
Hope of Little Rock Church Survey Report

An Executive Report of Results from the
2020 Little Rock Congregations Study Survey

Prepared for Hope of Little Rock Church by
Students and Faculty of the
University of Arkansas at Little Rock





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About the Little Rock Congregations Study

The Little Rock Congregations Study (LRCS) is a community-based research project that engages students in learning about the impact of faith-based community engagement.

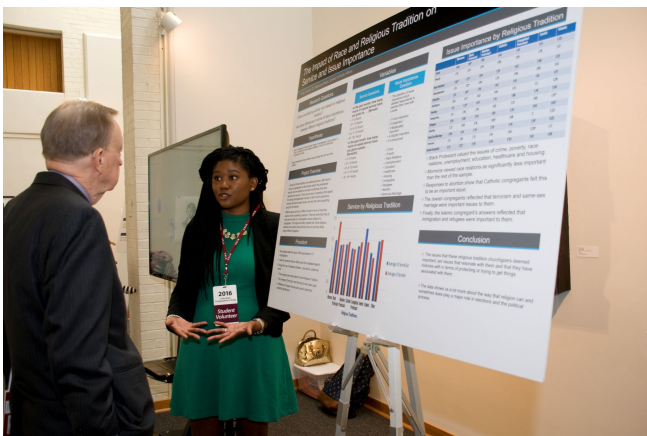
Paragraph about this specific congregation and their participation.



The Little Rock Congregations Study is led by an interdisciplinary research at UA Little Rock, including both graduate and undergraduate students. Since the study began in 2012, over 170 students have been involved.

Hope of Little Rock church joined 34 other congregations from diverse religious traditions all across the city of Little Rock to participate in the 2020 Little Rock Congregations Study.

We plan to repeat our survey of congregation members again in four years and would love to provide you with longitudinal data on your members' attitudes. We hope to see you in 2024!



This would be a picture specific to the congregation.

In October 2020, electronic survey links were distributed by the leadership of Hope of Little Rock Church to your members. This report represents the responses of [x number] of your congregation members.



Little Rock Congregation Study student researchers in 2018.

Study Goals



Learn more about the impacts of local faith-based community engagement



Get students out of the classroom and into the community



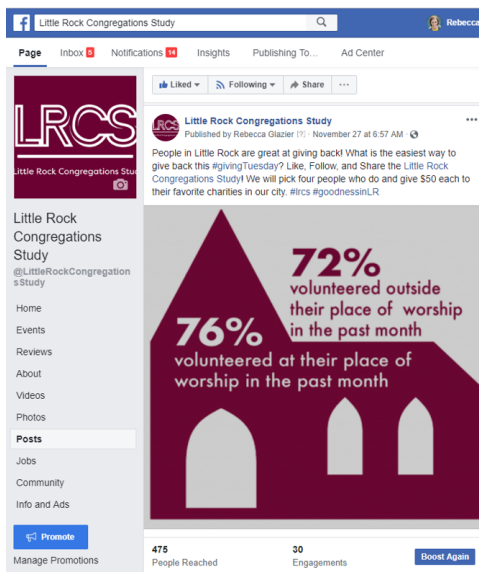
Provide relevant and meaningful findings to the community

Little Rock is a diverse city, with large and small, urban and rural congregations from many faith traditions. Because the LRCS is a community-based research project, it is most successful when the community sees benefits from participating. This is the first year that we have provided specific reports for each participating congregation. We hope this report is helpful for your leadership and your members!

Learn More about the LRCS Online

On our website:
<https://research.ualr.edu/lrcs/>

On our Facebook page:
<https://www.facebook.com/LittleRockCongregationsStudy/>



From Your Student Researcher

"I loved working with Hope of Little Rock Church." Quote from student researcher about their experience here.



