

**Covid-19 & Church-21**

**The Church of England in the 2021 Lockdown: Clergy and Churches**

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## 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 on 22 January 2021 in order to assess the ranges of services and ministry offered by churches and 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.

The survey included a section designed to be completed by incumbents or others who were in a position to be ‘key-informers’ about what services and online platforms were used during the pandemic. The survey also identified clergy within the overall sample. This brief paper has been designed profile an overview of the responses of key informers and those who identified as ordained Anglicans living in England who participated in the *Covid-19 & Church-21 Survey*. Of the 2,292 responses for the Church of England, 1502 (66%) were from lay people, 790 (34%) were from clergy, and from these two groups there were 524 responses from key informers (which we assume report on different churches). The samples may not represent the Church of England as a whole, but they do indicate the activity and experience of those who participated. This paper needs to be read in conjunction with a report of the 1,502 lay people from the same survey. Where clergy and laity were asked the same questions, we have included lay responses in the tables for comparison.

### 1. Who took part?

Table 1 provides an overview of the demographics of the 790 clergy who participated in the *Covid-19 & Church-21 Survey*.

- The majority of the clergy (54%) were living in towns or suburban environments, with just over a third (37%) from rural areas, and a just under a tenth (9%) from inner cities. These figures were similar to those for laity.
- The ratio between clergymen (55%) and clergywomen (44%) showed a much higher proportion of men than in the lay sample (38%).
- The age profile was slightly younger than in the lay sample, as might be expected, with 62% of the clergy being in their 50s or 60s.
- The vast majority of the clergy (80%) were living with others in their household during the lockdown.
- Just over half the clergy (52%) were in stipendiary ministry in parishes, and only 3% were retired and not active in ministry.

## 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 764 clergy and 1,343 lay participants who completed this aspect of the survey.

The clergy results were generally similar to the laity, but clergy showed even larger increases in some of the markers of negative affect: 66% felt more fatigued, 63% felt more frustrated, 61% felt more exhausted, 51% felt more anxious, and 49% felt more stressed. In most cases, 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, which were similar to those among laity: 59% felt more grateful, and 56% felt more thankful. Other aspects of positive affect were either mostly unchanged, but a few showed decline: 54% felt less excited, 40% less enthusiastic, and 36% less happy.

In general, it appeared that clergy may, on average, have felt the negative effects of lockdown slightly more keenly than did lay people.

## 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 90% of the clergy participants, even higher than for laity (77%). The impact on exercise was reflected in 44% whose level of exercise increased and 33% whose level of exercise decreased. A higher proportion of clergy than laity reported that they had consumed more alcohol (30% versus 23%), eaten more (39% versus 35%), drank more coffee (24% versus 18%) and eaten more chocolate (33% versus 28%).

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

- Better spiritual health was reported from 35% of clergy and 39% of laity, compared with 23% of clergy and 20% of laity who reported worse spiritual health

The situation was less positive for physical and mental health, especially so for clergy:

- 24% reported better physical health, compared with 30% who reported worse physical health
- 13% reported better mental health, compared with 37% who reported worse mental health

While among laity 35% found it easy to cope and 31% found it difficult to cope, among clergy the figures were 30% and 35%, a slight shift to a more negative outcome. More detailed work is needed to see if these trends relate to the different profiles of the two groups in this study, but the *prima facie* evidence seems to show that clergy were more vulnerable than laity to the stressful effects of lockdown.

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

Table 4 assesses perceived impact of the pandemic on aspects of the participants' religious life. Clergy, like laity, showed positive signs where more participants reported increases than decreases, though for clergy the figures were even higher than for laity.

- 48% reported increases in frequency of personal prayer
- 46% reported increases in their trust in God
- 38% reported increases in the quality of their spiritual life
- 38% reported increases in their motivation to serve

The proportion of clergy reporting decreased trust in the local church (22%) was slightly lower than among the laity, but the proportion reporting decreased trust and in the national Church (50%) was higher than among laity (43%). Decrease in trust in the Government was reported by 67% for clergy and 61% of laity.

