

**Religious Leaders' LGBQ Support: A National Survey Examining Psychosocial,
Religious, and Congregational Factors**

Seungju Kim¹ and Weiman Xu²⁻³

¹Psychology Department, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

²Department of Child, Youth and Family Studies, University of Nebraska-Lincoln

³Nebraska Academy for Methodology, Analytics & Psychometrics, University of Nebraska-
Lincoln

Notice: This paper has not been peer-reviewed or accepted for publication. Preprints—unless they show as "accepted—should not be reported in news media as established information.

Author Note

This material is based upon work supported by the National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship Program under Grant No. DGE 21-46756. Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Seungju Kim. Email: seungju7@illinois.edu. We would like to thank F. Grace Hart and Hannah A. Hawkins for their feedback.

Abstract

Public support for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and queer (LGBQ) individuals in the United States has historically increased since 1996, yet religious leaders' perspectives remain understudied using large quantitative approaches. Using a nationally representative sample of religious leaders from the National Survey of Religious Leaders ($N = 1,600$), we tested preregistered hypotheses to examine psychosocial, religious, and spiritual correlates with LGBQ support, as well as potential congregational moderators. Results reveal relatively moderate LGBQ support among religious leaders ($M = 2.61$, $range = 1.0-6.5$), with psychosocial factors (e.g., identifying as White, woman, higher education, income) and religious/spiritual struggles associated with greater support, while literal Biblical interpretation and prayer practices associated with lower support. While congregation size did not moderate the relationship between literal interpretation and LGBQ support, the racial composition of congregations did. Together, these findings suggest that congregational dynamics may play a more significant role in shaping religious leaders' LGBQ support than previously recognized; we conclude by highlighting limitations and directions for future studies.

Keywords: religious leaders, LGBQ support, religiousness, spirituality, congregations

Religious Leaders' LGBQ Support: A National Survey Examining Psychosocial, Religious, and Congregational Factors

According to a recent nationwide study, public support (e.g., same-sex marriage, legal protections) for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and queer (LGBQ) individuals has declined for the first time in a decade in the United States (Public Religion Research Institute, 2024a), despite historically increasing support since 1996 (Brenan, 2024). Notably, this decline in support comes at a time when legislation surrounding the rights of LGBTQ+ individuals has proliferated (i.e., over 520 anti-LGBQ+ bills were introduced across the United States in 2023 alone [Peele, 2023]). Religious conservatives, including some evangelical clergy, frequently advocate for these bills, even so far as to assert that the implementation of school prayer could deter students from identifying as transgender (Hixenbaugh & Hylton, 2023).

While a growing body of literature has sought to understand factors connected to the acceptance and rejection of LGBQ individuals by religious *individuals*, these factors remain understudied in religious *leaders*. Indeed, multiple studies have established religious affiliation, political views, and congregational dynamics as significant predictors of LGBQ support among religious individuals using large and nationally representative samples (Flores et al., 2020; Lefevor et al., 2024; Public Religion Research Institute, 2024b; Wilkins et al., 2024). Yet, LGBQ support amongst religious leaders has mostly been examined with small samples ($N < 100$) and qualitative studies (Butcher, 2019; Estelhomme et al., 2020; Kitaen & Xu, 2023; Mosley et al., 2022; Pauken, 2020; Skidmore et al., 2022), limiting the generalizability of their findings. To our knowledge, only one study employed a large and nationally representative sample of religious leaders in assessing LGBQ support, but this, too, was focused on only Mainline Protestant clergy (Public Religion Research Institute, 2023).

Extant findings on LGBQ support among non-religious and even religious individuals may not directly apply to religious leaders, given leaders' unique roles as religious and spiritual authorities. The complex interplay between a leader's personal faith, theological interpretations, and institutional responsibilities creates a distinct context that warrants a separate examination. Notably, while studies have examined how congregational dynamics influence individual members' attitudes toward LGBQ support, there is an absence of research exploring how congregations shape their leaders' perspectives on this issue. Furthermore, the depth and nature of religiousness and spirituality among religious leaders likely differ from that of the general population, potentially leading to divergent patterns in LGBQ support. The lack of studies using large and nationally representative samples of leaders across various faiths has left a significant gap in understanding how these unique religious, spiritual, and congregational factors influence LGBQ support among religious leaders.

