

# Americans' trust in the church rebounds slightly

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While most Americans remain distrustful of the church, a growing number say they have confidence in the institution. Currently, 36 percent say they trust the church, according to [Gallup's annual tracking poll](#).

For the past three years, the percentage of U.S. adults who said they had a great deal or quite a lot of confidence in the church or organized religion has hovered near record lows. In 2022, trust fell to 31 percent of Americans and has been at 32 percent the last two years.

For the first time since 2020, however, the church has experienced a significant jump in trust. In 2025, 36 percent say they have a great deal or quite a lot of confidence in the church as an institution. The church was last that high in 2021 (37 percent).

Gallup began tracking U.S. adults' confidence in the church as an institution in 1973. In 1975, 68 percent expressed a great deal or quite a lot of confidence in the church.

After a downward trend, the church experienced a boost of confidence in 2001, as did most other national institutions after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks. The church rebounded to 60 percent for the first time since 1987. That year marked the last time at least 3 in 5 Americans had confidence in the church.

More than half of U.S. adults (52 percent) said they had a great deal or quite a lot of confidence in the church as an institution in 2019, the last year a majority held that belief. In 2018, confidence levels fell below 40 percent for the first time.

They edged above that mark in 2020, only to drop back below in 2021 and even further in 2022. Despite the 1-point increase in 2023 and the steady percentage in 2024, those years still marked the second-lowest percentages ever.

## **Political differences**

The increase since last year was driven primarily by a jump among Republicans. Compared to 2024, Republicans' trust in the church increased by 15 points, from 49 percent to 64 percent this year.

With the election of President Donald Trump, Republicans grew in their trust of every institution measured in 2024 and 2025, except for the Supreme Court, which remained statistically flat by falling 1 percentage point.

Trust of the church among political independents grew by 2 percentage points—28 percent to 30 percent. Democrats' confidence in the church hovered around 1 in 5, falling 1 point to 21 percent.

As churchgoers increasingly say they prefer to be part of a congregation that shares their politics and non-Republicans are most likely to never attend church, congregations may grow politically segregated and struggle to reach those who aren't GOP voters.

## **Demographic distinctions**

In addition to Democrats and independents, other demographics also report lower levels of confidence in the church.

Black (31 percent) and Hispanic Americans (33 percent) are less likely than white Americans (37 percent) to express a great deal or quite a lot of trust in the church or organized religion. Last year, however, just 30 percent of

all non-white Americans said they trusted the church. Many groups that have previously had low levels of trust in the church grew in their confidence in 2025.

While Americans 55 and older are the most likely to express high trust in the church, all age demographics increased in their confidence. Older Americans grew from 39 percent to 42 percent, those 38 to 54 increased from 28 percent to 31 percent, and young adults had the highest jump, moving from 26 percent to 32 percent.

Other segments that saw increases since last year are those who attended some college but didn't graduate (25 percent to 36 percent), those with annual household income of \$50,000 or less (31 percent to 39 percent), and those with household incomes more than \$100,000 (29 percent to 36 percent).

Also, men stayed statistically the same (36 percent in 2024 and 37 percent in 2025), but women jumped from 28 percent to 36 percent.

## **Church in second tier of trusted institutions**

In the most recent findings, only three institutions—small businesses (70 percent), the military (62 percent) and science (61 percent)—have the trust of a majority of Americans. The church is among the next tier, including the police (45 percent), higher education (42 percent), the medical system (32 percent), the presidency (30 percent) and banks (30 percent).

Fewer Americans say they trust the public schools (29 percent), the Supreme Court (27 percent), large tech companies (24 percent), newspapers (17 percent), the criminal justice system (17 percent) or big business (15 percent). The least trusted institutions are television news (11

percent) and Congress (10 percent).

In general, Americans have grown less trusting of institutions. The increases in confidence among Republicans have been largely offset by declines among Democrats.

“The significant party shifts in confidence this year largely cancel each other out in the aggregate, and thus, Americans’ confidence in most institutions is unchanged or statistically similar to last year,” according to Gallup.

For example, while confidence in the presidency grew 73 points among Republicans since last year, trust in the institution fell 58 points among Democrats. Overall, trust in the presidency grew slightly from 26 percent in 2024 to 30 percent in 2025.

“While the loss of faith in key U.S. institutions may be hard to ever recover among political independents, partisans’ confidence is easily restored when their political party controls the institution. The flip side, of course, is that the confidence of the other party’s supporters declines when their party loses power,” wrote Megan Brennan in Gallup’s report.

“This suggests that confidence in U.S. institutions may be less about how well the institution performs its societal functions and more about who has the power to influence what the institution can do.”

The public’s average confidence level in the 14 institutions rated each year by Gallup since 1993 remains near historic lows. On average, 28 percent of U.S. adults currently have high levels of trust in those institutions, the same as 2024.