Student Name
Major
Year

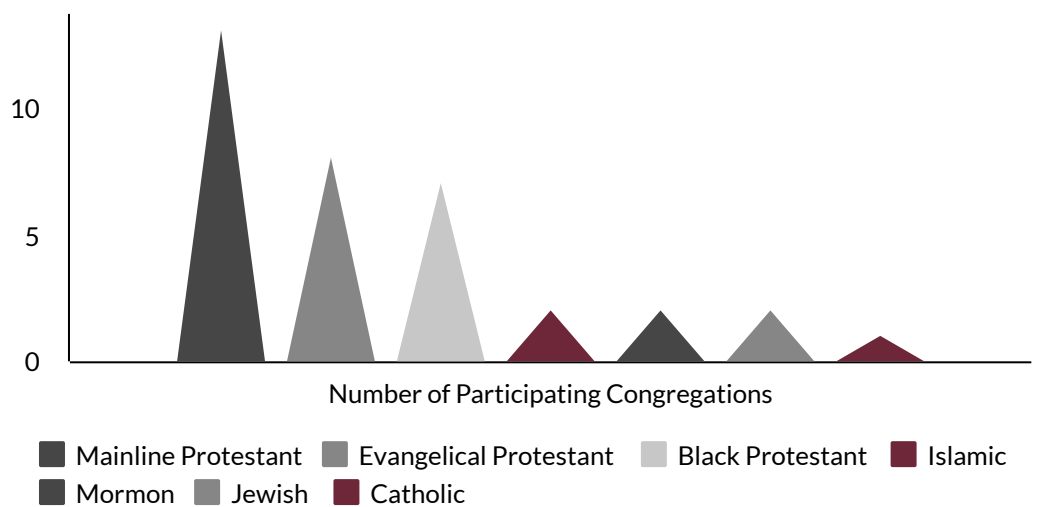
Methodology and Demographics

Invitations to participate in the 2020 Little Rock Congregations Study were sent to all religious leaders of places of worship within the city limits of Little Rock (n=365). Sixty-six completed the clergy survey for the first stage of participation, with fifty-eight providing contact information for our research team to reach out for an interview. We interviewed 37 congregation leaders in the second stage and 35 ultimately participated in the congregation survey portion of the project. This is double the 17 congregations that participated in 2016. A total of 2,269 people across these 35 congregations responded to the survey, including x number from Hope of Little Rock Church.

Average Age of Respondents from Hope of Little Rock Church

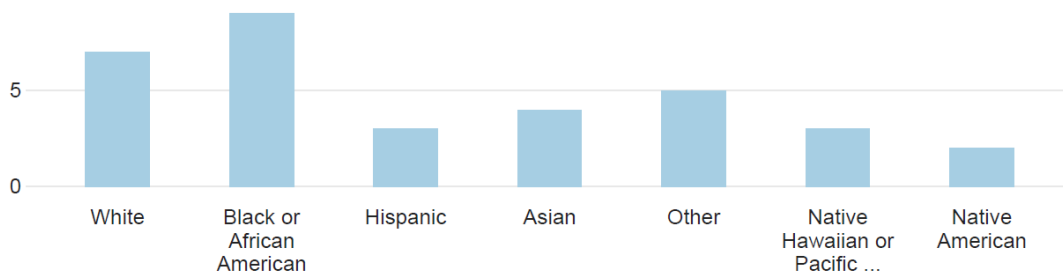
57

Number of Participating Congregations by Religious Tradition

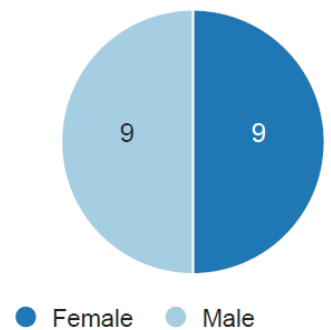


Respondent Demographics for Hope of Little Rock Church

Race/Ethnicity



Gender

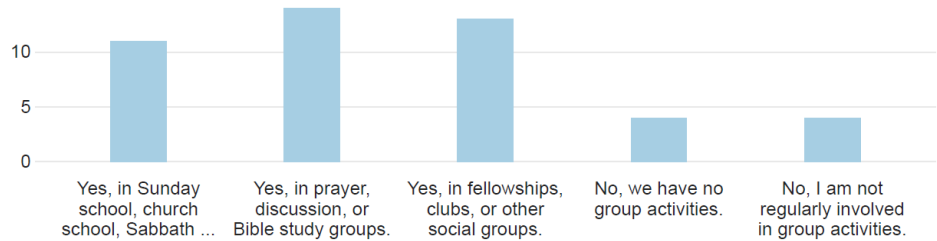


Engagement and Service

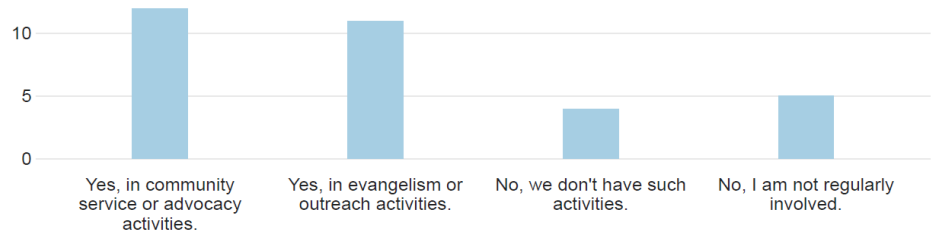
Even during these challenging times, people are staying engaged and serving. To get a sense of how things are changing as a result of Covid-19, the survey included questions about congregation participation before the pandemic, service now, and member priorities.