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

Clergy, like anyone else, needed support during the pandemic. Table 5 assesses the perceived personal help and support needed in various aspects of life. Not all clergy needed support in all aspects but, when they did, most were able to get help that was of at least some use. The data highlights the areas in which needs were most often experienced

- keeping in touch with the wider church, 70% (versus 60% of laity)
- keeping in touch with my congregation, 67% (versus 70%)
- practical difficulties, 65% (versus 29%)
- emotional difficulties, 50% (versus 37%)
- faith, 50% (versus 49%)
- isolation or loneliness, 39% (versus 33%)
- mental health, 38% (versus 28%)

- illness, 21% (versus 14%)
- bereavement, 16% (versus 15%)

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

- isolation and loneliness, 20% (versus 14% of laity)
- emotional difficulties, 18% (versus 14%)
- mental health, 16% (versus 13%)
- Christian ministry, 13% (versus 11%)
- keeping in touch with congregation, 13% (versus 15%)
- keeping in touch with the wider church, 13% (versus 16%)
- practical difficulties, 13% (versus 8%)
- faith, 9% (versus 13%)
- illness, 8% (versus 5%)
- bereavement, 6% (versus 5%)

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

- Christian ministry, 23% (versus 11% of laity)
- practical difficulties, 18% (versus 8%)
- keeping in touch with congregation, 18% (versus 20%)
- keeping in touch with the wider church, 15% (versus 20%)
- faith, 15% (versus 14%)

The picture is mixed, but seems to suggest that clergy felt the need for support related to wellbeing more keenly than did laity, and when they needed that support they found it less often and less often rated it as helpful.

## **6. 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 6 make the following key points.

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

- 85% agreed that the lockdown has helped the Church to move into the digital age
- 80% 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.

- 48% agreed that online worship is a great liturgical tool (versus 49% of laity)
- 48% agreed that social media is a great pastoral tool (versus 47%)
- 48% agreed that social media is a great evangelistic tool (versus 42%)

Third, however, there was less enthusiasm for virtual church becoming the norm for the future. These figures were very similar to those among laity.

- 28% agreed that we should put more effort into developing virtual churches
- 32% agreed that online services should replace some of our in-church services
- 6% agreed that virtual contact is as good as face-to-face

The consensus for the future remained with resourcing offline church.

- 79% agreed that we should put our effort into maintaining local churches

## **7. 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 7 make the following key points.

First, fewer than a third of clergy imagined that the local church would not be changed by the pandemic

- 24% agreed that their church will eventually return to how it was pre-pandemic (versus 37% of laity)

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

- 38% agreed that many people will not return to church after the pandemic
- 39% agreed that the church's income will be permanently lower
- 34% agreed that key lay people will step down and be difficult to replace

Third, more than one in eight clergy considered that the survival of their church was under threat.

- 21% agreed that they will need to merge with other churches to be viable (versus 18%)
- 18% agreed that their church building will not be financially viable (versus 19% of laity)
- 16% agreed that their congregation will be too small to be sustainable (versus 17%)
- 15% agreed that they will not be able to serve children and young people (versus 17%)

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

The third set of attitudinal questions explored attitude toward faith post-pandemic. Clergy had a different set of questions to laity in this section. The responses to these questions presented in table 8 make the following key points.

First, opinion seems to be mixed among clergy on how far they would return to previous patterns of ministry and attitudes towards church

- while 32% agreed that they will get back to their previous pattern of ministry, 31% disagreed
- while 39% agreed that they will devote more time to virtual church, 33% disagreed
- while 33% agreed that they will cherish their local church more than they used to, 38% disagreed

Second, there was strong support to develop commitment to online worship.

- 68% agreed that they will promote online services
- 59% agreed that they will promote online meetings for prayer or Bible study
- 45% agreed that they will meet people online for daily offices or prayer

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

The fourth set of attitude questions explored attitude toward Communion post-pandemic. As might be expected, there was more consensus among clergy than among laity about clergy retaining a key role in celebrating the rite:

- 54% agreed that the priest needs to be physically present for the bread and wine to be consecrated, 32% disagreed
- 23% agreed that properly prepared lay people should be authorised to preside at communion in their homes, 58% disagreed
- 13% agreed that lay people should be allowed to preside at communion in their homes, 70% disagreed

In general, clergy seemed more content to retain the status quo than were laity.

## **10. 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 10 demonstrate a sense that while the pandemic was not sent by God, God has some control in how events unfold.

