 <i>percentage points</i>
Catholic	959	4.9 percentage points
<i>White Catholic</i>	516	5.7 <i>percentage points</i>
<i>Hispanic Catholic</i>	385	9.1 <i>percentage points</i>
<i>Among U.S. adults who watched religious services online or on TV in the last month</i>		
Total	3,740	2.4 percentage points
Christian	3,378	2.5 percentage points
Protestant	2,362	3.0 percentage points
<i>Evangelical</i>	1,420	3.8 <i>percentage points</i>
<i>Mainline</i>	597	6.0 <i>percentage points</i>
<i>Historically Black</i>	345	7.6 <i>percentage points</i>
Catholic	866	5.2 percentage points
<i>White Catholic</i>	427	6.2 <i>percentage points</i>
<i>Hispanic Catholic</i>	384	9.2 <i>percentage points</i>
<i>Among U.S. adults who watched religious services online or on TV, or attended in-person services in the last month</i>		
Total	4,141	2.3 percentage points
Christian	3,728	2.4 percentage points
Protestant	2,555	2.9 percentage points
<i>Evangelical</i>	1,549	3.6 <i>percentage points</i>
<i>Mainline</i>	649	5.8 <i>percentage points</i>
<i>Historically Black</i>	357	7.4 <i>percentage points</i>
Catholic	998	4.8 percentage points
<i>White Catholic</i>	517	5.7 <i>percentage points</i>
<i>Hispanic Catholic</i>	417	8.8 <i>percentage points</i>

Sample sizes and sampling errors for other subgroups are available upon request.