Respondents may be thinking about groups like x and y, at Hope of Little Rock Church, in answering these questions.

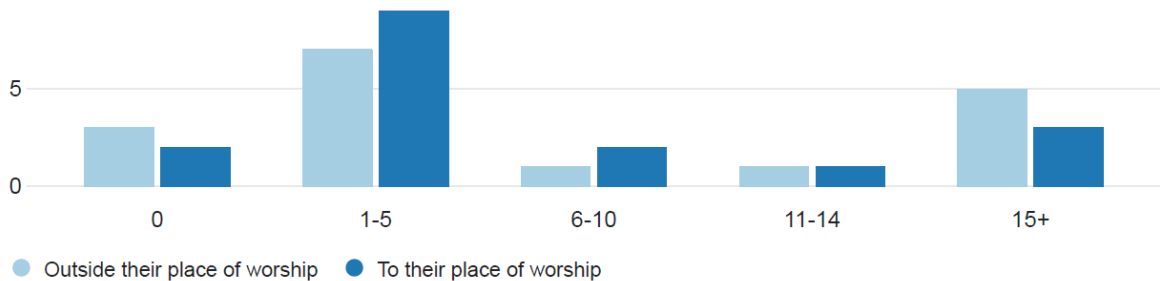
Thinking about your activity during "normal" times, that is, not during a pandemic, are you regularly involved in any group activities here?



Thinking about your activity during "normal" times, that is, not during a pandemic, do you regularly take part in any activities of this congregation that reach out to the wider community?



Hours of unpaid service given by respondents in the past month



Congregation Priorities During Challenging Times

(each priority was ranked 1-4, with those ranked closer to 1 being more important to members)

1

Spiritual Growth (1.83)

3

Helping the Poor and Needy (2.64)

2

Social Connection and Fellowship (2.17)

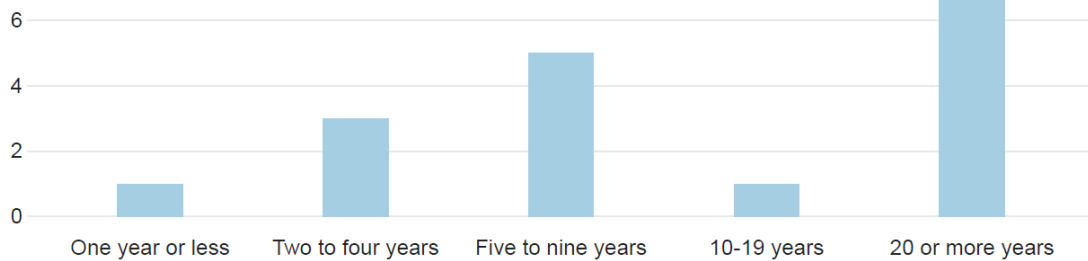
4

Other (3.79)

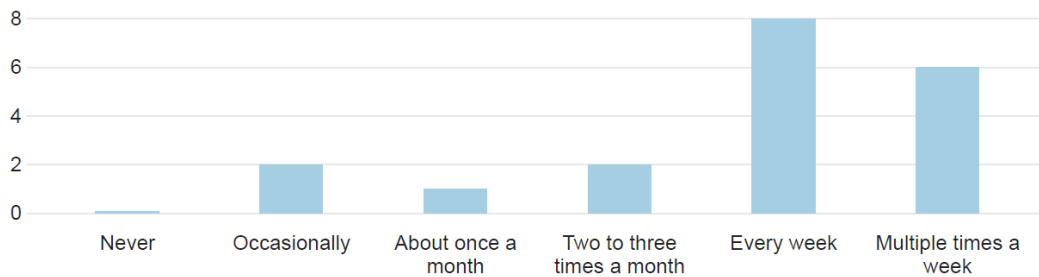
Attendance

Worship service attendance has changed dramatically as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic and our survey questions are able to provide a closer look at this phenomenon.

