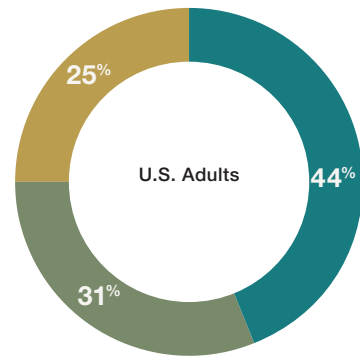
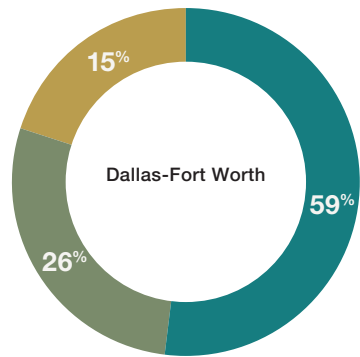


What People Think of Churches and Pastors

Most Dallas-Fort Worth residents have positive perceptions of local Christian churches. However, 1 in 4 holds indifferent views and 1 in 7 is negative.

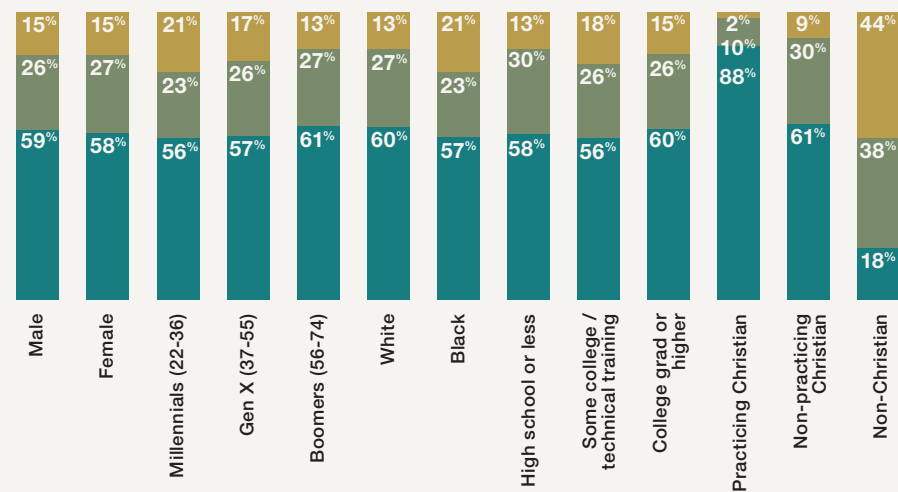
Three Primary Reactions to Local Churches

● Positive ● Indifferent ● Negative



Who's Thinking What About Local Churches?

● Positive ● Indifferent ● Negative



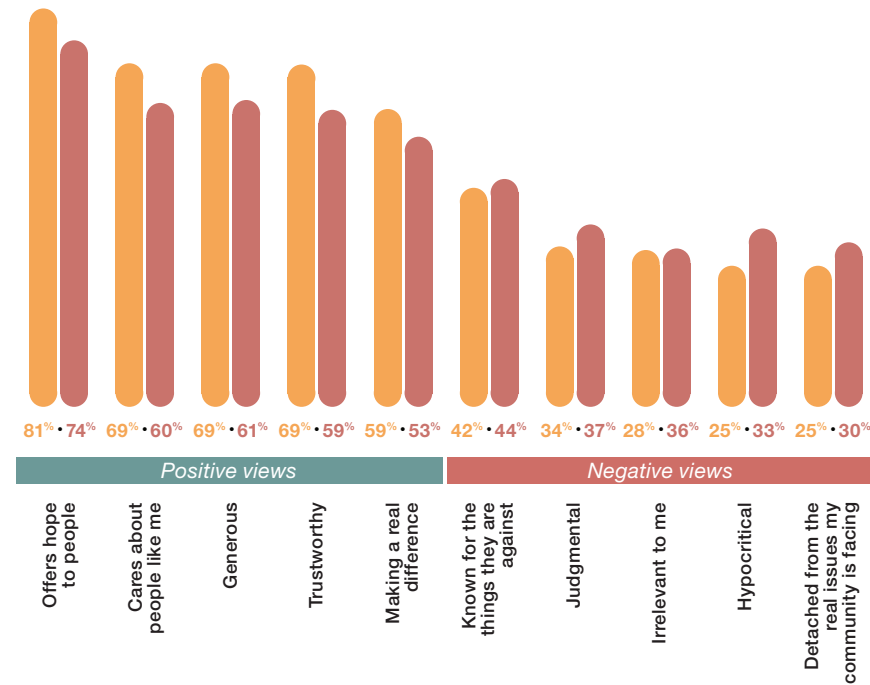
n=2,007 U.S. adults | n=1,000 Dallas-Fort Worth residents | April 23–May 5, 2021



Churches in Dallas-Fort Worth are thought of favorably, with the most common description being “offers hope to people.” The most frequent negative views are “known for the things they are against” and “judgmental.”

