

The U.S. Congregational Life Survey

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America Responses
 Frequencies (N = 43,463 attendees from 420 congregations)
 Survey conducted April, 2001

You and Your Congregation

1. How often do you go to worship services at this congregation?
 - 2.0% This is my first time
 - 1.8 Hardly ever/special occasions only
 - 1.6 Less than once a month
 - 2.7 Once a month
 - 18.3 Two or three times a month
 - 69.0 Usually every week
 - 4.6 More than once a week
2. How long have you been going to worship services or activities at this congregation?

6.8%	Less than 1 year	12.6	6-10 years
7.5	1-2 years	17.4	11-20 years
11.4	3-5 years	41.3	More than 20 years

 - 2.2 I am visiting from another congregation
 - 0.8 I am visiting and do not regularly go anywhere else
3. Are you regularly involved in any **group** activities here? (Mark **all** that apply.)
 - 23.1% Yes, in Sunday school, church school, or Sabbath school
 - 22.0 Yes, in prayer, discussion, or Bible study groups
 - 35.6 Yes, in fellowships, clubs, or other social groups
 - 4.8 No, we have no group activities
 - 37.3 No, I am not regularly involved in group activities
4. Do you regularly take part in any activities of this congregation that reach out to the wider community (e.g., visitation, evangelism, outreach, community service, social justice)? (Mark **all** that apply.)
 - 14.3% Yes, in evangelism or outreach activities
 - 23.7 Yes, in community service, social justice, or advocacy activities of this congregation
 - 4.2 No, we don't have such activities
 - 58.3 No, I am not regularly involved
5. Do you currently have any of the following roles here? (Mark **all** that apply.)
 - 7.8% Member of the governing board
 - 17.0 Member of a congregational committee or task force
 - 14.2 Leading or assisting in worship
 - 8.0 Officer or leader of men's, women's, youth, or other small group
 - 14.3 Choir member, musician, or choir director
 - 10.5 Sunday school, church school, or Sabbath school teacher
 - 13.5 Other role not listed here (specify):
 - 42.4 None

About Your Faith

6. Over the last year, how much have you grown in your faith?
 - 6.1% No real growth
 - 43.7 Some growth
 - 34.4 Much growth, mainly through this congregation
 - 5.6 Much growth, mainly through other groups or congregations
 - 10.1 Much growth, mainly through my own private activities

7. How often do you spend time in private devotional activities (e.g., prayer, meditation, reading the Bible alone)?
 - 43.6% Every day/most days
 - 19.5 A few times a week
 - 4.7 Once a week
 - 21.6 Occasionally
 - 8.5 Hardly ever
 - 2.1 Never
8. Which statement comes closest to your view of the Bible? (Mark **one** only.)
 - 23.9% The Bible is the word of God, to be taken literally word for word
 - 26.8 The Bible is the word of God, to be interpreted in the light of its historical and cultural context
 - 42.5 The Bible is the word of God, to be interpreted in the light of its historical context and the Church's teachings
 - 3.8 The Bible is not the word of God, but contains God's word to us
 - 0.6 The Bible is not the word of God but is a valuable book
 - 0.1 The Bible is an ancient book with little value today
 - 2.2 Don't know
9. Do you agree or disagree with this statement: "All the different religions are equally good ways of helping a person find ultimate truth"?
 - 12.9% Strongly agree
 - 41.2 Agree
 - 21.0 Neutral or unsure
 - 17.9 Disagree
 - 7.0 Strongly disagree
10. Do you agree or disagree: "My spiritual needs are being met in this congregation or parish"?
 - 30.7% Strongly agree
 - 54.2 Agree
 - 11.6 Neutral or unsure
 - 2.8 Disagree
 - 0.6 Strongly disagree
11. Some people feel they came to faith gradually. For others, it began at a definite moment of commitment. Have you ever experienced such a moment of decisive faith commitment or conversion?
 - 52.8% No, I've had faith for as long as I can remember
 - 25.5 No, I came to faith through a gradual process
 - 3.3 Yes, at one specific moment in the last 5 years
 - 5.8 Yes, at one specific moment more than 5 years ago
 - 8.3 Yes, a number of specific moments of commitment or re-commitment
 - 4.4 Not sure or not applicable
12. Are you currently a member of this congregation?
 - 87.7% Yes
 - 5.3 No
 - 1.7 No, but I'm in the process of becoming a member
 - 5.3 No, but I regularly participate here