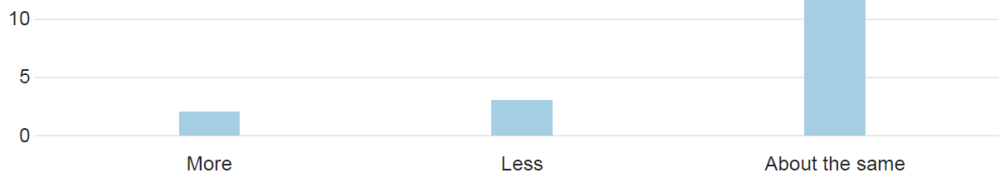
How long have you been attending this congregation?



How often do you attend religious services?



Is that more or less often than you were attending a year ago?



Our research team analyzed the open-ended responses about why people may have changed their attendance patterns. Information specific to Hope of Little Rock Church here.

Why are people attending more?



Quotes from open ended responses here.

Why are people attending less?



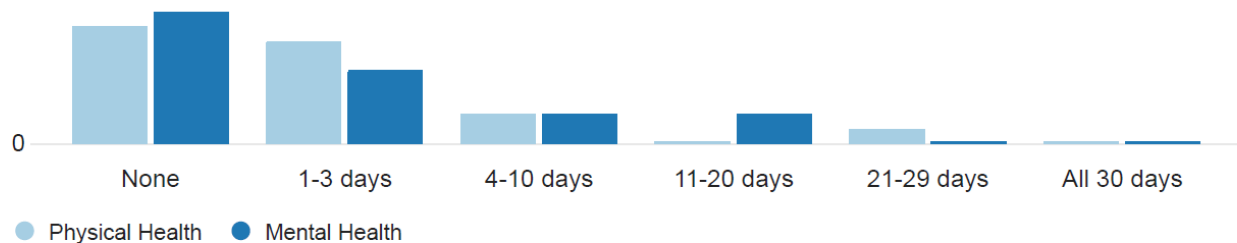
Quotes from open ended responses here.

Quality of Life

Places of worship contribute to quality of life far beyond the time people spend together at worship services. Studies show that people who have a supportive community of faith are happier and healthier. Here are some survey questions that show you how your members are doing.

Keep in mind, these numbers only reflect the people who responded to the survey. Those who are struggling with mental health challenges may be particularly likely to be isolated and not responsive to overtures like requests to participate in congregation activities. The data provided here are just a snapshot of those who responded.

Thinking about your health, for how many days during the past 30 days was your health NOT good?



All things considered, how satisfied are you with your life as a whole these days?
(1-100 scale)

If your members are struggling with poor mental health, here is the number for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline:
800-273-8255