Aside from serving as spiritual counselors, religious leaders have also helped promote health in the religious communities they serve by encouraging vaccinations, oral health, and disease prevention practices (Anshel & Smith, 2014; Ruijs et al., 2013; Toni-Uebari & Inusa, 2009; Umaru, 2019). Religious leaders also wield large social influence over their religious communities, evident in their ability to mobilize their congregations toward political and social activism (Edwards & Oyakawa, 2022; Roso et al., 2024). Understanding factors associated with increased LGBQ support in religious leaders can, by extension, also provide insight into congregational support for LGBQ individuals.

Demographic Correlates

Age

The most recent estimates posit most U.S. Americans (hereafter Americans), across all age groups, to be generally supportive of same-sex marriage and non-discrimination protections for LGBQ+ individuals (Public Religion Research Institute, 2024b). Perhaps unsurprisingly, younger Americans are generally more supportive of same-sex marriage and non-discrimination protections than any other age group (Public Religion Research Institute, 2021). Indeed, even amongst a sample of Mainline Protestant Leaders, younger religious leaders were more likely to support LGBQ+ individuals (Krivulskaya, 2023). While no studies to our knowledge have examined direct connections between LGBQ+ support and age, Adam and Krosnick (1991) offer one perspective: cohort succession, which states that older cohorts are gradually replaced by new ones, leading to attitude shift in each new age groups and conversely, the entire country. Coupled with new cohorts is growing LGBQ visibility (e.g., social media and televised representation [Jacobs & Meeusen, 2021]) and increased contact with LGBQ+ individuals (Knepp, 2022; Orcés, 2023), both proven to be associated with higher positive attitudes for LGBQ+ individuals (Knepp, 2022; Searcy, 2011). Taken together, we posit:

H2a: Lower age will be associated with higher LGBQ support.

Race

Compared to age, support for LGBQ individuals among religious leaders by race remains clouded. While no study exists to our knowledge for religious leaders, almost all of the recent polling show that on average, the majority of all racial groups support LGBQ individuals (e.g., non-discrimination protections, same-sex marriage). However, Americans of color may be more likely to support LGBQ individuals and the expansion of their rights given their own history of oppression and discrimination (David & Derthick, 2017). Coupled with higher progressive political identification among Black, Hispanic, and Asian Americans, and higher conservative

political identification among White Americans (Pew Research Center, 2024), we hold that for religious leaders:

H2b: Identifying as Black will be associated with higher LGBQ support.

H2c: Identifying as Asian American/Pacific Islander will be associated with higher LGBQ support.

H2d: Identifying as Hispanic will be associated with higher LGBQ support.

H2e: Identifying as White will be associated with lower LGBQ support.

Gender

Unlike racial identity, differences between men and women remain clear among Americans and religious leaders and even higher among gender-diverse Americans. While both men and women report high support (78% of women, 72% of men, and 90% of LGBTQ individuals) for protection (Public Religion Research Institute, 2024), this difference is likely pronounced among religious leaders. Historically, the majority of religions have prohibited the ordained leadership of women, in part due to fundamentalism and historical precedent (Kwilecki, 1987). As such, when religious individuals and organizations have nuanced interpretations of sacred texts for women to take on religious leadership (Green, 2023), they may also be likely to hold nuanced attitudes toward the inclusion of LGBQ+ individuals. Thus, we hold that:

H2f: Identifying as a woman will be associated with higher LGBQ support.

Socioeconomic status Correlates

Finally, the present study examines educational attainment and income as possible correlates to LGBQ support among religious leaders. Existing polls show that college graduates report moderately (i.e., 16%) higher support for same-sex marriage than those without a college education (Public Religion Research Institute, 2024). Religious leaders with higher education

may replicate greater support for LGBQ individuals, as increasing studies acknowledge the persistence of sexual attractions (Przeworski et al., 2021) and cultural humility. Additionally, higher education attainment is closely aligned with awareness of systemic inequities impacting racial and sexual minorities (Lechuga et al., 2009). Moving to income, few have examined its connection to LGBQ support on the individual level, yet findings show higher income countries do report greater support for LGBQ rights (Badgett et al., 2018). Income may be positively associated with LGBQ rights through education as a proxy and possibly a sign of gender equality (Kabeer & Natali, 2013) and recognition of marginalized communities such as LGBQ individuals (Nagle & Fakhoury, 2021). Taken together, we posit:

H2g: Higher educational attainment will be associated with higher LGBQ support.