You and Your Local Community

13. Are you involved in any community service, social service, or advocacy groups **not** connected to this congregation? (Mark **all** that apply.)
- 31.9% Yes, social service or charity groups
5.2 Yes, advocacy, justice, or lobbying groups
61.1 No, I'm not involved with such groups
14. Which of the following best describes your readiness to talk to others about your faith?
- 0.6% I do not have faith, so the question is not applicable
12.8 I do not talk about my faith; my life and actions are sufficient
16.3 I find it hard to talk about my faith in ordinary language
59.7 I mostly feel at ease talking about my faith and do so if it comes up
10.6 I feel at ease talking about my faith and seek opportunities to do so
15. Would you be prepared to invite to a worship service here any of your friends and relatives who do not now attend a congregation?
- 42.1% Yes, and I have done so in the past 12 months
41.7 Yes, but I have not done so in the past 12 months
10.7 Don't know
5.1 No, probably not
0.5 No, definitely not
16. In the past 12 months, have you done any of the following? (Mark **all** that apply.)
- 21.1% Loaned money to someone outside your family
18.5 Cared for someone outside your family who was very sick
16.0 Helped someone outside your family find a job
51.8 Donated or prepared food for someone outside your family or congregation
79.4 Voted in the last presidential election
75.4 Donated money to a charitable organization (other than this congregation)
21.8 Worked with others to try to solve a community problem
19.4 Contacted an elected official about a public issue

More About Your Involvement Here

17. How satisfied are you with what is offered here for children and youth (less than 19 years of age)?
- 26.1% Very satisfied
38.1 Satisfied
17.7 Mixed feelings
4.2 Dissatisfied
1.3 Very dissatisfied
12.6 Not sure or not applicable
18. Which best describes your involvement in the making of important decisions in this congregation?
- 22.4% I have been given the opportunity and often participate in decision-making
28.8 I have been given the opportunity and occasionally get involved in decision-making
34.2 I have been given the opportunity but don't usually get involved in decision-making
12.1 I have **not** been given an opportunity to be involved and this is fine with me
2.5 I have **not** been given an opportunity to be involved and I am not happy about this

19. Do you have a strong sense of belonging to this congregation?
- 47.6% Yes, a strong sense of belonging that is growing
30.1 Yes, a strong sense—about the same as last year
9.0 Yes, but perhaps not as strong as in the past
3.8 No, but I am new here
2.2 No, and I wish I did by now
3.6 No, but I am happy as I am
3.7 Don't know/not applicable
20. While you may value many different styles of music, which of the following do you prefer in congregational worship? (Mark up to **two**.)
- 72.1% Traditional hymns
27.4 Praise music or choruses
31.9 Contemporary hymns
12.0 Other contemporary music or songs (not hymns)
4.4 Sung responsorial psalms
9.4 Classical music or chorales
1.1 Contemplative chants (Taizé, Iona)
7.3 Music or songs from a variety of cultures
2.9 African-American gospel music
0.3 No music or songs
2.1 Don't know
21. To what extent do the worship services or activities of this congregation help you with everyday living?
- 42.0% A great extent
46.6 Some extent
9.3 A small extent
2.1 Not at all
22. Which of the following aspects of this congregation do you personally most value? (Mark up to **three** options.)
- 11.3% Wider community care or social justice emphasis
10.6 Reaching those who do not attend church
39.5 Traditional style of worship or music
16.3 Contemporary style of worship or music
57.3 Sharing in Holy Communion, Eucharist, or the Lord's Supper
13.3 Social activities or meeting new people
38.8 Sermons, preaching, or homilies
12.1 Bible study or prayer groups, other discussion groups
18.1 Ministry for children or youth
8.6 Prayer ministry for one another
13.5 Practical care for one another in times of need
3.5 The congregation's school or pre-school
6.4 Openness to social diversity
2.8 Adult church-school or Sabbath-school class
23. Do you have any close friends in this congregation?
- 10.8% No, I have little contact with others from this congregation outside of activities here
18.2 No, I have some friends in this congregation, but my closest friends are not involved here
59.6 Yes, I have some close friends here as well as other close friends who are not part of this congregation
11.4 Yes, all of my closest friends are part of this congregation
24. Before you started coming to this congregation, were you participating in another congregation?
- 20.2% No, I've come here for most/all of my life
14.2 No, before coming here I had not been attending any congregation for several years
4.7 No, before coming here I had never regularly attended
60.9 Yes, immediately prior to coming here, I was participating in another congregation