- 75% maintained that God has always been in control during the pandemic (versus 65% of laity)



- 42% maintained that God could stop the pandemic at any point whatever we do (versus 32%)
- 67% maintained that God's power to save us from the pandemic depends on human co-operation (versus 67%)
- 56% maintained that God will save us from the pandemic through science (versus 52%)
- 41% maintained that the pandemic is a solely 'natural' event without any relation to God (versus 45%)
- 22% maintained that the pandemic is the result of human sin (versus 16%)
- 3% maintained that God sent the pandemic to test our faith (versus 5%)
- 1% maintained that the pandemic is a punishment from God (versus 2%)

The differences from laity are mostly slight, but where they exist they suggest clergy may have had a stronger sense of God, rather than humans, being in control.

## **11. Data from key informers**

One section of the survey asked those who were incumbents, or others who were in a position of overall leadership, to report what churches had done by way of offering services and other ministry during lockdown. Of the 524 people who answered questions in this section, 436 (83%) were clergy and 88 (17%) were laity. Just under half (46%) were in a single-church benefice, 21% had 2 churches, and 33% had 3 or more churches. The usual Sunday attendance pre-pandemic was less than 20 in 7% of these churches, 21-50 in 48%, 51-100 in 32% and over 100 in 14%.

### **11.1 Services online**

Nearly all the churches (93%) offered some sort of online services during the pandemic (Table 11.1). Live-streamed services were generally more popular than pre-recorded ones. Of the 489 who replied to these items, 63% of churches had offered some live-streamed services of the Word and 56% had offered live-streamed Communion, compared with 59% and 40% respectively for pre-recorded services. During the week, live-streamed morning worship was most often offered (46% of churches) compared to 23% for pre-recorded. Weekly morning services of the word were live-streamed by 12% of churches, with 16% offering it most days.

### **11.2 Services in church**

During the eased lockdown from July 2020 to January 2021 nearly all churches (92%) had offered some services in church, while 33% had offered in-church services since January at the time they completed the survey. Just under half (46%) had offered Communion every Sunday when this was possible. We asked about changes in the frequency of services offered in church during the pandemic compared with pre-pandemic: some churches with socially distanced seating could accommodate fewer than their normal Sunday attendance, so we wondered if some had put on more services. Where respondents were able to answer this (Table 11.2), most reported fewer, rather than more services. Assessing changes in numbers

accessing services is obviously difficult, but where informers had information, 22% thought far more people accessed pre-recorded services than used to come to Sunday worship in church (compared with 12% who thought there were far fewer), so online services may have improved the attendance in some churches.

### 11.3 Other online ministry online during the pandemic

As well as offering services online, churches also used online platforms to run a range of ministry and administration during the pandemic (Table 11.3). The most frequent use was for PCC meetings (89% of churches had done this at least once and for 70% it was now normal practice). There were similar high figures for Ministry Team meetings, and slightly lower figures for Bible studies and fellowship/prayer groups. Less often tried was using online platforms for work with young people.

Churches used a variety of platforms to deliver services and ministry.

- For services, 69% had used Zoom, 53% YouTube, 40% Facebook Live, and 6% WhatsApp.
- For other ministries, 97% had used Zoom, 3% YouTube, 3% Facebook Live, and 16% WhatsApp.

### 11.4 Quality of online ministry provision

Those who had tried various types of online ministry were asked to rate the quality of provision online (Table 11.4). Samples varied and were low, but most reported the provision was good rather than adequate or poor in most settings. The least successful were work with primary-aged children teenagers and young adults (25% rated this as poor, though the rest rated it as good), and pastoral work (21% rated this as poor, and only 16% rated it as good).

### 11.5 Parochial ministry during the pandemic

Church ministry involves a variety of pastoral and outreach work in the community. We asked key informers how their churches had coped with maintaining this ministry during the pandemic. Respondents were asked if a ministry had not been tried, tried but found to be not possible, done mostly poorly, or done mostly well. Table 11.5 indicates a few trends that have been found in the *Coronavirus, Church & You* survey and may have been widespread among Anglican churches:

- Ministries that were most often either not tried or tried and found not possible included baptisms (61%), being a spokesperson/lobbying (68%), weddings (38%), and working with other denominations (54%). Some of these were not possible in lockdown, but some churches may rarely have engaged in these ministries anyway.
- Ministries that were most frequent also tended to be rated as done mostly well, and included supporting the congregation (81% rated this as done mostly well), dealing with funerals (76%), working with fellow ministers (74%), and offering prayer/Spiritual support (67%).