H2h: Higher income will be associated with higher LGBQ support.

Religiousness and Spirituality

A fundamental reason why religious leaders may support or oppose the inclusion of LGBQ individuals rests on their own religious/spiritual convictions and their denominations. Many religions, like the Roman Catholic Church, do not affirm LGBQ individuals and have described 'homosexuality' as "... acts of grave depravity... intrinsically disordered... [and] Under no circumstances can they be approved." (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2000, p. 566). Yet, other religions and denominations have moved to affirm LGBQ individuals (e.g., United Methodist Church [(Graham, 2024), allowing clergy to perform same-sex weddings and LGBQ individuals to take leadership positions. As such, how religiousness (i.e., the search for significance that occurs within the context of established institutions designed to facilitate spirituality [Pargament et al., 2013, p. 15]) informs one support for LGBQ individuals may largely rest upon the organized religion they are part of. One form of religiousness, religious

struggles, often involves questioning not only core beliefs but also institutional doctrines and social stances (Exline et al., 2014). As individuals grapple with religious uncertainty, they may find themselves reevaluating various positions traditionally held by their faith, such as views on abortion, women in leadership roles, or LGBQ support (Beagan & Hattie, 2015; Chaves, 1999; Gaddini, 2022). Given most faiths in the United States do not affirm LGBQ individuals (Brammer, 2018; Liu, 2012), we hypothesize that:

H3: Religious doubt will predict higher LGBQ support.

Unlike religiousness, we assert spirituality to hold a more complex relationship with LGBQ support. While similar to religiousness, spirituality is broadly understood to be “the search for the sacred” (Pargament et al., 2013, p. 14) through behaviors (e.g., prayer, reading scriptures) and beliefs (e.g., self-actualization, authenticity, God) (Saroglou, 2011). As such, non-religious spiritual individuals have evidenced higher support for LGBQ individuals than religious individuals (Kazyak et al., 2023). Some forms of spiritual engagement, like prayer, have less (Demmrich, 2015; Pargament et al., 2013), while other forms, like reading scripture, have more to do with one's religiousness (Bjarnason, 2007; Ronald, 2012; Zinnbauer et al., 1997). Finally, Exline and colleagues (2014) also describe spiritual struggles with the divine as a dimension of (dis)engaging with the sacred, where one questions either the existence or character of the divine. Similar to religious struggles, doubting God's existence may facilitate greater deconstruction of divine doctrines prohibiting the inclusion of LGBQ individuals in religious communities or leadership. Thus, we assert:

H4a: Literal interpretation of the Bible will be negatively associated with LGBQ support.

H4b: Prayer frequency will have no significant associations with LGBQ support.

H4c: Doubting God's existence will be positively associated with LGBQ support.

Congregational Influences

As much as religious leaders may influence congregants, congregants also wield large influence over their peers, broader community, and even religious leaders (Hamm & Eagle, 2021; Lefevor et al., 2021; London & Wiseman, 2011; Maton et al., 2013). While no studies, to our knowledge, have examined the direct relationship between congregants and religious leaders' values, religious leaders are likely informed by engagement with their social environment. Indeed, Pettigrew's (1998) intergroup contact theory and work (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006) suggest that broader exposure and contact with diverse groups reduced prejudice and increased empathy (Johnston & Glasford, 2018). Using this framework, we examine two potential moderators of the literal interpretation of LGBQ support: congregation size and congregational diversity.