25. Before you started coming here, what type of congregation did you attend? (Mark only *one*.)
- | | | | |
|------|--|-----|-------------------------|
| 0.4% | Assembly of God | 0.2 | Pentecostal |
| 2.7 | Baptist | 1.3 | Non-denominational |
| 6.9 | Catholic | 0.2 | Nazarene |
| 1.4 | Episcopal | 2.8 | Presbyterian |
| 58.9 | Lutheran | 0.0 | Seventh-day Adventist |
| 5.4 | Methodist | 1.7 | United Church of Christ |
| 2.9 | Other | | |
| 15.0 | I did not attend another congregation before coming here | | |

26. Over the last two years, has there been any conflict in this congregation? (Mark only *one*.)
- | | |
|-------|--|
| 46.4% | No conflict that I am aware of |
| 30.6 | Some minor conflict |
| 3.7 | Major conflict |
| 6.4 | Major conflict, with leaders or people leaving |
| 13.0 | Don't know |

This Congregation's Leadership

27. Have this congregation's leaders encouraged you to find and use your gifts and skills here?
- | | |
|-------|------------------------|
| 30.3% | Yes, to a great extent |
| 38.4 | Yes, to some extent |
| 15.9 | Yes, to a small extent |
| 6.5 | Not at all |
| 9.0 | Don't know |

About You

28. In what year were you born? Please complete the year.
Median Age = 54
29. Are you:
- | | |
|-------|--------|
| 38.1% | Male |
| 61.9 | Female |
30. What is your employment status? (Mark *all* that apply.)
- | | |
|-------|---|
| 52.5% | Employed full time, part time, or self-employed |
| 2.0 | Unemployed |
| 31.3 | Retired |
| 8.8 | Full-time homemaker |
| 6.5 | Student |
| 2.4 | Other (please specify) |
31. What is the *highest* educational level you have completed?
- | | |
|------|--|
| 0.2% | No formal schooling |
| 3.4 | Primary school through 8 th grade (K-8) |
| 6.8 | Some high school |
| 36.2 | Completed high school |
| 7.2 | Trade certificate |
| 10.0 | Associate degree |
| 23.1 | Bachelors degree from a university or college |
| 13.2 | Master's, Doctorate, or other graduate degree |
32. What is your present marital status?
- | | | | |
|-------|------------------------------------|------|-----------|
| 10.6% | Never married | 0.7 | Separated |
| 58.8 | In first marriage | 5.2 | Divorced |
| 10.3 | Remarried after divorce | 10.7 | Widowed |
| 2.0 | Remarried after death of spouse | | |
| 1.6 | Living in a committed relationship | | |

33. Do you have a spouse or partner who is also completing a survey here?
- | | |
|-------|-----|
| 55.2% | Yes |
| 44.8 | No |
34. What is your race or origin? (Mark *all* that apply.)
- | | |
|------|---|
| 0.4% | Asian or Pacific Islander |
| 0.6 | Black or African American |
| 0.7 | Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin |
| 0.9 | Indian (American) or Alaska Native |
| 92.5 | White or Caucasian |
| 0.9 | Some other race (please specify): _____ |

