



Written by [Veronika Kyrylenko](#) on October 8, 2024

## Low Voter Enthusiasm Among Christians Projected to Impact Election

As the race between Donald Trump and Kamala Harris intensifies in the final weeks of the 2024 presidential campaign, a new national survey reveals a surprising trend that could shape the election outcome: millions of religious voters, including a significant portion of Christian regular churchgoers, are projected to abstain from voting. According to [research](#) conducted by the Cultural Research Center at Arizona Christian University, led by Dr. George Barna, voter turnout enthusiasm has dipped significantly compared to previous elections. Such a lack of participation could play a crucial role in determining the next president.



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### **Key Finding: 104 Million People of Faith Expected Not to Vote**

The report released on Monday highlights that approximately 104 million people of faith, including 32 million self-identified Christians who regularly attend church, are unlikely to cast their ballots in the upcoming election.

According to the paper,

One of the most important findings of the research is the depressed voting intent of “people of faith”....

Among those classified as a person of faith, only one-half (51%) indicated they are likely to vote. If the survey statistics are projected on the basis of national population estimates, based on a Census-derived U.S. voting-age population of 268 million and an estimated 212 million adults qualifying as a “person of faith,” the 49% who are not likely to vote in November represents about 104 million eligible non-voters in the “people of faith” segment.

The researchers designate “people of faith” as individuals who either describe themselves as having religious faith or associate with a recognized religious tradition such as Christianity, Judaism, Mormonism, Islam, and others. Based on these criteria, 79 percent of Americans qualify as people of faith. Sixty-six percent of them are Christians aged 18 or older. That means that more than four out of five adults (83 percent) who identify as religious are Christians.

The researchers argue that these findings are significant. Christian churchgoers have historically supported conservative candidates. This trend could pose a potential setback for Donald Trump’s reelection campaign.



## Reasons for Not Voting

The survey further explored why so many voters, particularly within the faith community, plan to abstain. The most common reasons include a general lack of interest in politics (68 percent), “disliking” of all major candidates (57 percent), and a belief that their vote will not make a difference (52 percent). Half of the respondents also cited the “controversial” nature of the election as a reason for staying away from the polls.

In addition to that, nearly half of the non-voters (48 percent) were discouraged from participating in the election due to concerns that the outcome would be rigged, or because they felt they did not have enough information about the candidates to make an informed decision.

Despite efforts to engage non-voters, the research found that none of the proposed scenarios — such as close friends urging them to vote or receiving non-partisan briefings on candidate positions — significantly increased the likelihood of participation.

## Decline in Church Engagement

The study also points to a decline in church engagement on political matters. Many Christian churches are opting not to encourage their congregants to vote or address key social issues related to the election. This shift, according to the research, has left many regular churchgoers uninformed or unmotivated to participate in the election.

Among those surveyed, 56 percent of churches have encouraged voting. Fewer churches have taken more active steps, such as registering new voters (26 percent) or providing voter guides (24 percent). Many regular church attendees have expressed dissatisfaction with the lack of election-related teachings in their churches. This concern is particularly strong among those in Protestant and Catholic churches.

Notably, the role of churches in voter engagement varies significantly across different congregations. The survey highlighted that [black churches](#) are more active in all seven types of election-related activities studied. Specifically, traditionally black churches are more than twice as likely as other Christian churches to register voters (55 percent compared to 25 percent). They are also more likely to provide voter guides (53 percent versus 23 percent).

## Key Issues Shaping Voting Decisions Among Churchgoing Christians

For Christians who regularly attend church, several key issues are shaping their choice of candidate in the 2024 election. Inflation and the cost of living top the list at 67 percent. The economy follows at 64 percent, immigration and border control at 60 percent, and crime and law enforcement at 59 percent. Voters are also concerned about poverty, government mismanagement, and abortion. Despite these concerns, the survey found that pastors rarely address many topics critical to their congregants. Only one percent of churchgoing Christians said these issues wouldn’t influence their vote.

## Potential Impact on the Election

The projected low turnout from people of faith could have a direct impact on the 2024 election. Historical data shows that in close races, small shifts in voter turnout can significantly influence outcomes.

Dr. Barna remarked,

The voting results that tell the real story are the margins of victory in the swing states. In



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2020, the margins of victory were a combined 587,000 votes or so in nine battleground states. Cumulatively, they represented about one-fifth of the Electoral College votes — 104 out of the 538 electoral votes. You only need 270 electoral votes to win the race, yet an average gap of just 60,000 votes in each of those states determined the winner of nearly 40 percent of the total electoral votes needed to win.

He continued,

In that context, the 32 million Christians sitting in the pews each week who refuse to vote are a gamechanger. It's low hanging fruit for pastors as they try to motivate those congregants to carry out their civic duty and honor God through their influence for things that matter in our culture.

The researcher expressed hope that more Christians would become energized about the election in the final weeks leading up to it.

### **Methodology**

The Cultural Research Center conducted two national surveys in August and September 2024. The first surveyed 2,000 self-identified Christians who attend church regularly using a mixed-method approach, combining phone and online interviews. The second surveyed 1,000 voting-age adults through online panels. Both samples were statistically weighted for demographic representation, with margins of error ranging from  $\pm 3$  to  $\pm 4$  percentage points. Interviews lasted an average of 15-17 minutes.



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