At the time of data collection for the present study, 2020, more U.S. Americans than ever identify as LGBQ. Indeed, in 2020, national LGBQ+ identification was 5.6% (Gallup Inc., 2022) and 1 in 6 for young adults aged 18-24 (Flores & Conron, 2023). Larger congregations, by virtue of their size, may be more likely to include LGBQ individuals or someone who knows one; thus, religious leaders may be increasingly likely to broaden their perspectives on LGBQ support. Likewise, a racially/ethnically diverse congregation may also have the potential to broaden the perspectives of religious leaders on LGBQ issues, given shared experiences of exclusion at individual and structural levels (Bailey et al., 2017; Hatzenbuehler, 2014) and commitments to social justice (Hope et al., 2019; Jones & Brewster, 2017; Turner et al., 2022). This diversity can expose leaders to a variety of lived experiences and viewpoints, fostering greater empathy and understanding while challenging traditional norms, potentially leading to more inclusive stances on sexuality. As such, we hypothesize:

H5a: The size of the congregation will moderate the relationship between literal interpretation of the Bible and LGBQ support, such that larger congregation sizes will reduce the negative effect of literal interpretation of the Bible on LGBQ support.

H5b: Black, Diverse, and Other groups will report higher LGBQ support than the White group.

Present Study

Although the discussed findings related to sociodemographic correlates of support for LGBQ individuals lends a rich understanding to who, in general, is supportive of rights for LGBQ people, it is not known if these correlations hold among religious leaders. While support for lesbian, gay, and queer individuals has been examined among the general public in recent years, much less is known among religious leaders. To establish a contemporary understanding of LGBQ support amongst religious leaders, we examine five research questions:

RQ1: Among US religious leaders, what is the average level of LGBQ support?

RQ2: What are the psychosocial correlates of LGBQ support?

RQ3: Is religiousness associated with LGBQ support?

RQ4: Is spirituality associated with LGBQ support?

RQ5a: Does congregation size moderate the effect of the literal interpretation of the Bible on LGBQ support?

RQ5b: Does congregation diversity moderate the effect of the literal interpretation of the Bible on LGBQ support?

Methods

Participants and Procedures

Data for the present study were from the National Survey of Religious Leaders (NSRL; Chaves, 2023), a nationally representative sample of 1,600 clergy in the United States across various religious faiths, measuring their views on various topics (e.g., politics, sexuality, science). Data can be accessed through an online Open Science Framework repository or the Association of Religion Data Archives (DOI: [10.17605/OSF.IO/JE82R](https://doi.org/10.17605/OSF.IO/JE82R)) along with the codebook. Inclusion criteria for the NSRL required religious leaders to work in congregations as either full-time or part-time ministerial staff or clergy, paid or unpaid. Leaders were recruited to complete self-administered questionnaires from 2019 to 2020. For the total of 1,600 participants, most of them were born in the years 1950-1959 ($n = 400$, 25.00%), identified as male ($n = 1,144$, 71.50%), White ($n = 1,189$, 74.31%), and White Conservative/Evangelical/Fundamentalist ($n = 573$, 35.81%) (see Online Supplemental Table S1 for more details).

Measures

While participants completed questionnaires through the NSRL, they did not administer psychological measures or previously validated scales for variables in the present study. As such, our study attempted to create composite variables of constructs when possible and otherwise ran analyses on the item level. To test for internal reliability, Cronbach's alpha was calculated for composite variables with three or more items and Spearman-Brown for composite variables with two items (as recommended by Eisinga et al., 2013).

LGBQ Support

LGBQ support was measured using two variables from the NSRL: *GAYMARRY* and *ORIENT*. *GAYMARRY* asked religious leaders, "Would you perform the wedding of a same-sex couple if your religious group allowed it?" from (1) *Definitely Not* to (5) *Definitely Yes*. *ORIENT* asked leaders to rate agreement with "All religious leadership positions should be open to people

regardless of their sexual orientation” from (1) *Completely disagree* to (7) *Completely Agree*.

GAYMARRY and *ORIENT* were standardized before being averaged into one composite variable.

This composite variable demonstrated good internal reliability (Spearman-Brown = .89), with higher scores indicate greater LGBQ support.

Race

Chaves (2023) collapsed self-reported racial/ethnic identities into four categories: White/American Indian, Black or African American, Hispanic/Latino, and Asian/Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander. To utilize these racial/ethnic identities, three dummy variables were created for Black, Hispanic, and Asian categories, with the White racial group as the reference group. Another dichotomized variable, White, was also created, which coded participants identifying as White as 1, and non-White 0, only to be used to test for Hypothesis 2 in the bivariate correlations.

