



COVID-19 (Coronavirus)

Church Statistics During the Coronavirus Pandemic

By CDF Capital

In the midst of a global pandemic declared by the World Health Organization (WHO), we wanted to share a few insights and recommendations for pastors and church leaders navigating these unsettling times.

CDF Capital is committed to helping churches grow—and in order for churches to grow, leaders need to have a strong understanding of the state of churches around the nation during uncertain times.

To that end, we surveyed 269 US-based churches to learn how Sunday services went on March 15. Afterward, we surveyed 93 churches about their Sunday services and offerings for the week of March 22. Here is what we have learned from their responses.

Church attendance statistics during COVID-19

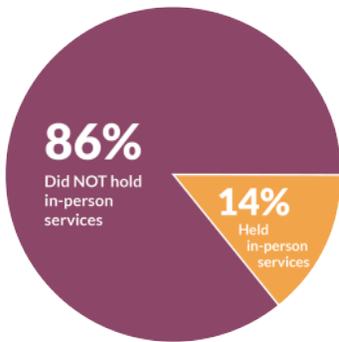
Most churches have canceled in-person services

86% of churches did NOT hold in-person, on-campus Sunday services on March 22, 2020. This is a massive, yet predictable jump from 54% of churches declining to meet on March 15. Most churches are responding to the pandemic by either skipping Sunday services entirely, or instead engaging in some form of digital service.

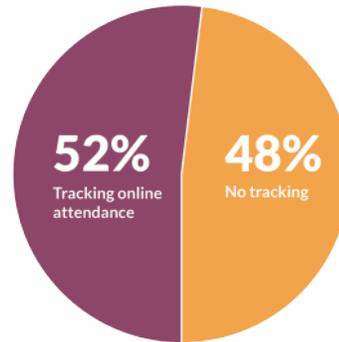
Half of churches have begun tracking online attendance

Of churches surveyed, 52% are tracking online attendance. This will continue to be important as churches learn to estimate how many individuals are reached for every unique view online.

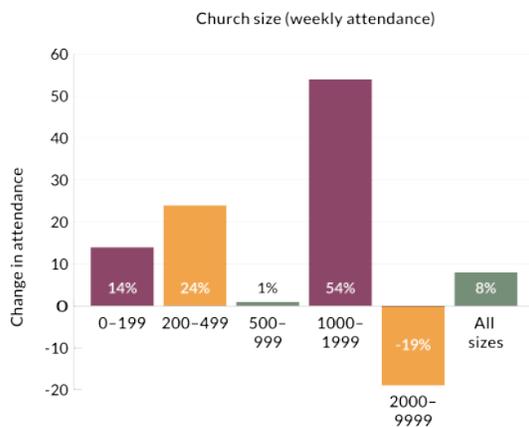
In-Person Services March 22, 2020



Online Church March 22, 2020



Decrease in Attendance by Church Size



Online attendance averages slightly higher than regular in-person attendance

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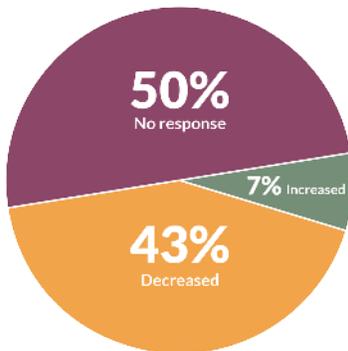
Church giving statistics during COVID-19

When someone experiences a crisis, the way they handle their finances tends to change. The COVID-19 outbreak has left many Americans wondering how long they will still have jobs and be able to pay their bills. So how does such a widespread crisis impact overall church giving?

Churches continue to report abnormally low tithes and offerings

43% of churches reported a decrease in giving on March 22, 2020. Half of churches surveyed did not provide giving information, and the remaining 7% reported an increase.

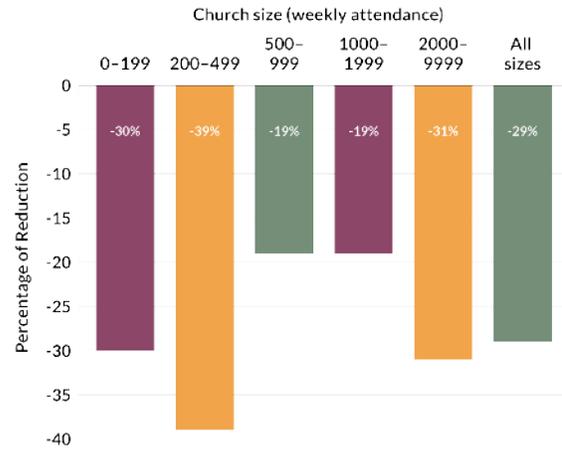
Changes in Church Giving



Churches of all sizes experienced this decline

Churches report that giving has decreased by 29% since COVID-19. This is a sharper drop off than last week, when churches reported an average decrease of 13% in tithes and offerings.

Decrease in Giving by Church Size



Important takeaways for churches during COVID-19:

Churches in the United States have only begun to experience the shifts that this new situation is bringing our way. We do not yet know the exact long-term effects the coronavirus will have on church attendance and giving. But we can draw a few takeaways from last Sunday:

1. Adapt to digital-only means of outreach and discipleship.

As local governments tighten restrictions, and as more people voluntarily opt for social distancing, churches must find ways to connect with members and communities.

2. Remote Giving Is Essential

Churches can no longer rely on passing a plate to collect offerings. Having a secure means of requesting and collecting digital donations will be important during these times. Fortunately, several technology companies have developed sophisticated tools not only for digital giving, but for automatic recurring giving as well.

3. Congregations are in trouble too.

While the elderly and medically vulnerable have been at risk for some time, now many congregants are navigating sudden unemployment or partial unemployment. Many of these individuals are facing the prospect of getting sick without health insurance. On top of this, wealthier congregants are experiencing losses in the stock market—with the looming possibility of a recession. Churches will need to be sensitive to a wide array of pain points as they request and collect tithes and offerings.

For more practical applications from this survey, see *4 Key Learnings for the Post COVID-19 Church*, an article by Nathan Elson, CDF Capital Executive Director of Marketing and Business Development.