“Brand” Perceptions of Local Churches

● Dallas-Fort Worth ● U.S. Adults

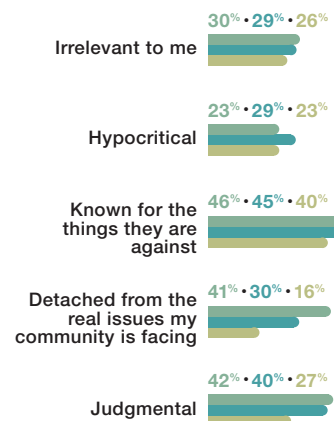


Negative perceptions are higher among younger Dallas-Fort Worth residents, especially the perception that churches are detached and pastors are out of touch.

● Millennials (22-36) ● Gen X (37-55) ● Boomers (56-74)

“Brand” Perceptions of Local Churches

Dallas-Fort Worth, Generations



Perceptions of Local Pastors

Dallas-Fort Worth, Generations
Agree strongly + Agree somewhat



Perceptions of pastors in Dallas-Fort Worth also show a “Christianized Halo Effect.” Even 2 in 3 unchurched residents gives props to Christian pastors for their leadership during COVID.

Perceptions of Local Pastors

Agree strongly + Agree somewhat

● Dallas-Fort Worth ● U.S. Adults ● Churched ● Unchurched



Questions to Consider

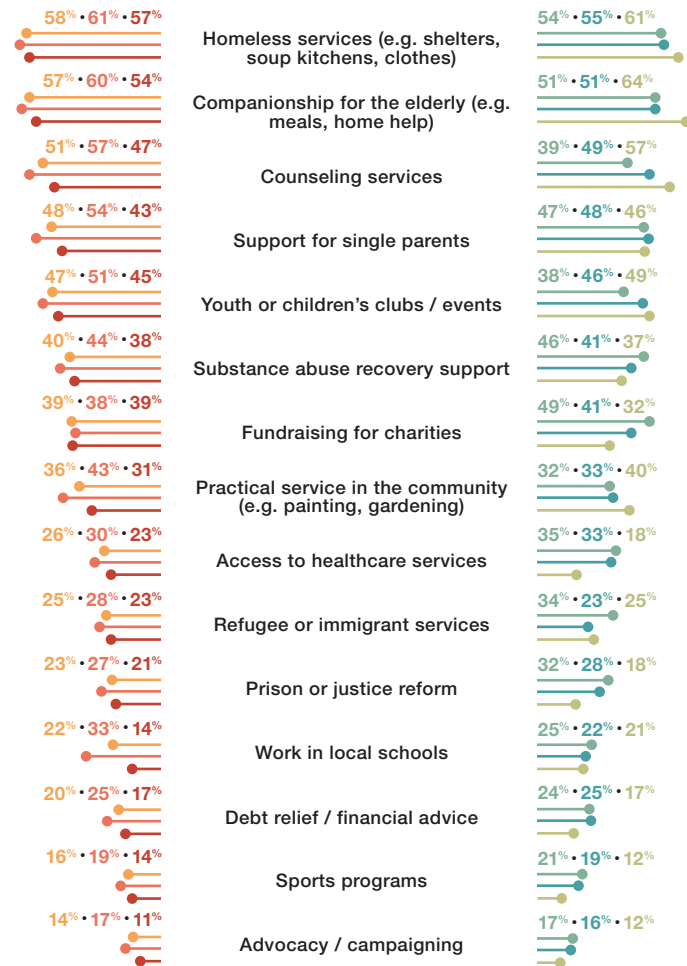
- What do you think has contributed to positive as well as negative perceptions of the Church in your community?
- What are tangible ways you can help to rebuild the credibility and influence of the Church among those who hold indifferent or negative views?
- Of the negative “brand” perceptions of local churches in your city, which one concerns you the most? What factors are contributing to those perceptions, and what can churches do to reverse them?
- How can your church serve the needs of your community in the most effective way?
- Does your church have a strategy for contributing to “whole life” discipleship— influencing the five dimensions of flourishing?
- While there’s a clear difference between preferences and needs, how might people’s perceptions of sermon topics and length affect your preaching strategy?
- What can your church do to engage younger generations—who represent a mix of opportunities and obstacles—more effectively?
- From the list “What People Expect of Churches,” which finding surprised you? What does that finding reveal about what you might do to help transform your city?

What People Expect of Churches

Dallas-Fort Worth residents expect a lot of Christian churches. They are most likely to expect homeless services, companionship for the elderly, youth or children's events and support for single parents.

What People Expect of Churches

● Dallas-Fort Worth ● Churched ● Unchurched
● Millennials (22-36) ● Gen X (37-55) ● Boomers (56-74)



Millennials in Dallas-Fort Worth are more likely than older generations to want to see the church engaged in access to recovery health care services, prison or justice reform, refugee services and debt relief / financial advice.