- Ministries that had the highest 'mostly poorly' ratings were those that involved working beyond the church fellowship in the wider community: dealing with the sick or dying (31% rated mostly poorly), outreach and mission (37%), dealing with the bereaved (29%), and working in the local community (28%).

## 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

*Demographics*

|                                    | Clergy<br><i>N</i> = 790 | Laity<br><i>N</i> = 1,502 |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|
|                                    | %                        | %                         |
| <i>Location</i>                    |                          |                           |
| Rural                              | 37                       | 36                        |
| Town                               | 29                       | 32                        |
| Suburb                             | 25                       | 23                        |
| Inner city                         | 9                        | 7                         |
| Missing                            | <1                       | 2                         |
| <i>Sex</i>                         |                          |                           |
| Male                               | 55                       | 38                        |
| Female                             | 44                       | 60                        |
| Missing                            | 1                        | 2                         |
| <i>Age</i>                         |                          |                           |
| 20s                                | 1                        | 3                         |
| 30s                                | 5                        | 4                         |
| 40s                                | 13                       | 8                         |
| 50s                                | 26                       | 16                        |
| 60s                                | 36                       | 30                        |
| 70s                                | 16                       | 30                        |
| 80s                                | 2                        | 7                         |
| Missing                            | 0                        | 2                         |
| <i>Living status</i>               |                          |                           |
| Live alone                         | 20                       | 22                        |
| Live with others in your household | 80                       | 75                        |
| Live in community                  | <1                       | 1                         |
| Missing                            | 0                        | 2                         |
| <i>Ministry status</i>             |                          |                           |
| Stipendiary Parochial              | 52                       | -                         |
| Self-supporting                    | 18                       | -                         |
| Retired with LTO                   | 16                       | -                         |
| Retired not active in ministry     | 3                        | -                         |

Table 2

*How would you rate how you are now compared with before the pandemic started?*

|                        | Clergy ( <i>n</i> = 764) |           |           | Laity ( <i>n</i> = 1,343) |           |           |
|------------------------|--------------------------|-----------|-----------|---------------------------|-----------|-----------|
|                        | Less<br>%                | Same<br>% | More<br>% | Less<br>%                 | Same<br>% | More<br>% |
| <i>Positive affect</i> |                          |           |           |                           |           |           |
| Creative               | 30                       | 31        | 39        | 25                        | 45        | 30        |
| Excited                | 54                       | 34        | 13        | 57                        | 36        | 6         |
| Calm                   | 34                       | 51        | 15        | 32                        | 54        | 14        |
| Happy                  | 36                       | 52        | 12        | 39                        | 51        | 10        |
| Enthusiastic           | 40                       | 43        | 17        | 40                        | 49        | 12        |
| Thankful               | 6                        | 38        | 56        | 6                         | 36        | 58        |
| Hopeful                | 19                       | 42        | 39        | 23                        | 43        | 34        |
| Confident              | 24                       | 52        | 23        | 26                        | 56        | 18        |
| Grateful               | 5                        | 36        | 59        | 5                         | 34        | 61        |
| Inspired               | 32                       | 41        | 27        | 29                        | 50        | 21        |
| <i>Negative affect</i> |                          |           |           |                           |           |           |
| Exhausted              | 12                       | 27        | 61        | 15                        | 44        | 41        |
| Anxious                | 11                       | 38        | 51        | 10                        | 41        | 49        |
| Stressed               | 17                       | 34        | 49        | 16                        | 41        | 42        |
| Upset                  | 13                       | 54        | 32        | 12                        | 55        | 33        |
| Afraid                 | 13                       | 56        | 31        | 12                        | 53        | 35        |
| Irritable              | 13                       | 43        | 44        | 11                        | 53        | 36        |
| Guilty                 | 17                       | 65        | 18        | 13                        | 74        | 13        |
| Despondent             | 21                       | 50        | 30        | 17                        | 52        | 31        |
| Fatigued               | 12                       | 22        | 66        | 15                        | 40        | 46        |
| Frustrated             | 10                       | 27        | 63        | 9                         | 31        | 61        |