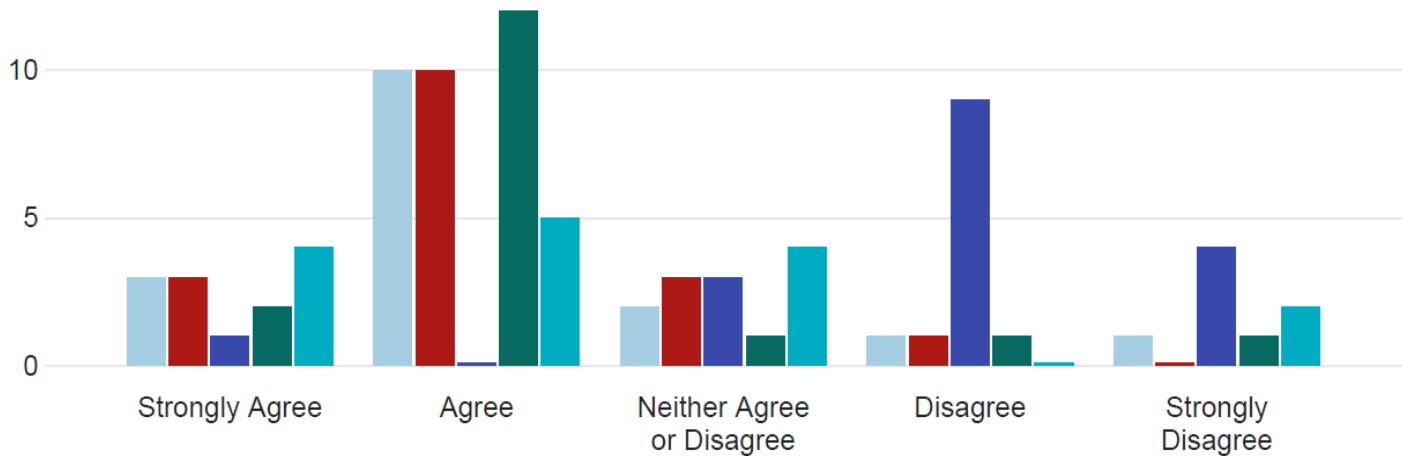


If your members are experiencing symptoms of Covid-19, here is the number for the Arkansas Department of Health Covid-19 Hotline:
800-803-7847

Congregation Warmth

How do the people who responded to the survey feel about your congregation? We asked a number of questions about the congregation and also summarized the following five responses in a single measure of Congregation Warmth (note that, when appropriate, the responses were reverse-coded for this summative measure).

Agreement with the following statements about the congregation.



- My congregation feels like family to me.
- My congregation meets my spiritual needs.
- I feel like an outsider in my congregation.
- I would be prepared to invite friends or relatives to a worship service here.
- My congregation makes an effort to be welcoming to different racial and ethnic gr...

Our research team has looked closely at what contributes to a "culture of service" in congregations. We have found that higher levels of congregation warmth lead people to give more service to their congregations. You can read more about how congregation can foster a "culture of service" both within their congregation and in the broader community, in this blog post on the Little Rock Congregations Study website: [Creating a Culture of Service.](#)



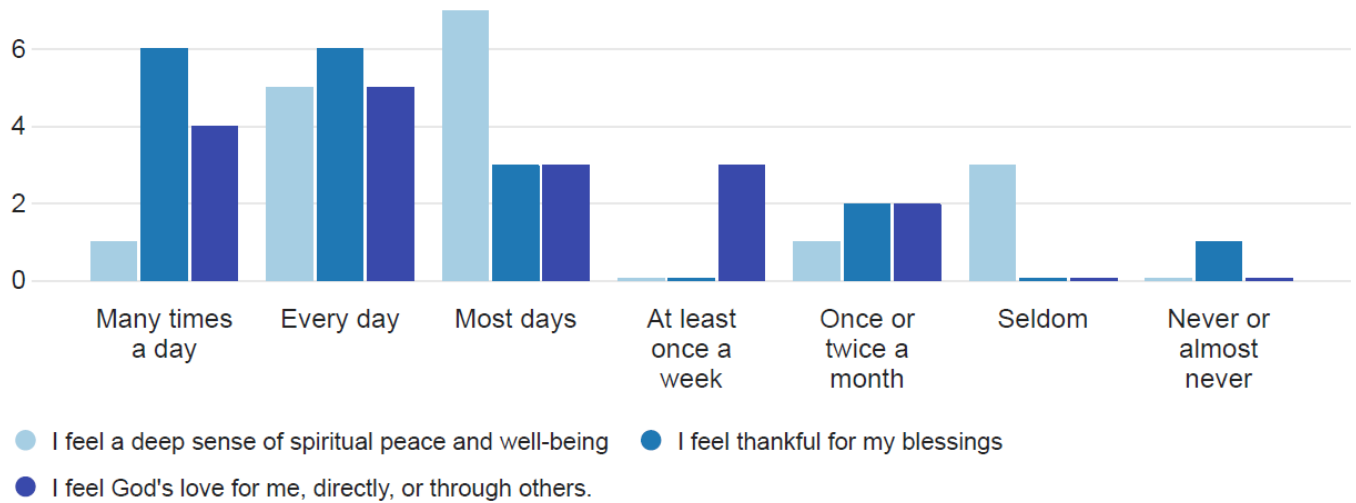
23.6

Overall Congregation Warmth
(out of a possible 25)

