

## **Covid-19 & Church-21**

### **Canadian Anglicans in the 2021 Lockdown: Listening to the Laity**

Andrew Village

Professor of Practical and Empirical Theology

York St John University, York

Leslie J. Francis

Visiting Professor of Theology and Religious Studies

York St John University, York

Neil Elliot

Statistics and research officer, Anglican Church of Canada

## Structure

### Setting the context

1. Who took part?
2. Impact of the pandemic on personal wellbeing
3. Impact of the pandemic on lifestyle
4. Impact of the pandemic on religious life
5. Perceived help and support needed and received during the pandemic
6. Accessing and assessing online services during the pandemic
7. Assessing attending services in church during the pandemic
8. Attitude toward virtual church post-pandemic
9. Attitude toward local church post-pandemic
10. Attitude toward my faith post-pandemic
11. Attitude toward Holy Communion post-pandemic
12. Attitude toward the role of God in the pandemic
13. The pandemic and church-leaving: Giving up

## Setting the context

Between 8 May and late July 2020 the *Coronavirus, Church & You Survey* attracted good participation from both Anglicans and Catholics across Great Britain and Ireland. The findings from this earlier survey have been made widely available (see Appendix 1).

The *Covid-19 & Church-21 Survey* was launched in 22 January 2021 in order to capture an update on how clergy and laity across Great Britain and Ireland were faring after such a prolonged period of disruption caused by the pandemic. It coincided with another national lockdown introduced earlier in the month to cope with a third upturn in infections in the UK. Within a few weeks, colleagues in Canada and in the USA had been attracted by our earlier survey and asked to join in. We produced a few questions that were specific to the Anglican Church of Canada (mainly related to names of services) within the existing survey, which was promoted from April to June 2021.

This brief paper has been designed to profile an overview of the responses of those who identified as lay Anglicans living in Canada who participated in the *Covid-19 & Church-21 Survey*. Of the 409 responses, 317 (76%) were from lay people and 92 (24%) were from clergy. This overview of the laity will both provide immediate insights into matters of core pastoral and liturgical concern, and also stimulate further questions that can be addressed by more sophisticated interrogation of these data.

### 1. Who took part?

Table 1.1 provides an overview of the demographics of the 317 laity who participated in the *Covid-19 & Church-21 Survey*.

- The majority of the participants were living in inner city or suburban environments (49%).
- The ratio between men (24%) and women (74%), after allowing for missing data, reflects what is known of the profile of many church congregations.
- The age profile shows that three-quarters of the participants (75%) were in their 60s or older, with just 6% under 40.
- The majority (68%) were living with others in their household during the lockdown.
- Over a third (38%) of these lay people were in some sort of authorised lay ministry.
- The employment status shows that nearly one third (27%) of the participants were in full-or part-time work and that nearly two thirds (62%) were retired.

Table 1.2 provides the service attendance profile of the 305 participants who provided this information

- before the pandemic, 82% attended offline services at least weekly
- since lockdown, 66% accessed online services at least weekly

## 2. Impact of the pandemic on personal wellbeing

Our assessment of the impact of the pandemic on personal wellbeing draws on the psychological theory that positive affect and negative affect work as relatively independent systems. Potentially challenging situations may result in increases both in positive affect and in negative affect. Dynamically, increases in positive affect may offset some of the deleterious consequences of increases in negative affect.

Table 2 profiles the effect of the pandemic on ten markers of positive affect and ten markers of negative affect as reported by the 305 participants who completed this aspect of the survey.

The results show that there were large increases in some of the markers of negative affect: 46% felt more stressed, 44% felt more fatigued, 43% felt more anxious, and 41% felt more exhausted. In general, less than 20% reported declines in negative affect.

At the same time, the results show that there were large increases in some of the markers of positive affect: 63% felt more grateful, 58% felt more thankful, and 40% felt more hopeful. Other aspects of positive affect were either mostly unchanged, but a few showed decline: 46% felt less excited, 38% less enthusiastic, and 34% less calm.