Table 3.1

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

|                                       | Clergy ( <i>n</i> = 717) |           |                | Laity ( <i>n</i> = 1,246) |           |                |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------|----------------|---------------------------|-----------|----------------|
|                                       | Decreased<br>%           | Same<br>% | Increased<br>% | Decreased<br>%            | Same<br>% | Increased<br>% |
| The time I spend in front of a screen | 2                        | 8         | 90             | 3                         | 20        | 77             |
| The amount I exercise                 | 33                       | 23        | 44             | 34                        | 21        | 45             |
| The amount I eat                      | 11                       | 50        | 39             | 14                        | 52        | 35             |
| The amount of alcohol I drink         | 17                       | 53        | 30             | 20                        | 57        | 23             |
| The amount of coffee I drink          | 6                        | 70        | 24             | 7                         | 75        | 18             |
| The amount of chocolate I eat         | 12                       | 55        | 33             | 11                        | 60        | 28             |



Table 3.2

*How has the pandemic affected you?*

|                         | Clergy ( <i>n</i> = 710) |                     |               | Laity ( <i>n</i> = 1,222) |                     |               |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|---------------|---------------------------|---------------------|---------------|
|                         | Agree<br>%               | Not<br>certain<br>% | Disagree<br>% | Agree<br>%                | Not<br>certain<br>% | Disagree<br>% |
| Better spiritual health | 35                       | 42                  | 23            | 39                        | 41                  | 20            |
| Better physical health  | 24                       | 46                  | 30            | 25                        | 49                  | 26            |
| Better mental health    | 13                       | 50                  | 37            | 15                        | 50                  | 35            |
| Found it easy to cope   | 30                       | 35                  | 35            | 35                        | 34                  | 31            |

Table 4

*Impact of the pandemic on religious life*

|                                 | Clergy ( <i>n</i> = 717) |           |                | Laity ( <i>n</i> = 1,246) |           |                |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------|----------------|---------------------------|-----------|----------------|
|                                 | Decreased<br>%           | Same<br>% | Increased<br>% | Decreased<br>%            | Same<br>% | Increased<br>% |
| Frequency of personal prayer    | 19                       | 33        | 48             | 15                        | 37        | 49             |
| Frequency of worship services   | 52                       | 30        | 18             | 37                        | 41        | 22             |
| Frequency of Bible reading      | 16                       | 55        | 29             | 16                        | 55        | 29             |
| Quality of my spiritual life    | 29                       | 33        | 38             | 26                        | 36        | 38             |
| My motivation to serve          | 24                       | 37        | 38             | 20                        | 43        | 37             |
| Volunteering in the community   | 29                       | 45        | 25             | 27                        | 47        | 26             |
| My trust in God                 | 4                        | 50        | 46             | 7                         | 53        | 40             |
| My trust in my local church     | 22                       | 52        | 26             | 28                        | 47        | 26             |
| My trust in the national Church | 50                       | 40        | 10             | 43                        | 45        | 13             |
| My hope for the Church          | 45                       | 26        | 29             | 39                        | 33        | 28             |
| My trust in the Government      | 67                       | 25        | 8              | 61                        | 27        | 12             |

Table 5

*Personal help and support during the pandemic (N = 716)*

|  | Not<br>needed<br>% | Needed<br>not<br>given<br>% | Given<br>not<br>useful<br>% | Given<br>some<br>use<br>% | Given<br>helpful<br>% |
|--|--------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| My faith                               | 50                 | 7                           | 2                           | 26                        | 15                    |
| My Christian ministry                  | 25                 | 10                          | 3                           | 40                        | 23                    |
| Practical difficulties                 | 35                 | 10                          | 3                           | 33                        | 18                    |
| Emotional difficulties                 | 50                 | 15                          | 3                           | 24                        | 8                     |
| Mental health                          | 62                 | 13                          | 3                           | 16                        | 6                     |
| Keeping in touch with my congregation  | 33                 | 10                          | 3                           | 36                        | 18                    |
| Keeping in touch with the wider church | 30                 | 8                           | 5                           | 42                        | 15                    |
| Isolation or loneliness                | 61                 | 17                          | 3                           | 16                        | 4                     |
| Illness                                | 79                 | 6                           | 2                           | 9                         | 4                     |
| Bereavement                            | 84                 | 4                           | 2                           | 7                         | 3                     |

