

**2008 Mainline Protestant Clergy Voices Survey  
FINAL Top Line Results (N=2,658 respondents)**

**FAITH AND PUBLIC LIFE**

**1. Generally speaking, how interested are you in politics?**

<i>Very Interested</i>		<i>Mildly Interested</i>			<i>Not at all Interested</i>	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
29%	32%	19%	13%	4%	2%	1%

**2. How involved are you in advocating on behalf of social and political issues?**

<i>Extremely Involved</i>		<i>Moderately Involved</i>			<i>Not at all Involved</i>	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
5%	17%	23%	30%	14%	9%	2%

**3. If it were possible, would you like to be more or less involved with social and political issues?**

<i>More Involved</i>		<i>Same as Now</i>			<i>Less Involved</i>	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
12%	21%	23%	38%	3%	2%	1%

**4. Do you think your denomination needs to be more or less involved in social and political issues?**

<i>More Involved</i>		<i>Same as Now</i>			<i>Less Involved</i>	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
8%	10%	20%	38%	13%	5%	6%

**5. We hear a lot of talk in politics about liberals and conservatives. How would you classify yourself?**

<i>Extremely Liberal</i>	<i>Very Liberal</i>	<i>Somewhat Liberal</i>	<i>Moderate</i>	<i>Somewhat Conservative</i>	<i>Very Conservative</i>	<i>Extremely Conservative</i>
4	21	23	19	18	13	2=100

**6. Generally, do you think of yourself as a Republican, a Democrat, or what?**

<i>Strong Democrat</i>	<i>Weak Democrat</i>	<i>Independent Lean Dem</i>	<i>Independent</i>	<i>Independent Lean Rep</i>	<i>Weak Republican</i>	<i>Strong Republican</i>
29	10	17	10	13	9	12=100

<b>7. If you have made your views known publicly in any way, how often have you addressed the following issues in the last year?</b>	<i>Very Often</i>	<i>Often</i>	<i>Seldom</i>	<i>Never</i>
a. Alcohol and drug abuse	13	41	40	6=100
b. Hunger and poverty	29	52	17	2=100
c. Teaching about evolution in public schools	3	13	42	42=100
d. War in Iraq	13	40	37	10=100
e. Abortion	5	21	48	26=100
f. Israel and the Middle East	6	30	48	16=100
g. Race relations and civil rights	18	43	33	6=100
h. Gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender (LGBT) issues	10	33	44	13=100
i. Capital punishment	5	21	49	25=100
j. Sexual morality	14	39	39	8=100
k. Environmental problems	15	44	33	8=100
l. Marriage and family issues	27	48	22	3=100
m. Pornography or explicit sexuality in movies, TV, and advertising	7	29	47	17=100
n. Access to health care	15	32	37	16=100
o. Immigration	9	24	45	22=100
p. Sex education in public schools	2	11	44	43=100

<b>8. Have you ever participated in the following activities? Please check how often you have generally undertaken such an activity.</b>	<i>Very Often</i>	<i>Often</i>	<i>Seldom</i>	<i>Never</i>
a. Wrote a letter to the editor of a newspaper	2	12	54	32=100
b. Publicly (not preaching) supported a political candidate	3	17	36	44=100
c. Publicly (not preaching) took a stand on some public issue	11	39	39	11=100
d. Took a stand from the pulpit on some political issue	4	18	42	36=100
e. Organized a study or action group in church related to a public issue	6	22	39	33=100
f. Actively participated in a local clergy council	36	36	22	6=100
g. Participated in a protest march	3	8	38	51=100
h. Actively participated in denominational committees or organizations	33	37	24	6=100

**9. Which of the following view is the BEST way for religious groups to address societal problems?**

1	Religious groups should not try to solve societal problems.
8	Religious groups should help solve the social problems of their own members.
57	Religious groups should help individuals in the larger community solve their social problems.
<u>34</u>	Religious groups should be engaged in the political process to solve problems.
100	Total

**10. Religious communities should concentrate on fostering:**

<i>Social Justice</i>		<i>Both Equally</i>		<i>Individual Morality</i>	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	
7%	12%	69%	9%	3%	

**11. What should be the relative importance of evangelism and sociopolitical action in the mission of the church?**

<i>Evangelism</i>		<i>Both Equally</i>		<i>Sociopolitical Action</i>	
<i>Much More Important</i>		<i>Important</i>		<i>Much More Important</i>	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	
13%	26%	51%	8%	2%	

**12. Generally speaking, when it comes to fostering necessary social change, do you favor incremental reform or fundamental transformation?**