## 3. Impact of the pandemic on lifestyle

The survey included two rather different types of question to assess the wider impact of the pandemic on participants and to complement the information provided by the balanced affect approach reported in the previous section.

Table 3.1 assesses perceived changes in behaviour and in consumption. Overall, the major change occurred in the amount of time spent on screen: this increased for 74% of the participants. The impact on exercise was reflected in 33% whose level of exercise increased and 38% whose level of exercise decreased.

In some cases, there were more participants who reported increase in consumption than who reported decrease in consumption.

- 17% drank more coffee, compared with 9% who drank less
- 19% ate more chocolate, compared with 15% who ate less
- 34% generally ate more, compared with 17% who ate less

One exception was alcohol consumption, where 17% drank more alcohol, compared with 23% who drank less

Table 3.2 assessed perceived changes in physical, mental, and spiritual health. These data reveal improvements in spiritual health.

- 40% reported better spiritual health, compared with 19% who reported worse spiritual health

The situation was less positive for physical and mental health.

- 20% reported better physical health, compared with 30% who reported worse physical health
- 17% reported better mental health, compared with 35% who reported worse mental health

This table also shows a balance between 29% who found it easy to cope and 29% who found it difficult to cope.

#### **4. Impact of the pandemic on religious life**

Table 4 assesses perceived impact of the pandemic on aspects of the participants' religious life. These data revealed some important positive signs where more participants reported increases than decreases.

- 47% reported increases in frequency of personal prayer
- 43% reported increases in their trust in God
- 34% reported increases in the quality of their spiritual life
- 36% reported increases in their hope for the church

On the other hand, these data also revealed areas in which more participants reported decreases than increases. For example, 40% reported decreases in frequency of worship services, and 38% reported decreases in frequency of volunteering in the community.

While these data reveal some decreased trust in the local church (23%) and in the national Church (21%), far more people reported a decrease in trust in the Government (42%).

#### **5. Personal help and support needed and received during the pandemic**

Table 5 assesses the perceived personal help and support needed and received by the participants during the pandemic. The first finding from these data highlights the areas in which needs were experienced

- bereavement, 18%
- illness, 17%
- practical difficulties, 34%
- mental health, 35%
- emotional difficulties, 40%
- isolation or loneliness, 42%
- faith, 50%

- keeping in touch with the wider church, 65%
- keeping in touch with my congregation, 77%

The second finding highlights the areas of perceived needs for which no help was given.

- isolation and loneliness, 14%
- keeping in touch with congregation, 12%
- emotional difficulties, 12%
- practical difficulties, 11%
- mental health, 9%
- faith, 9%

The third finding highlights the areas of perceived needs for which the help given was rated highly.

- keeping in touch with my congregation, 27%
- keeping in touch with the wider church, 18%
- faith, 18%

## **6. Accessing and assessing online services during the pandemic**

In assessing access to online services, the survey made a clear distinction between accessing pre-recorded services and live-streamed services.

Table 6.1 examines the proportions of participants who accessed different forms of online services. These data show that:

- 33% accessed live-streamed communion services
- 55% accessed live-streamed services of the word

This compares with:

- 18% accessed pre-recorded communion services
- 47% accessed pre-recorded services of the word

Table 6.1 also examines the proportions of participants who contributed to these services. These data show that:

- 28% did readings
- 16% led prayers
- 8% sang and
- 3% played instruments

Those who participated in pre-recorded services or in live-streamed services were invited to assess their experience. Table 6.2 examines the responses to this invitation, once again

employing the notion of distinguishing between positive affect and negative affect. These data suggest similar responses to both pre-recorded and live-streamed services. Drawing on the responses to live-streamed services (in which a larger number of participants were involved), items associated with positive affect indicated that during or after online services

- 79% felt blessed
- 69% felt energised
- 68% felt inspired
- 58% felt fulfilled

Items concerned with negative affect indicated that during or after online services

- 24% felt distracted
- 22% felt detached
- 17% felt frustrated
- 11% felt unmoved

Table 6.3 completes the picture by inviting the participants to rate the online services that they had accessed. These data suggest similar ratings for both pre-recorded services and live-streamed services. Drawing on the responses to live-streamed services

- 89% rated them easy to access
- 76% rated them fit for purpose
- 64% rated them professional

## **7. Assessing attending services in church during the pandemic**

When churches were able to open for services during the pandemic, what they could offer was limited by the restrictions governing safe practice.