Table 6

*Attitude toward virtual church post-pandemic*

|   | Clergy ( <i>n</i> = 717) |                     |               | Laity ( <i>n</i> = 1,246) |                     |               |
|---|--------------------------|---------------------|---------------|---------------------------|---------------------|---------------|
|   | Agree<br>%               | Not<br>certain<br>% | Disagree<br>% | Agree<br>%                | Not<br>certain<br>% | Disagree<br>% |
| Online worship is the way ahead for the next generation         | 29                       | 31                  | 39            | 29                        | 31                  | 40            |
| Virtual contact is as good as meeting face to face              | 6                        | 9                   | 85            | 7                         | 8                   | 85            |
| Social media is a great pastoral tool                           | 48                       | 25                  | 27            | 47                        | 28                  | 25            |
| Social media is a great evangelistic tool                       | 48                       | 32                  | 20            | 42                        | 37                  | 22            |
| Online worship is a great liturgical tool                       | 48                       | 27                  | 25            | 49                        | 27                  | 25            |
| Online services should replace some of our in-church services   | 32                       | 23                  | 45            | 27                        | 21                  | 53            |
| We should put our effort into developing virtual churches       | 28                       | 28                  | 44            | 26                        | 30                  | 45            |
| We should put our effort into maintaining local churches        | 79                       | 16                  | 5             | 81                        | 14                  | 5             |
| We should do everything we can to keep church buildings open    | 59                       | 19                  | 22            | 73                        | 15                  | 12            |
| The lockdown has helped the Church to move into the digital age | 85                       | 9                   | 6             | 80                        | 13                  | 7             |
| The lockdown is a great chance to re-think the Church's future  | 80                       | 12                  | 8             | 77                        | 15                  | 8             |

Table 7

*Attitude toward local church post-pandemic*

|  | Clergy ( <i>n</i> = 717) |                     |               | Laity ( <i>n</i> = 1,246) |                     |               |
|--|--------------------------|---------------------|---------------|---------------------------|---------------------|---------------|
|  | Agree<br>%               | Not<br>certain<br>% | Disagree<br>% | Agree<br>%                | Not<br>certain<br>% | Disagree<br>% |
| Our congregations will be too small to be sustainable              | 16                       | 28                  | 57            | 17                        | 26                  | 57            |
| We will need to merge with other churches to be viable             | 21                       | 25                  | 54            | 18                        | 24                  | 58            |
| My church will eventually return to how it was pre-pandemic        | 24                       | 33                  | 43            | 37                        | 34                  | 29            |
| Many people will not return to church after the pandemic           | 38                       | 34                  | 28            | 33                        | 35                  | 32            |
| My church will emerge stronger than it was before                  | 33                       | 42                  | 25            | 34                        | 42                  | 24            |
| The church's income will be permanently lower                      | 39                       | 41                  | 20            | 39                        | 42                  | 19            |
| New people will join the church as a result of our online services | 36                       | 42                  | 22            | 30                        | 47                  | 23            |
| Our church building will not be financially viable                 | 18                       | 34                  | 48            | 19                        | 36                  | 46            |
| Key lay people will step down and be difficult to replace          | 34                       | 31                  | 35            | 29                        | 36                  | 35            |
| We will not be able to serve children and young people             | 15                       | 31                  | 54            | 17                        | 32                  | 51            |

Table 8

*Attitude toward my faith post-pandemic (N = 717)*

|  | Agree<br>% | Not certain<br>% | Disagree<br>% |
|--|------------|------------------|---------------|
| I will draw inspiration from the new practices I have acquired     | 68         | 20               | 12            |
| I will promote online services                                     | 68         | 18               | 14            |
| I will get back to my previous ways of ministering                 | 32         | 37               | 31            |
| My ministry will be less important to me than it was               | 8          | 14               | 78            |
| will devote more time to virtual church                            | 39         | 27               | 33            |
| My financial giving to the church will be less than it was         | 3          | 15               | 82            |
| I will promote online meetings for prayer or Bible study           | 59         | 22               | 19            |
| I will meet people online for daily offices or prayer              | 45         | 23               | 33            |
| I am more likely leave my current ministry                         | 17         | 15               | 68            |
| I will cherish church buildings more than I used to                | 33         | 28               | 38            |
| I will give more time to serving my local community than I used to | 31         | 49               | 20            |