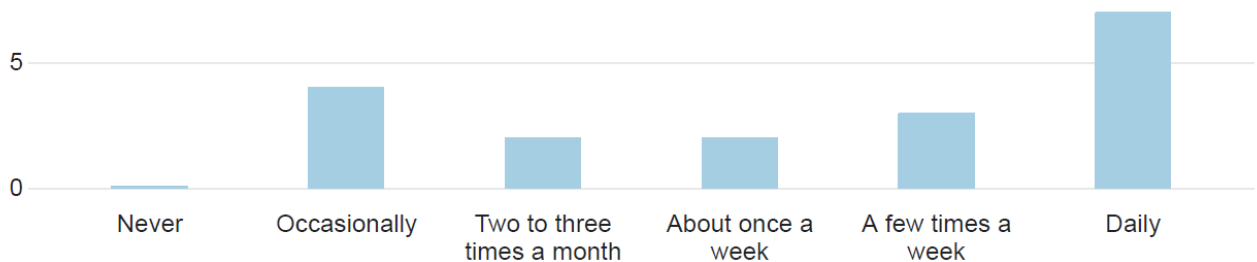
Spiritual Health

We know that religious leaders care deeply about the spiritual health of the people they lead. The survey included a number of questions about how people are doing spiritually, which are summarized on this page.

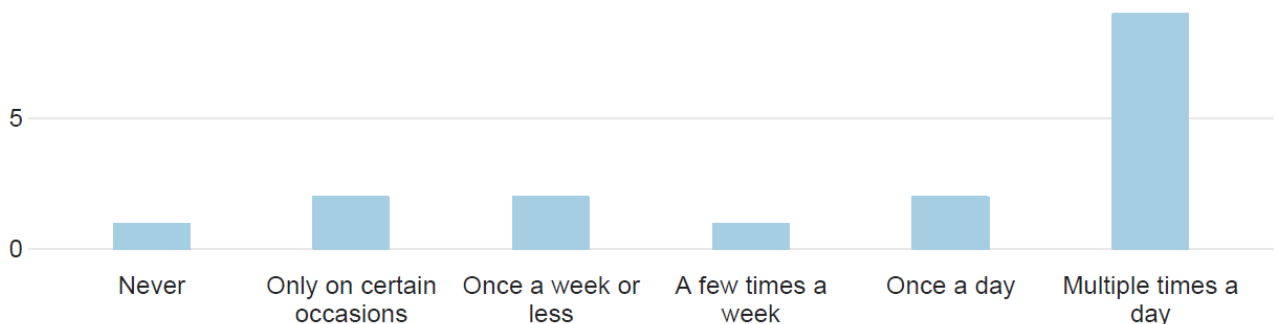
How often do your congregants report the following spiritual experiences?



Outside of attending religious services, about how often do you spend time alone reading the Bible, Koran, Torah, or other sacred texts?



About how often do you spend time alone praying outside of religious services?

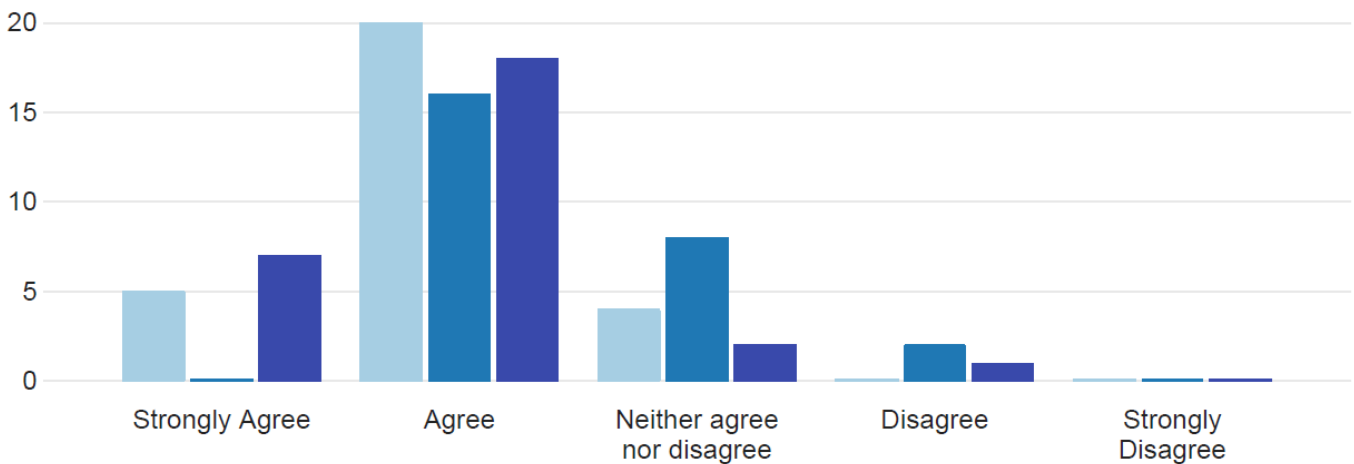


Race and Religion in Little Rock

As our research team has studied faith-based community engagement, we have learned just how important issues of race and religion are in our city. In our surveys and interviews with clergy over the past 8 years, race relations has increased in importance as a community issue to clergy (see this blog post on our website for more: [Understanding Race and Faith through the Data of the LRCS](#)). In 2020, 88% of responding clergy leaders agree or strongly agree that Little Rock has a problem with racial division, but the vast majority also believe that things will get better. People and places of faith are often critical to helping make those improvements.