<i>Incremental Reform</i>		<i>Some of Both</i>			<i>Fundamental Transformation</i>	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
2%	8%	13%	51%	14%	7%	5%

**13. What worries you more:**

41	Public officials who <i>don't pay enough attention</i> to religion OR
<u>59</u>	Public officials who are <i>too close</i> to religious leaders?
100	Total

**QUESTION 14 HELD FOR FURTHER ANALYSIS**

**15. For which presidential candidate did you vote in 2004, or did you not vote?**

56	John Kerry
40	George Bush
1	Other
<u>3</u>	Did not vote
100	Total

**16. For which congressional candidate did you vote in 2006, or did you not vote?**

57	Democratic candidate in your district
34	Republican candidate in your district
4	Independent or Third Party Candidate
<u>5</u>	Did not vote
100	Total

**17. Which candidate was your first choice for the presidential nominations in 2008?**

<b>Republican Candidates</b>		<b>Democratic Candidates</b>	
6	Rudy Giuliani	21	Hillary Clinton
33	Mike Huckabee	17	John Edwards
27	John McCain	46	Barack Obama
9	Mitt Romney	5	Other
5	Other	<u>11</u>	None
<u>20</u>	None	100	Total
100	Total		

18. During elections, many churches or their members provide materials or opportunities to help other members make important choices. Were these materials or opportunities available in your church in 2004? Are they likely to be available in 2008?	Available In 2004		Probably Available In 2008	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
a. Voter guides from conservative groups like the Family Research Council?	10	90	11	89
b. Voter guides from social justice groups like Sojourners or Bread for the World?	12	88	18	82
c. Materials prepared by you, a church committee, or other internal sources?	6	94	8	92
d. Materials from denominational sources?	17	83	21	79
e. Candidate forums held in your church?	6	94	7	93
f. Voter registration efforts or registered voters in church?	16	84	20	80

19. Do you think abortion should be:

- 13 Legal in all cases
- 38 Legal in most cases
- 42 Illegal in most cases
- 7 Illegal in all cases
- 100 Total

20. Which of the following three statements comes closest to your view?

- 33 Gay couples should be allowed to marry
- 32 Gay couples should be allowed to form civil unions, but not marry
- 35 There should be no legal recognition of a gay couple's relationship
- 100 Total

QUESTIONS 21-22, 23b, f, i, m HELD FOR FURTHER ANALYSIS

23. Please tell us whether you agree or disagree with the following statements about social and political policies and problems.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a. The federal government should do more to solve social problems such as unemployment, poverty, and poor housing.	42	36	6	13	3=100
c. More environmental protection is needed, even if it raises prices or costs jobs.	28	41	14	13	4=100
d. Creationism should be taught alongside evolution in public school biology classes.	15	21	10	19	35=100
e. Homosexuals should have all the same rights and privileges as other American citizens.	55	24	8	9	4=100
g. The government should guarantee health insurance for all citizens, even if it means raising taxes.	38	29	12	13	8=100
h. It was the right decision to use military force in Iraq.	10	13	11	18	48=100
j. Government is providing too many services which should be left to private enterprise.	9	22	21	35	13=100
k. Sex education programs included in the curricula of public schools should teach "abstinence-only" until marriage.	13	25	10	31	21=100
l. A lasting peace in the Middle East will require Israel to make greater concessions to the Palestinians.	18	38	21	15	8=100
n. I oppose capital punishment.	45	21	7	18	9=100
o. The U.S. should pass hate crime laws to protect lesbian and gay persons along with other minority groups who might be the targets of violence.	33	34	9	13	11=100