Table 7.1 invites those who attended services in churches to assess how they felt about that experience in categories similar to those used to assess the effect of accessing online services. Setting the figures presented in table 7.1 alongside those assessing online services in table 6.2 illustrates two conclusions.

- more people during or after the off-line services felt fulfilled (69%), compared with 57% attending pre-recorded services and 58% attending live-streamed services
- fewer people during or after offline services felt distracted (13%), compared with 24% attending pre-recorded services and 24% attending live-streamed services

Table 7.2 completes the picture by inviting participants to rate the services in church that they had attended. Setting the figures presented in table 7.2 alongside those rating online services in table 6.3 illustrates two conclusions.

- similar proportions rated these offline services as fit for purpose (75%), as rated fit for purpose, pre-recorded services (71%), and live-streamed services (76%)
- a higher proportion rated these offline services as professional (76%), compared with pre-recorded services (63%) and live-streamed services (64%).

## **8. Attitude toward virtual church post-pandemic**

The *Covid-19 & Church-21 Survey* concluded with five sets of attitudinal questions. The first set explored attitudes toward the virtual future for the Church. The responses to these questions presented in table 8 make the following key points.

First, there has been proper recognition that online provision has made an important contribution to sustaining church life during the pandemic.

- 80% agreed that the lockdown has helped the Church to move into the digital age
- 78% agreed that the lockdown is a great chance to re-think the Church's future

Second, there was also some affirmation for the various application of social media and online platforms.

- 62% agreed that online worship is a great liturgical tool
- 55% agreed that social media is a great pastoral tool
- 44% agreed that social media is a great evangelistic tool

Third, however, there was less enthusiasm for virtual church becoming the norm for the future.

- 34% agreed that we should put more effort into developing virtual churches
- 33% agreed that online services should replace some of our in-church services
- 9% agreed that virtual contact is as good as face-to-face

The consensus for the future remained with resourcing offline church.

- 77% agreed that we should put our effort into maintaining local churches

## **9. Attitude toward local church post-pandemic**

The second set of attitudinal questions explored attitude toward local church post-pandemic. The response to these questions presented in table 9 make the following key points.

First, fewer than half the participants imagined that the local church would not be changed by the pandemic

- 37% agreed that their church will eventually return to how it was pre-pandemic



Second, a significant number of participants identified key ways in which their church will be weaker post-pandemic.

- 39% agreed that many people will not return to church after the pandemic
- 33% agreed that the church's income will be permanently lower
- 24% agreed that key lay people will step down and be difficult to replace

Third, a fifth or more of the participants considered that the survival of their church was under threat.

- 19% agreed that their church building will not be financially viable
- 24% agreed that their congregation will be too small to be sustainable
- 27% agreed that they will not be able to serve children and young people
- 30% agreed that they will need to merge with other churches to be viable

## **10. Attitude toward my faith post-pandemic**

The third set of attitudinal questions explored attitude toward faith post-pandemic. The responses to these questions presented in table 10 make the following key points.

First, around three-quarters of the participants considered that they would try to get back to their pre-pandemic commitment to their church.

- 74% agreed that they will get back to their previous pattern of worship if they can
- 67% agreed that they will cherish their local church more than they used to
- 34% agreed that they will give more time to serving their local church than they used to

Second, around two fifths of the participants considered that they would develop their commitment to online worship.

- 48% agreed that they will develop their online expertise
- 42% agreed that they will worship online more often than they used to
- 19% agreed that they will meet people online for daily offices or prayers
- But very few agreed that they will find a new online (4%) or local (5%) church to join

## **11. Attitude toward Holy Communion post-pandemic**

The fourth set of attitude questions explored attitude toward Communion post-pandemic. The response to these questions in table 11 suggest opinion was divided on whether to retain traditional practice and doctrine or introduce innovations that have suited Communion in lockdown.