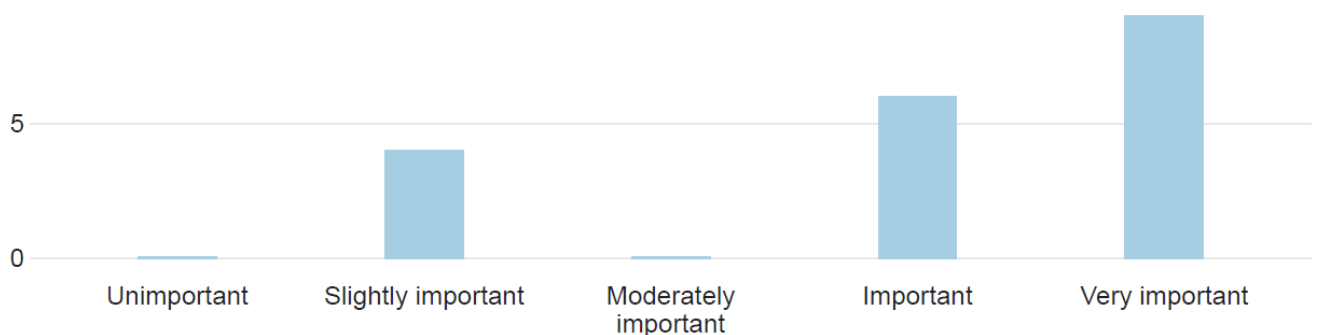
Our 2020 congregation survey included a number of questions about race relations. Race is also one of the focus areas for future community conversations, discussed on page 12 of this report.

Thinking about the city of Little Rock, how much would you agree or disagree with the following statements



- Little Rock has a problem with racial division.
- I think that race relations are likely to improve in Little Rock in the future.
- I am hopeful about the future of Little Rock.

How important is the issue of race relations to the members of your congregation?



Community Issues

What community issues matter most to your members? We asked them about nine issues and for each one, they rated its importance from Very Important (5) to Unimportant (1). The average score for each community issue is presented in the table below. The issues that are most important to your members are the ones with average scores closest to 5.

How important did your congregation rate each of the following issues?

Issue	Mean
Access to Healthcare	4.72
Education/Schools	4.64
Marriage/ Families	3.95
Race Relations	4.47
At-risk Children/Foster Care	4.30
Crime	4.01
Income Inequality	4.07
Housing/Homelessness	4.23
Prison/Criminal Justice	3.86

The top three community issues for the people who responded to your survey are: Healthcare, Education and Schools, and Race Relations. Of those who responded that those were Very Important issues for them, there were 68% of people for Healthcare, 87% for Education, and 93% for Race Relations, who wanted to see your congregation get involved in helping to solve those issues. Sixty-seven people also said they were willing to volunteer to help on Healthcare, 63 would be willing to help on Education, and 72 said they would volunteer on your congregation's efforts on the issue of Race Relations.

Our research team has identified some organizations that are already working on these issues in our community and have included their contact information here, in case you might be interested in partnering in the future. We are also planning further community conversations on some of these issues, as detailed on page 12 of the report.



Arkansas Faith Network, <https://www.arfaithnetwork.org/>, "empowers congregations in partnerships that promote transformative health."



AR Kids Read, <https://arkidsread.org/>, provides books to kids that need them most and engages community members as tutors to promote proficient reading skills.