24. Many religious and advocacy groups have been active in public life recently. Please tell us: (1) <u>How close</u> you feel towards the group; and (2) Whether or not you are a member?	To this group I feel:						Member or Contributor?	
	Very Close	Close	Neutral	Far	Very Far	Don't Know*	Yes	No
a. Focus on the Family/Family Research Council	6	19	19	14	41	1	6	94
b. Sojourners/Call to Renewal	10	34	35	8	8	5	18	82
c. Institute for Religion and Democracy (IRD)	2	8	43	10	24	13	2	98
d. Americans United for Separation of Church & State	3	15	33	17	23	9	2	98
e. Prison Fellowship	5	33	42	6	6	8	8	92
f. Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice (RCRC)	3	13	36	14	25	9	2	98
g. American Family Association	3	13	34	14	24	12	4	96
h. Religious LGBT Rights Groups	7	18	28	13	25	9	8	92
i. National Association of Evangelicals	4	19	27	21	22	7	3	97
j. Bread for the World	14	42	30	3	5	6	19	81
k. National Right to Life Committee	5	17	27	17	27	7	3	97
l. Interfaith Alliance	5	24	44	9	9	9	7	93
m. Pro-gun rights group	3	10	21	17	44	5	3	97
n. Women's Rights Group (e.g., NOW)	5	20	29	16	24	6	2	98
o. Concerned Women for America (CWA)	1	7	46	13	19	14	1	99
p. ACLU	6	22	24	14	29	5	7	93
q. National Council of Churches	13	35	24	12	12	4	19	81
r. Non-religious LGBT Rights Groups (e.g., HRC, PFLAG)	6	17	28	14	27	8	6	94
s. NAACP	6	30	34	11	13	6	5	95
t. Christian Coalition	1	10	32	17	31	9	1	99
u. Network of Spiritual Progressives/Tikkun	2	8	43	13	21	13	2	98
v. People for the American Way	2	7	37	15	27	12	2	98
w. Moveon.org	5	14	35	10	27	9	8	92
x. The religious right or conservative Christian movement	3	13	19	17	43	5	2	98
y. The religious left or progressive Christian movement	11	26	22	15	21	5	11	89

\*Respondents who skipped particular items in the battery but did not skip the entire battery were designated 'Don't know' responses on those questions.

**YOUR CONGREGATION**

**25. How many adult members are in your congregation?**

- 16 Less than 100
- 43 100-299
- 18 300-499
- 23 500 or more
- 100 Total

**26. Average Sunday worship attendance?**

- 41 Less than 100
- 45 100-299
- 9 300-499
- 5 500 or more
- 100 Total

**27. Which of the following best describes the nature of your congregation? Is it primarily:**

- 14 Working class
- 14 Lower-middle class
- 29 Upper-middle class
- 43 Mixed
- 100 Total

**28. Which of the following best describes the ethnic/racial composition of your congregation? Is it primarily:**

- 87 White/European
- 2 Black or African American
- 1 Latino/Hispanic
- \* Native American
- \* Asian
- 10 Mixed race/ethnicity
- 100 Total

**29. What are the THREE most important issues in our country today that the church should engage?**

Most Important	Second Most Important	Third Most Important	
38	41	34	Social Welfare
14	17	19	Economic and Domestic Problems
4	9	10	Public Order Problems
10	12	11	Cultural Issues
19	10	13	Foreign Policy
2	2	4	Political Problems
13	9	9	Religious, Church problems
100	100	100	Total

**QUESTIONS 30-31 HELD FOR FURTHER ANALYSIS**

**32. How would you compare the positions of the members of your congregation on SOCIAL issues to your own positions on such issues?**

<i>Much More Liberal</i>	<i>Somewhat More Liberal</i>	<i>About The Same</i>	<i>Somewhat More Conservative</i>	<i>Much More Conservative</i>
9%	17%	42%	30%	2%

**33. How would you compare the positions of the members of your congregation on ECONOMIC issues to your own positions on such issues?**

<i>Much More Liberal</i>	<i>Somewhat More Liberal</i>	<i>About The Same</i>	<i>Somewhat More Conservative</i>	<i>Much More Conservative</i>
6%	16%	47%	30%	1%

**QUESTIONS 34-41 AND QUESTIONS 42a-o, q-r HELD FOR FURTHER ANALYSIS**

42. Please indicate <u>YOUR VIEWS</u> on the following statements.		<i>Strongly Agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Not Sure</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>
p.	Otherwise qualified gay people should be allowed to adopt children.	29	26	14	14	17
s.	The U.S. should pass laws that would make it illegal for employers to discriminate on the basis of their sexual orientation or gender identity.	34	32	13	13	8

**QUESTIONS 43-47b AND QUESTIONS 47d, f-h, j-l, p HELD FOR FURTHER ANALYSIS**

47. Please tell us whether you agree or disagree with the following statements.		<i>Strongly Agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Not Sure</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>
c.	The Bible is the inerrant Word of God, both in matters of faith and in historic, geographical, and other secular matters.	15	14	4	35	32
e.	We must maintain a strict separation of church and state.	15	40	15	25	5
i.	Evolution is the best explanation for the origins of life on earth.	13	31	13	20	23
m.	Churches should not try to influence or lobby public officials.	6	17	15	50	12
n.	Many mainline churches are declining because they become theologically liberal.	14	24	16	30	16
o.	Many mainline churches are declining because they have lost the courage to take prophetic stands for social justice.	12	35	18	28	7