- While 38% agreed that the priest needs to be physically present for the bread and wine to be consecrated, 37% disagreed
- While 47% agreed that properly prepared lay people should be authorised to preside at communion in their homes, 20% disagreed
- While 29% agreed that lay people should be allowed to preside at communion in their homes, 30% disagreed
- While 40% would be willing to share the cup in future, 37% would not.

## 12. Attitude toward the role of God in the pandemic

The fifth set of attitudinal questions explored attitude toward the role of God in the pandemic. The responses to these questions presented in table 12 demonstrate a sense that while the pandemic was not sent by God, God has some control in how events unfold.

- 64% maintained that God has always been in control during the pandemic
- 23% maintained that God could stop the pandemic at any point whatever we do
- 70% maintained that God's power to save us from the pandemic depends on human co-operation
- 51% maintained that God will save us from the pandemic through science
- 50% maintained that the pandemic is a solely 'natural' event without any relation to God
- 6% maintained that the pandemic is the result of human sin
- 5% maintained that God sent the pandemic to test our faith
- 2% maintained that the pandemic is a punishment from God

## 13. The pandemic and church-leaving: Giving up

The research group who designed the *Covid-19 & Church-21 Survey* have had a long-established interest in the causes of church-leaving as displayed in the two books *Gone but not forgotten* (1998) and *Gone for good?* (2007). One of the main reasons for becoming a church leaver, voiced by 69% of the participants in our earlier survey, was simply 'getting out of the habit'. People had stopped going to church, found that they did not miss going, and even more that no one there seemed to miss them. They simply got out of the habit and found no good reason for returning. It seemed to us that closing churches in the face of the pandemic could, for some people, break the habit of a lifetime of church attendance.

We decided to close the survey with the simple question, 'Have you completely given up on online services, going to church, or God since the pandemic began?' Over a quarter of the participants (27%) responded that they had given up on at least one of those things. It is this statistic that may well need to stimulate the next serious piece of research.

## Appendix 1

### Publications arising from the [Coronavirus, Church & You Survey](#)

#### Qualtrics live between 8 March and 23 July 2020

#### Church press

- Village, A., & Francis, L. J. (2020). The emotional toll of Covid-19. *Church Times*, 16 October, 11.
- Village, A., & Francis, L. J. (2020). The writing is on the wall for fragile rural churches. *Church Times*, 20 November, 10.
- Village, A., & Francis, L. J. (2021). Different angle on the pandemic: Retired clergy have a distinctive take on it. *Church Times*, 1 January, 11.
- Village, A., & Francis, L. J. (2021). Shielding... but not shielded: Older churchgoers' views during lockdown. *Church Times*, 12 February, 13.
- Village, A., & Francis, L. J. (2021). Eucharist in a time of lockdown. *Church Times*, 19 March, 15.
- Village, A., & Francis, L. J. (2021). Survey reveals differing experiences during early coronavirus lockdown. *Methodist Recorder*, 26 March, 4.
- Village, A., & Francis, L. J. (2021). Has the pandemic put men off church? *Church Times*, 14 May, 12.
- Francis, L. J., & Village, A. (2021). Has there been a spiritual awakening in lockdown? *Church Times*, 2 July, 14.

#### Professional papers

- Francis, L. J., & Village, A. (2021). Psychological type and responding to Covid-19: An enquiry among lay Anglicans. *Type Face*, 32(1), 29-31.
- Francis, L. J., & Village, A. (2021). The perceived impact of Covid-19 on the Church of England. *Future First*, 75, 1-2.
- Francis, L. J., & Village, A. (2021). Considering the impact of Covid-19 on Christianity in the UK: Opportunity or challenge? *Challenging Religious Issues*, 18 (online).
- Francis, L. J., & Village, A. (2021). Assessing the impact of Covid-19 on Christianity in the UK: Opportunity or challenge? *Challenging Religious Issues*, 18 (online).