35. Where were you born?
- | | |
|-------|-------------------------------------|
| 97.6% | In the United States |
| 0.9 | In another English-speaking country |
| 1.5 | In a non-English speaking country |

36. Is English your first language?
- | | |
|-------|-----|
| 98.1% | Yes |
| 1.9 | No |

37. Which statement *best* describes the people who *currently* live in your household?
- | | |
|-------|--|
| 15.0% | I live alone |
| 6.9 | Adults only in the same household |
| 34.7 | A couple without children |
| 4.3 | One adult with child/children |
| 39.2 | Two or more adults with child/children |

38. What is the ZIP Code where you live?

39. About how much do you give financially to this congregation?
- | | |
|-------|---|
| 13.7% | I give 10% or more of net income regularly |
| 38.3 | I give about 5% to 9% of net income regularly |
| 30.9 | I give less than 5% of net income regularly |
| 12.2 | I give a small amount whenever I am here |
| 5.1 | I do not contribute financially here |

40. Which of the following describes your total annual household income before taxes?
- | | | | |
|------|----------------------|------|----------------------|
| 6.6% | less than \$10,000 | 22.9 | \$50,000 to \$74,999 |
| 17.4 | \$10,000 to \$24,999 | 12.3 | \$75,000 to \$99,999 |
| 28.5 | \$25,000 to \$49,999 | 12.3 | \$100,000 or more |

41. How many children of any age do you have, whether they live at home or elsewhere? Please write the number:
- | | | | |
|-------|-------|------|--------------|
| 12.9% | none | 10.4 | one |
| 32.5 | two | 20.5 | three |
| 8.9 | four | 3.3 | five |
| 1.4 | six | 0.6 | seven |
| 0.3 | eight | 0.3 | nine or more |

42. Do you have any children *living at home*? (Please provide the ages of your children living at home starting with the eldest.)
- | | |
|-------|---|
| 46.1% | None at home → Please skip to the next page |
|-------|---|
- Age data was not coded properly.

43. Of your children who *live at home*, which ones participate at this congregation?

	<u>Does She or He Participate Here?</u>		
	Yes, Here	Yes, Elsewhere	No
Eldest child at home	83.1%	5.5	11.5
Child number 2 at home	88.5	4.3	7.2
Child number 3 at home	86.6	5.2	8.2
Child number 4 at home	78.8	5.9	15.3