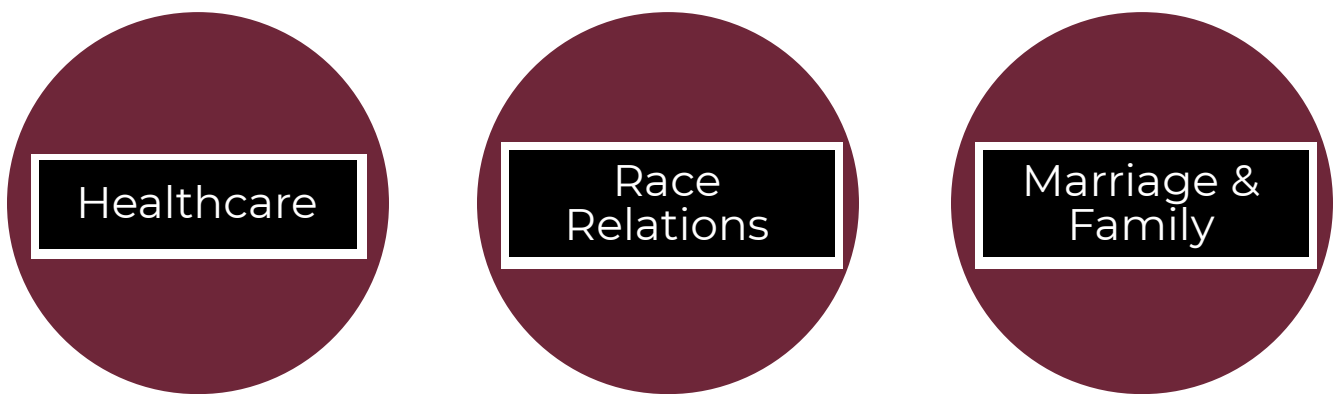


Race Under Grace, <https://citychurchar.org/race-under-grace-2017/>, a project of the City Church Network, is "designed to pursue racial unity in and between Central Arkansas Churches."

Where do we go from here?

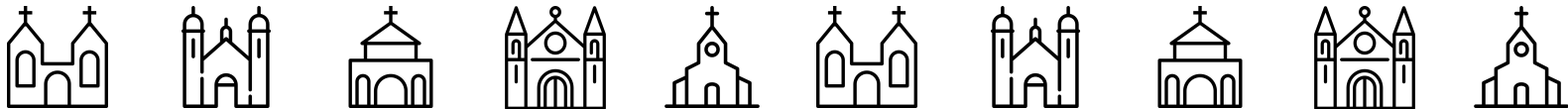
In the coming months, we will be sharing analysis of the full, anonymous dataset through our website and Facebook page. We are looking forward to sharing what we learn with the community.

We are also planning for facilitated dialogues around some key community issues, thanks to help from a team of graduate students from the Clinton School of Public Service. There are three facilitated dialogue groups planned for the spring of 2021, based on interest across the full sample of congregants in Little Rock. Both places of worship and nonprofit organizations will be invited to these conversations to talk about collaboration opportunities and how to best work together to find solutions to the problems that are so important to people of faith in our city.



Looking Ahead to 2024

The Little Rock Congregations Study is a longitudinal research project, which means we plan to keep doing work in our community for the long term. We are planning to survey congregations again in four years, in 2024, and we would love for Hope of Little Rock Church to be part of the research then. We will ask many of the same questions and will again provide a report like this one, so you will be able to see how your congregation has changed over time.



If you have questions about future research, or want to talk more about your congregation's results, please feel free to contact:

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Research Team



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Assistant Professor
School of Public Affairs
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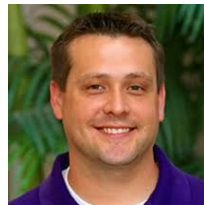
Clergy Advisory Board



Rev. Ryan Davis
Bullock Temple
Christian Methodist
Episcopal Church



Pastor Ray Williams
Fellowship Bible Church,
City Church Network



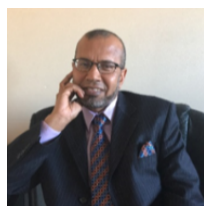
Pastor Preston Clegg
Second Baptist Church
Downtown



Rev. Lindy Vogado
Second Presbyterian
Church



Fr. Mark Wood
St. Theresa
Catholic Church



Imam Mahmoud
Hassanein
Islamic Center
of Little Rock



Pastor Earnest Thomas
Saint Mark
Baptist Church



Outreach Minister
Ceanne Warner
Church of Jesus Christ
of Latter-day Saints

The Little Rock Congregations Study Clergy Advisory Board is made up of religious leaders from diverse backgrounds across our city. They advise the research team both on methods (question selection, survey distribution, inclusive question wording, etc.) and on outreach (congregation recruitment, networking, etc.). Board members serve rotating two-year terms.



Website: <https://research.ualr.edu/lrcs>
Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/LittleRockCongregationsStudy/>