### Peer-reviewed articles (published)

- Francis, L. J., Village, A., & Lawson, A. (2020). Impact of Covid-19 on fragile churches: Is the rural situation really different? *Rural Theology*, *18*, 79-86.
- Village, A., & Francis, L. J. (2020). Faith in lockdown: Experience of rural Church of England clergy and laity during the Covid-19 pandemic. *Rural Theology*, *18*, 79-86.
- Francis, L. J., & Village, A. (2021). Viewing the impact of Covid-19 through the eyes of retired clergy. *Theology*, *124*, 24-31.
- Francis, L. J., & Village, A. (2021). Shielding, but not shielded: Comparing the experience of the Covid-19 lockdown for Anglican churchgoers aged seventy and over with those under the age of sixty. *Rural Theology*, *19*, 31-40.
- Francis, L. J., Village, A., & Lawson, S. A. (2021). Impact of Covid-19 on fragile churches: Listening to the voices of lay people. *Rural Theology*, *19*, 41-47.
- Village, A., & Francis, L. J. (2021). Exploring affect balance: Psychological wellbeing of Church of England clergy and laity during the Covid-19 pandemic. *Journal of Religion and Health*, online first.
- Village, A., & Francis, L. J. (2021). Wellbeing and perceptions of receiving support among Church of England clergy during the 2020 Covid-19 pandemic. *Mental Health, Religion and Culture*, online first.
- Francis, L. J., & Village, A. (2021). The pandemic and the feminisation of the Church? How male and female churchgoers experienced the Church of England's response to Covid-19. *Journal of Beliefs and Values*, online first.

### Peer-reviewed articles (in press)

- Francis, L. J., & Village, A. Introducing The Index of Balanced Affect Change (TIBACH): A study among Church of England clergy and laity. *Mental Health, Religion and Culture*.
- Francis, L. J., & Village, A. Reading the Church of England's response to the Covid-19 crisis: The diverging views of Anglo-Catholic and Evangelical clergy. *Journal of Anglican Studies*.
- Francis, L. J., & Village, A. This blessed sacrament of unity? Holy Communion, the pandemic, and the Church of England. *Journal of Empirical Theology*.
- Village, A., & Francis, L. J. Churches and faith: Attitude towards church buildings during the 2020 Covid-19 lockdown among churchgoers in England. *Ecclesial Practices*.
- Village, A., & Francis, L. J. Shaping attitudes toward church in a time of Coronavirus: Exploring the effects of personal, psychological, social, and theological factors among Church of England clergy and laity. *Journal of Empirical Theology*.

Table 1.1

*Demographics (N = 317)*

	%
<i>Location</i>	
Rural	18
Town	31
Suburb	33
Inner city	16
Missing	2
<i>Sex</i>	
Male	24
Female	74
Missing	2
<i>Age</i>	
20s	2
30s	4
40s	6
50s	13
60s	32
70s	31
80s	12
Missing	1
<i>Living status</i>	
Live alone	31
Live with others in your household	68
Live in community	<1
Missing	1
<i>Ministry status</i>	
Lay minister	38

*Employment status* (could chose more than one)

Full-time work	17
Part-time work	10
Self-employed	7
Homemaker/carer	4
Unemployed	2
Student	2
Retired	62

*Impact of Covid*  
(of 102 who were in employment when the pandemic started)

Hours reduced	17
Income reduced	23
Made redundant	7
Started new job	9

---

Table 1.2

*Service attendance profile (N = 305)*

	%
<i>Church attendance pre-pandemic</i>	
A few times a year	4
Once a month	2
Twice a month	10
Once a week	76
Most days	6
<i>Online services since lockdown</i>	
Never	5
A few times	13
Once a month	6
Twice a month	10
Once a week	56
Most days	10

Table 2

*How would you rate how you are now compared with before the pandemic started? (N = 305)*