**ABOUT YOU**

**48. What is your denomination?**

38	United Methodist Church
20	Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
12	Presbyterian Church in the USA
13	American Baptist USA
9	Episcopal Church in the USA
5	United Church of Christ
<u>3</u>	Disciples of Christ
100	Total

**49. How many years have you been in the ministry?**

14	Less than 10 years
24	10-19 years
32	20-29 years
24	30-39 years
<u>6</u>	40 years or more
100	Total

**50. Years at your present church?**

23	Less than 3 years
30	3-5 years
21	6-9 years
<u>26</u>	10 years or more
100	Total

**51. What is the highest year in school/degree you have completed?**

*	High school/GED
1	Some college
3	College graduate
75	Graduate degree (seminary)
<u>21</u>	Graduate degree (other than seminary)
100	Total

**52. Please describe your seminary education:**

1	None
*	Bible College
5	Some seminary
72	Seminary graduate (M.Div.)
<u>22</u>	Post-seminary graduate degree (D.Min., Th.D., Ph.D., etc.)
100	Total

**QUESTIONS 53-54 HELD FOR FURTHER ANALYSIS**

**55. While no one likes religious labels, do any of the following describe your religious identity? (Check all that apply.)**

60	Mainline
26	Conservative
41	Ecumenical
43	Evangelical
31	Progressive
24	Liberal
23	Born Again
12	Emerging Church
11	Charismatic
1	Fundamentalist

**56. In what state do you reside?**

25	Northeast
29	Midwest
32	South
<u>14</u>	West
100	Total

**57. What is the kind of community in which your congregation is located?**

41	Farm, rural, or small town (under 15,000)
27	Small or medium city (15,000 to 100,000)
15	Suburb of large city
<u>16</u>	Urban
100	Total

**58. What is your gender?**

80	Male
<u>20</u>	Female
100	Total

**59. What was the year in which your were born?**

9	Under 40 years old
17	40-49 years old
20	50-54 years old
23	55-59 years old
<u>31</u>	60 years or older
100	Total

**QUESTION 60 HELD FOR FURTHER ANALYSIS**

**61. What is your marital status?**

85	Married
1	Domestic Partnership
<u>14</u>	Not Married
100	Total

**62. Are you parenting a child under 18?**

31	Yes
<u>69</u>	No
100	Total

**63. What is your race?**

93	White
3	Black or African American
1	Hispanic or Latino
<u>3</u>	Other
100	Total

**64. Approximate family income in 2007:**

21	Under \$50,000
36	\$50,000 - \$75,000
22	75,000 - \$100,00
<u>21</u>	Over \$100,000
100	Total

**END SURVEY**

## **ABOUT THE SURVEY**

The Mainline Protestant Clergy Voices Survey (CVS) is the largest survey of Mainline Protestant clergy conducted in the last seven years. CVS was conducted by Public Religion Research and funded by a grant from the Evelyn and Walter Haas, Jr. Fund, which aims to fulfill its founders' vision of a just and caring society where all people are able to live, work, and raise their families with dignity. Dr. Robert P. Jones, president of Public Religion Research, served as the principal investigator for the survey. Daniel Cox, research director for Public Religion Research, oversaw data analysis. Dr. John C. Green, Director of the Bliss Institute for Applied Politics at the University of Akron, served as advisor to the project and supervised the data collection. The CVS builds upon previous studies of clergy political and social engagement conducted in 1989 (Guth et al. 1997) and 2001 (Smidt 2004).

The data was weighted to reflect the relative size of each denomination in the general population (e.g., UMC clergy, members of the largest denomination, were weighted more heavily than Disciples clergy from the smallest denomination). This method allows us to have a sense of the relative influence of clergy from each denomination.

CVS was conducted as a mail survey. The sample was generated by obtaining a random sample of 1,000 senior clergy from each of the seven largest Mainline Protestant denominations (UMC, ELCA, ABCUSA, PCUSA, Episcopal, UCC, and DOC). Four waves of questionnaires and a cover letter under the signature of Dr. Jones and Dr. Green were mailed to clergy between March 3 and September 15, 2008. This process yielded a final data set of 2,658 respondents, representing a 44% response rate. The margin of error for analysis based on the entire sample is +/- 2.0%.

## **ABOUT PUBLIC RELIGION RESEARCH**

Public Religion Research is a consulting firm specializing in public opinion polling and research-based strategic advice at the intersection of religion, values, and public policy. We also work with clients to develop strategies to engage people of faith for social change. For more information, visit [www.publicreligion.org](http://www.publicreligion.org).