Table 9

*Attitude toward Holy Communion post-pandemic*

|  | Clergy ( <i>n</i> = 717) |                     |               | Laity ( <i>n</i> = 1,246) |                     |               |
|--|--------------------------|---------------------|---------------|---------------------------|---------------------|---------------|
|  | Agree<br>%               | Not<br>certain<br>% | Disagree<br>% | Agree<br>%                | Not<br>certain<br>% | Disagree<br>% |
| We need to find ways of expressing communion spiritually without bread and wine          | 30                       | 15                  | 55            | 39                        | 19                  | 41            |
| People at home should be allowed to take bread and wine during live-streamed services    | 45                       | 15                  | 39            | 54                        | 24                  | 23            |
| People at home should be allowed to take bread and wine during pre-recorded services     | 34                       | 20                  | 46            | 45                        | 27                  | 28            |
| The priest needs to be physically present for the bread and wine to be consecrated       | 54                       | 14                  | 32            | 35                        | 23                  | 43            |
| In future I would prefer not to share the cup in church                                  | 18                       | 19                  | 63            | 28                        | 23                  | 49            |
| Communion should not be part of online worship   | 21                       | 20                  | 58            | 15                        | 22                  | 62            |
| I value online communion services even if I cannot receive                               | 50                       | 21                  | 29            | 58                        | 19                  | 23            |
| All lay people should be allowed to preside at communion in their homes                  | 13                       | 17                  | 70            | 32                        | 30                  | 38            |
| Properly prepared lay people should be authorised to preside at communion in their homes | 23                       | 19                  | 58            | 41                        | 30                  | 29            |

Table 10

*Attitude toward the role of God in the pandemic*

|  | Clergy ( <i>n</i> = 717) |                     |               | Laity ( <i>n</i> = 1,246) |                     |               |
|--|--------------------------|---------------------|---------------|---------------------------|---------------------|---------------|
|  | Agree<br>%               | Not<br>certain<br>% | Disagree<br>% | Agree<br>%                | Not<br>certain<br>% | Disagree<br>% |
| God has always been in control during the pandemic                     | 75                       | 15                  | 10            | 65                        | 24                  | 12            |
| God sent the pandemic to test our faith                                | 3                        | 9                   | 88            | 5                         | 15                  | 80            |
| God will save us from the pandemic through science                     | 56                       | 31                  | 13            | 52                        | 33                  | 15            |
| The pandemic is a solely 'natural' event without any relation to God   | 41                       | 19                  | 39            | 45                        | 27                  | 28            |
| God could stop the pandemic at any point whatever we do                | 42                       | 16                  | 42            | 32                        | 25                  | 43            |
| The pandemic is punishment from God                                    | 1                        | 7                   | 92            | 2                         | 8                   | 90            |
| God's power to save us from the pandemic depends on human co-operation | 67                       | 13                  | 20            | 67                        | 15                  | 18            |
| Science will save us from the pandemic without God's help              | 9                        | 19                  | 72            | 14                        | 26                  | 60            |
| The pandemic is the result of human sin                                | 22                       | 20                  | 59            | 16                        | 17                  | 67            |



Table 11.1

*Online services offered during the pandemic (N = 489)*

|                                   | Never | Some<br>Sundays | Most<br>Sundays | Every<br>Sunday |  |
|-----------------------------------|-------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|--|
|                                   | %     | %               | %               | %               |  |
| Pre-recorded Service of the Word  | 41    | 24              | 13              | 22              |  |
| Pre-recorded Holy Communion       | 60    | 26              | 6               | 8               |  |
| Live-streamed Service of the Word | 37    | 25              | 18              | 20              |  |
| Live-streamed Holy Communion      | 44    | 29              | 12              | 15              |  |