	Less %	Same %	More %
<i>Positive affect</i>			
Creative	22	44	24
Excited	46	36	7
Calm	34	44	11
Happy	29	51	9
Enthusiastic	38	43	8
Thankful	4	28	58
Hopeful	16	34	40
Confident	17	51	22
Grateful	3	24	63
Inspired	23	44	23
<i>Negative affect</i>			
Exhausted	11	37	41
Anxious	9	38	43
Stressed	16	28	46
Upset	13	45	32
Afraid	11	49	30
Irritable	11	43	36
Guilty	17	68	5
Despondent	18	51	20
Fatigued	16	30	44
Frustrated	23	44	23



Table 3.1

*Impact of the pandemic on lifestyle (N = 258)*

	Decreased %	Same %	Increased %
The time I spend in front of a screen	4	22	74
The amount I exercise	38	30	33
The amount I eat	17	49	34
The amount of alcohol I drink	23	61	17
The amount of coffee I drink	9	75	17
The amount of chocolate I eat	15	66	19

Table 3.2

*How has the pandemic affected you? (N = 258)*

	Agree %	Not certain %	Disagree %
Better spiritual health	40	41	19
Better physical health	20	50	30
Better mental health	17	48	35
Found it easy to cope	29	42	29

Table 4

*Impact of the pandemic on religious life (N = 258)*

	Decreased %	Same %	Increased %
Frequency of personal prayer	16	37	47
Frequency of worship services	40	37	23
Frequency of Bible reading	18	56	26
Quality of my spiritual life	28	38	34
My motivation to serve	23	40	38
Volunteering in the community	38	36	25
My trust in God	5	52	43
My trust in my local church	23	48	29
My trust in the national Church	21	63	16
My hope for the Church	30	34	36
My trust in the Government	42	42	15

Table 5

*Personal help and support during the pandemic (N = 258)*

	Not needed %	Needed not given %	Given not useful %	Given some use %	Given helpful %
My faith	50	9	1	23	18
Practical difficulties	66	11	2	17	5
Emotional difficulties	60	12	4	18	7
Mental health	65	9	4	18	5
Keeping in touch with my congregation	23	12	7	31	27
Keeping in touch with the wider church	35	8	8	30	18
Isolation or loneliness	58	14	0	18	6
Illness	83	4	2	6	5
Bereavement	82	5	2	5	5

Table 6.1

*Those who accessed online services during the pandemic (N =277)*

	Yes %
<i>Type of service</i>	
Service of the word: pre-recorded	47
Service of the word: live-streamed	55
Holy Communion: pre-recorded	18
Holy Communion: live-streamed	33
Children/youth/family worship: pre-recorded	8
Children/youth/family worship: live-streamed	9
<i>Type of contribution</i>	
Doing readings	28
Leading prayers	16
Singing	8
Playing an instrument	3
Live interactive contribution	12

Table 6.2

*During or after online services I usually felt*

	Agree %	Not certain %	Disagree %
<i>Pre-recorded services (N = 165)</i>			
<i>Positive affect</i>			
Energised	61	21	18
Inspired	66	19	15
Blessed	78	15	7
Fulfilled	57	24	19
<i>Negative affect</i>			
Detached	25	21	54
Frustrated	15	20	75
Unmoved	15	21	64
Distracted	24	22	54
<i>Live-streamed services (N = 195)</i>			
<i>Positive affect</i>			
Energised	69	15	16
Inspired	68	19	13
Blessed	79	16	5
Fulfilled	58	24	18
<i>Negative affect</i>			
Detached	22	17	61
Frustrated	17	20	63
Unmoved	11	22	67
Distracted	24	14	62

Table 6.3

*How would you rate online services you accessed?*

	Agree %	Not certain %	Disagree %
<i>Pre-recorded services (N = 165)</i>			
Easy to access	93	5	2
Better than face to face	12	40	48
Engaging	51	28	21
Professional	63	22	15
Innovative	36	34	30
Fit for purpose	71	20	9
<i>Live-streamed services (N = 195)</i>			
Easy to access	89	8	3
Better than face to face	14	37	49
Engaging	58	27	15
Professional	64	24	12
Innovative	41	28	31
Fit for purpose	76	16	8