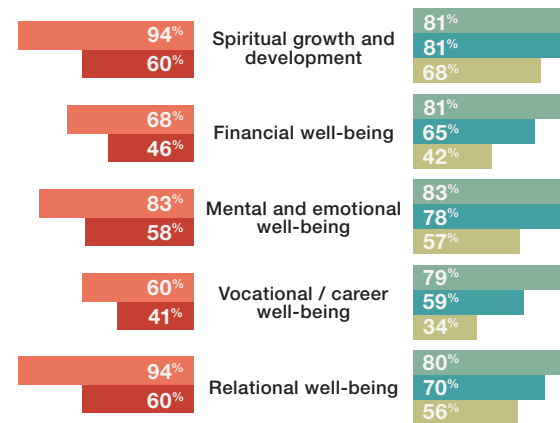
n=2,007 U.S. adults | n=1,000 Dallas-Fort Worth residents | April 23–May 5, 2021

Dallas-Fort Worth churches have a chance to impact five dimensions of human flourishing—even large percentages of the unchurched are open to that. Millennials, followed by Gen X, are especially interested in churches caring about “all of life,” represented by these five dimensions.

How Churches Can Impact Flourishing

Definitely + Probably Interested

● Churched ● Unchurched
● Millennials (22-36) ● Gen X (37-55) ● Boomers (56-74)

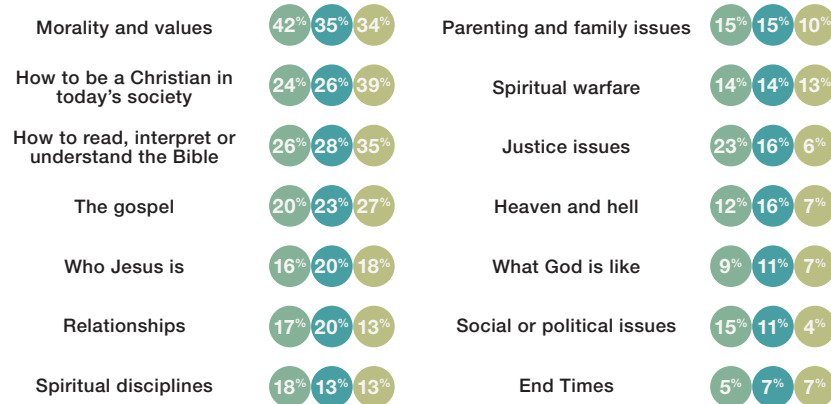


Q: How interested would you be if Christian churches in your community offered preaching and programs to help you achieve the following?

Three sermon topics are most interesting to people in Dallas-Fort Worth: morality and values, how to be a Christian in today's society and Bible interpretation. Younger Dallas-Fort Worth residents express above-average interest in preaching on morality and values, spiritual disciplines, justice issues and social or political issues.

Sermon Topic Expectations

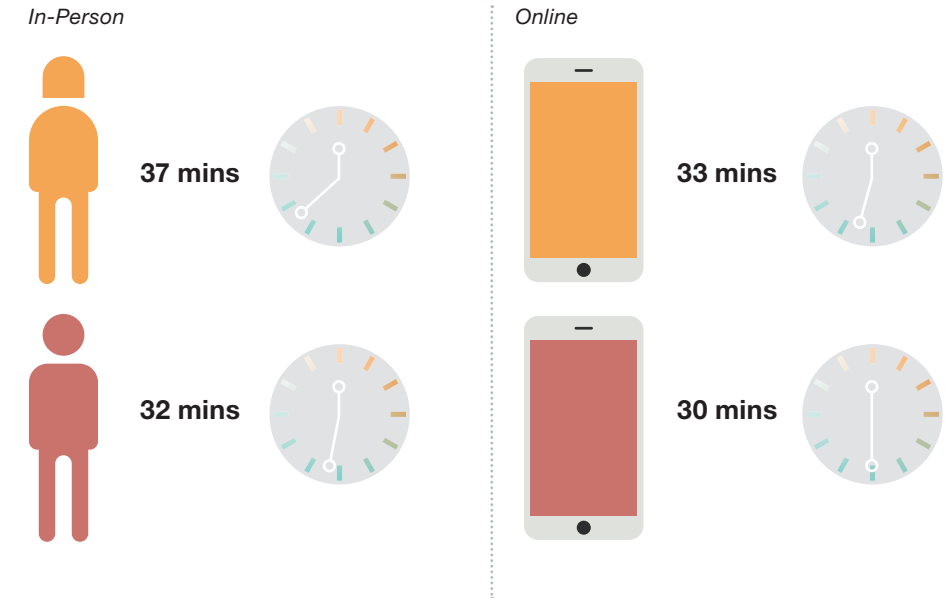
● Millennials (22-36) ● Gen X (37-55) ● Boomers (56-74)



Dallas-Fort Worth churchgoers say their ideal in-person sermon is 37 minutes and online sermon is 33 minutes, slightly higher than national norms.

Ideal Sermon Length

● Dallas-Fort Worth churchgoers ● U.S. churchgoers



Perhaps counterintuitively, Millennial churchgoers in Dallas-Fort Worth are more likely than average to prefer sermons of 45 minutes or more.

Sermon Length

% of churchgoers

● More than an hour ● 45 minutes to an hour ● 31 to 45 minutes
● 16 to 30 minutes ● 15 minutes or less