  

|   | Never | Some<br>weeks | Most<br>weeks | Every<br>week | Most days |
|---|-------|---------------|---------------|---------------|-----------|
|   | %     | %             | %             | %             | %         |
| Pre-recorded morning Service of the Word  | 77    | 13            | 2             | 5             | 3         |
| Pre-recorded evening Service of the Word  | 79    | 15            | 2             | 2             | 2         |
| Pre-recorded Holy Communion               | 83    | 13            | 1             | 3             | 0         |
| Live-streamed morning Service of the Word | 54    | 12            | 6             | 12            | 16        |
| Live-streamed evening Service of the Word | 64    | 14            | 4             | 9             | 9         |
| Lived-streamed Holy Communion             | 73    | 14            | 5             | 6             | 2         |

Table 11.2

*Changes in the frequency of church services offered when this was possible during the pandemic*

|                             | <i>n</i> | Fewer services | Same | More services |
|-----------------------------|----------|----------------|------|---------------|
|                             |          | %              | %    | %             |
| Sunday Service of the Word  | 440      | 48             | 42   | 10            |
| Sunday Holy Communion       | 481      | 54             | 41   | 5             |
| Weekday Service of the Word | 413      | 40             | 52   | 8             |
| Weekday Holy Communion      | 447      | 50             | 46   | 4             |

Table 11.3

*Online delivery of ministry during the pandemic (N = 524)*

|                                  | Never | Tried as<br>one-off | Used<br>sometimes | Normal<br>practice now |
|----------------------------------|-------|---------------------|-------------------|------------------------|
|                                  | %     | %                   | %                 | %                      |
| Bible study                      | 35    | 4                   | 26                | 35                     |
| Fellowship/ prayer groups        | 34    | 4                   | 26                | 36                     |
| Lent (or Advent) groups          | 35    | 6                   | 29                | 30                     |
| Work with primary-aged children  | 37    | 7                   | 32                | 24                     |
| Work with teenagers/young adults | 67    | 5                   | 15                | 13                     |
| Ministry team meetings           | 16    | 2                   | 19                | 63                     |
| PCC / PPC meetings               | 11    | 3                   | 15                | 70                     |
| Online pastoral care             | 34    | 3                   | 49                | 14                     |

Table 11.4

*Quality ratings of online delivery of ministry during the pandemic*

|                                  |          | Poor | Adequate | Good |
|----------------------------------|----------|------|----------|------|
|                                  | <i>n</i> | %    | %        | %    |
| Bible study                      | 336      | 7    | 42       | 51   |
| Fellowship/ prayer groups        | 338      | 7    | 42       | 51   |
| Lent (or Advent) groups          | 331      | 5    | 43       | 52   |
| Work with primary-aged children  | 327      | 15   | 48       | 37   |
| Work with teenagers/young adults | 167      | 25   | 0        | 75   |
| Ministry team meetings           | 435      | 5    | 34       | 61   |
| PCC / PPC meetings               | 465      | 8    | 39       | 53   |
| Online pastoral care             | 342      | 21   | 63       | 16   |

Table 11.5

*Parochial ministry during the pandemic (N = 493)*

|                                   | Not<br>tried | Tried but<br>not possible | Mostly<br>poorly | Mostly<br>well |
|-----------------------------------|--------------|---------------------------|------------------|----------------|
|                                   | %            | %                         | %                | %              |
| Supporting your congregation      | 2            | 1                         | 16               | 81             |
| Dealing with funerals             | 9            | 1                         | 14               | 76             |
| Working with fellow ministers     | 11           | 2                         | 13               | 74             |
| Offering prayer/spiritual support | 9            | 2                         | 22               | 67             |
| Dealing with the bereaved         | 9            | 1                         | 29               | 61             |
| Working with the local community  | 14           | 7                         | 28               | 51             |
| Dealing with weddings             | 28           | 10                        | 18               | 45             |
| Supporting fellowship groups      | 31           | 7                         | 20               | 43             |
| Dealing with the sick or dying    | 21           | 6                         | 31               | 43             |
| Outreach and mission              | 18           | 10                        | 37               | 35             |
| Working with other denominations  | 45           | 9                         | 16               | 30             |
| Dealing with baptisms             | 49           | 12                        | 17               | 23             |
| Being a spokesperson/lobbying     | 65           | 3                         | 13               | 19             |