Table 7.1

*During or after attending services in church I usually felt (N = 158)*

	Agree %	Not certain %	Disagree %
<i>Positive affect</i>			
Energised	66	24	10
Inspired	73	20	7
Fulfilled	69	21	10
<i>Negative affect</i>			
Detached	12	10	78
Emotionally drained	12	8	80
Unmoved	9	16	75
Distracted	13	18	69
Discontented	16	14	70



Table 7.2

*How would you rate the services you attended in church? (N = 158)*

	Agree %	Not certain %	Disagree %
Easy to access	92	5	3
Better than pre-pandemic	15	42	43
Well received	69	21	10
Professional	76	20	4
Innovative	27	31	41
Fit for purpose	75	19	6

Table 8

*Attitude toward virtual church post-pandemic (N = 252)*

	Agree %	Not certain %	Disagree %
Online worship is the way ahead for the next generation	43	29	28
Virtual contact is as good as meeting face to face	9	6	85
Social media is a great pastoral tool	55	21	24
Social media is a great evangelistic tool	44	34	21
Online worship is a great liturgical tool	62	21	17
Online services should replace some of our in-church services	33	18	49
We should put our effort into developing virtual churches	34	27	39
We should put our effort into maintaining local churches	77	16	7
We should do everything we can to keep church buildings open	60	22	18
The lockdown has helped the Church to move into the digital age	80	13	7
The lockdown is a great chance to re-think the Church's future	78	15	7

Table 9

*Attitude toward local church post-pandemic (N = 252)*

	Agree %	Not certain %	Disagree %
Our congregations will be too small to be sustainable	24	34	42
We will need to merge with other churches to be viable	30	25	45
My church will eventually return to how it was pre-pandemic	37	29	34
Many people will not return to church after the pandemic	39	39	23
My church will emerge stronger than it was before	30	45	25
the church's income will be permanently lower	33	40	27
New people will join the church as a result of our online services	33	44	23
Our church building will not be financially viable	19	43	37
Key lay people will step down and be difficult to replace	24	33	43
We will not be able to serve children and young people	27	29	44

Table 10

*Attitude toward my faith post-pandemic (N = 252)*

	Agree %	Not certain %	Disagree %
I will go to services in church less often than I used to	13	14	73
I will worship online more often than I used to	42	13	44
I will get back to my previous worship patterns if I can	74	18	9
My religious will be less important to me than it was	6	5	89
I will develop my online expertise	48	27	25
My financial giving to the church will be less than it was	10	11	79
I will meet people online for daily offices or prayer	19	28	54
I will find a new local church to join	5	12	83
I will find a new online church to join	4	15	81
I will cherish my local church more than I used to	67	18	15
I will give more time to serving my local church than I used to	34	42	24

Table 11

*Attitude toward Holy Communion post-pandemic (N = 252)*

	Agree %	Not certain %	Disagree %
We need to find ways of expressing communion spiritually without bread and wine	50	17	34
People at home should be allowed to take bread and wine during live-streamed services	49	31	21
People at home should be allowed to take bread and wine during pre-recorded services	38	35	28
The priest needs to be physically present for the bread and wine to be consecrated	38	25	37
In future I would prefer not to share the cup in church	37	24	40
Communion should not be part of online worship	21	27	52
I value online communion services even if I cannot receive	63	16	21
All lay people should be allowed to preside at communion in their homes	29	41	30
Properly prepared lay people should be authorised to preside at communion in their homes	47	33	20

Table 12

*Attitude toward the role of God in the pandemic (N = 252)*

	Agree %	Not certain %	Disagree %
God has always been in control during the pandemic	64	23	13
God sent the pandemic to test our faith	5	15	80
God will save us from the pandemic through science	51	33	16
The pandemic is a solely 'natural' event without any relation to God	50	25	25
God could stop the pandemic at any point whatever we do	23	21	56
The pandemic is punishment from God	2	6	91
God's power to save us from the pandemic depends on human co-operation	70	16	14
Science will save us from the pandemic without God's help	17	26	57
The pandemic is the result of human sin	6	13	81