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WASHINGTON (RNS)—Presidential hopefuls Rudolph Giuliani and Sen. Hillary Clinton hold early leads among key religious voting blocs in the race to win their party nominations, a national survey revealed.

The survey by the Pew Research Center shows religious voters leaning toward more recognizable candidates in the early stages of the race, said John Green, a senior fellow at the [Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life](#).

Giuliani, a Republican, leads Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., among white evangelical Republican-leaning voters, 27 percent to 23 percent. Former Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich was third (7 percent) even though he hasn't announced his candidacy. The GOP's fundraising leader, former Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney, was fourth (6 percent) among this key group of Republican voters.

White evangelicals gave 78 percent of their votes to President Bush in 2004

and 72 percent to Republican congressional candidates in 2006.

White non-Hispanic Catholics are showing early support for Giuliani among those who lean Republican, at 37 percent. McCain is second (23 percent) among these voters, who went 56 percent in favor of Bush in the 2004 election. Gingrich and Romney are tied at 9 percent each.

Clinton leads among white Catholics who lean Democratic, with 33 percent of their support. According to exit polls, 50 percent of white Catholics voted for Democrats in the 2006 mid-term elections—a slight shift away from the GOP in the 2004 presidential results.

Former Vice President Al Gore, who has said he isn't running for president, is second (22 percent), followed closely by 2004 Democratic vice presidential nominee John Edwards (21 percent). Illinois Sen. Barack Obama is fourth (12 percent).

The impact of campaign funds is about to be felt, likely shifting future poll numbers, Green said, adding that the \$25 million raised by Obama and the \$23 million by Romney so far this year will give them boosts.