Some Final Questions

44. How long does it usually take you to get here?
- | | |
|-------|----------------------|
| 34.0% | 1-5 minutes |
| 30.3 | 6-10 minutes |
| 17.9 | 11-15 minutes |
| 9.8 | 16-20 minutes |
| 5.7 | 21-30 minutes |
| 2.3 | More than 20 minutes |
45. Compared to 2 years ago, do you think you participate in activities of the congregation more, less, or about the same amount as you did then?
- | | |
|-------|--|
| 26.8% | Participate more |
| 52.4 | About the same participation |
| 13.4 | Participate less |
| 7.4 | Not applicable (been coming less than 2 years) |
46. Do you identify with any of the following approaches to faith? (Mark up to *two* options.)
- | | | | | | |
|------|--|------|----------------|-----|---------|
| 20.9 | Catholic | 1.3 | Pentecostal | 3.4 | Liberal |
| 31.0 | Evangelical | 1.3 | Fundamentalist | 1.2 | New Age |
| 3.3 | Reformed | 13.0 | Traditionalist | | |
| 1.4 | Charismatic | 6.7 | Moderate | | |
| 25.6 | I do not identify with such descriptions | | | | |
47. Do you agree or disagree: "This congregation is strongly focused on serving the wider community beyond the congregation"?
- | | |
|-------|-------------------|
| 29.2% | Strongly agree |
| 49.7 | Agree |
| 16.9 | Neutral or unsure |
| 3.6 | Disagree |
| 0.6 | Strongly disagree |
48. How often do you experience the following during worship services at this congregation? (Mark *one* response in each row.)
- | | Always | Usually | Sometimes | Rarely |
|---|--------|---------|-----------|--------|
| A sense of God's presence . . . | 40.5 | 37.6 | 18.2 | 3.8 |
| Inspiration | 25.9 | 48.8 | 22.8 | 2.5 |
| Boredom | 1.0 | 3.5 | 31.1 | 64.4 |
| Awe or mystery | 4.4 | 16.1 | 51.6 | 28.0 |
| Joy | 26.1 | 49.2 | 21.9 | 2.8 |
| Frustration | 0.9 | 2.9 | 25.7 | 70.5 |
| Spontaneity | 4.8 | 18.7 | 50.4 | 26.1 |
| A sense of fulfilling my obligation | 16.9 | 48.7 | 26.0 | 8.4 |
49. Does this congregation have a clear vision, goals, or direction for its ministry and mission?
- | | |
|-------|--|
| 12.9% | I am not aware of such a vision, goals, or direction |
| 15.5 | There are ideas but no clear vision, goals, or direction |
| 30.5 | Yes, and I am strongly committed to them |
| 33.7 | Yes, and I am partly committed to them |
| 7.3 | Yes, but I am not committed to them |
50. Do you agree or disagree: "I have a sense of excitement about our congregation's future"?
- | | |
|-------|-------------------|
| 23.1% | Strongly agree |
| 49.7 | Agree |
| 23.8 | Neutral or unsure |
| 2.8 | Disagree |
| 0.6 | Strongly disagree |
51. Of the following, which *one* best describes your opinion of the future directions of this congregation?
- | | |
|------|--|
| 4.0% | We need to get back to the way we did things in the past |
| 10.4 | We are faithfully maintaining past directions |
| 24.4 | We are currently deciding on new directions |
| 34.8 | We are currently moving in new directions |
| 7.5 | We need to rethink where we are heading |
| 2.5 | Our future is very unclear or doubtful |
| 16.3 | Don't know |
52. Do you agree or disagree: "This congregation is always ready to try something new"?
- | | |
|-------|-------------------|
| 10.1% | Strongly agree |
| 48.6 | Agree |
| 30.6 | Neutral or unsure |
| 9.6 | Disagree |
| 1.0 | Strongly disagree |
53. To what extent does the minister, pastor, or priest here take into account the ideas of those who worship here?
- | | |
|-------|-----------------------------------|
| 48.8% | A great extent |
| 32.1 | Some extent |
| 4.6 | A small extent |
| 0.9 | Not at all |
| 12.9 | Don't know |
| 0.7 | There is currently no leader here |
54. Which of the following is the best description of the style of leadership of your pastor, minister, or priest?
- | | |
|-------|--|
| 17.9% | Leadership that tends to take charge |
| 48.0 | Leadership that inspires people to take action |
| 19.7 | Leadership that acts on goals that people here have been involved in setting |
| 3.7 | Leadership where the people start most things |
| 1.5 | There is currently no leader here |
| 9.3 | Don't know |
55. What do you think are the main roles that your minister, pastor, or priest actually carries out here? (Mark up to *three* options.)
- | | |
|-------|--|
| 74.3% | Conducting worship or administering the sacraments |
| 51.1 | Teaching people about the faith |
| 6.8 | Training people for ministry and mission |
| 4.0 | Converting others to the faith |
| 21.5 | Administering the work of the congregation |
| 44.8 | Visiting, counseling and helping people |
| 9.8 | Confronting social injustices |
| 13.8 | Providing a vision and goals for the future |
| 22.3 | Offering prayer or being a spiritual role model |
| 4.1 | Don't know |
56. Do you agree or disagree: "In general, there is a good match between our congregation and our minister, pastor, or priest"?
- | | |
|-------|-----------------------------------|
| 50.3% | Strongly agree |
| 35.9 | Agree |
| 10.2 | Neutral or unsure |
| 1.6 | Disagree |
| 0.6 | Strongly disagree |
| 1.3 | There is currently no leader here |