Age

Age was measured using the *YEARBORN* variable. Chaves (2023) collapsed the year of birth for participants into 7 categories ranging from (1) *1930 to 1939* to (7) *1990 to 1999*. This variable was subsequently reverse-scored so that higher values indicate greater years of age.

Income

Income was measured using the *HHINCOME* variable, which asked religious leaders about their total household income and subsequently collapsed into 13 categories by Chaves (2023), ranging from (1) *\$0 - \$9,999* to (13) *\$200,000 or more*.

Doubt in Religion and God

Doubt in religion was measured using the *DOUBT* variable, which asked religious leaders how often they have doubts about their religious faith from (1) *Never* to (4) *All the time*,

with an option to select not applicable. Doubt in God was measured using the *GOD* variable, which asked religious leaders about their belief in God, ranging from (1) *I know God really exists, and I have no doubts about it* to (6) *I don't believe in God*. These variables were analyzed individually.

Literal Interpretation

Literal interpretation of the Bible was measured using four variables from the NSRL: *BIBLE*, *SIXDAYS*, *YNGEARTH*, and *CREMIRAC*. *BIBLE* asked religious leaders about their beliefs about the Bible, ranging from (1) *The Bible is the actual word of God and is to be taken literally, word for word*, to (5) *The Bible contains a mix of legends, stories, and moral precepts with little relevance for today*. *SIXDAYS*, *YNGEARTH*, and *CREMIRAC* asked religious leaders how likely a statement is true, such as “God created the world in six 24-hour days,” “The Earth is less than 10,000 years old,” “God directly created humans through a miraculous process,” respectively, ranging from (1) *Definitely false* to (5) *Definitely true*. After *BIBLE* was reverse coded, all four variables were standardized before being averaged into one composite variable. This composite variable demonstrated good internal reliability ($\alpha = .84$), with higher scores indicating greater literal interpretation of the Bible.

Prayer

We attempted to measure praying using the variables *GRACE* and *PRAYSOLO* from the NSRL. These items asked religious leaders to report how often they engaged in specific prayer activities. *GRACE* assessed how often respondents "prayed before or after a meal," while *PRAYSOLO* measured how often they "prayed or meditated when [they] were alone." Responses for both items ranged from (1) *Not at all* to (6) *More than once a day*. These variables were

standardized before being averaged into one composite variable; however, due to poor reliability (Spearman-Brown = .63), items were analyzed individually.

Congregation Size

Congregation size was measured using the CONG_SIZE variable from the NSRL. Chaves (2023) collapsed the number of adults 18 years and older who regularly participate in a congregation into five categories: (1) 50 or fewer, (2) 51 to 150, (3) 151 to 350, (4) 351 to 1000, and (5) 1001 or more.

Congregation Diversity

Congregation racial and ethnic diversity was measured using the *CONG_RACE* variable from the NSRL. Chaves (2023) collapsed the racial composition of congregations into 5 groups, where at least 80% of the congregation was either White, Black, Hispanic, or another race, or no group was 80%. For the present study, a dummy variable was created with four categories: White, Black, Diverse, and Other. Congregations with no racial group as the majority (80%) were recoded as “Diverse,” while congregations with a majority Hispanic or another race were recoded as “Other.”

Analysis Plan

The analysis plan was preregistered (https://osf.io/vy2bc/?view_only=27e52b269f4d43f2b66275c3524becdf) prior to accessing data and based on research questions and hypotheses for the present study. Online supplemental tables and analysis syntax for the present study are located in an Open Science Framework repository (https://osf.io/epdvu/?view_only=95aebd4a3ec940eb83eb198b8848c7d8).

All analyses were conducted using R programming (R Core Team, 2024) to test all hypotheses; these can be completely reproduced with the provided syntax and output files. In

addition, since the data provided was not weighted, we employed a survey weight to utilize the national representation of the sample: “WT_NSRL_ALL_ATTENDEE.”

To test Hypothesis 1, “religious leaders will report moderate levels (i.e., scores ranging 2.5-3.5) of LGBQ support”, we examined descriptive statistics of LGBQ support broadly using the “TAM” package (Robitzsch et al., 2024) to account for the sample weight. To test H2a-H2h, we conducted bivariate correlations between variables of interest and LGBQ support using the “apaTables” package (Stanley, 2023). To test H3, we ran a multiple-regression model to examine the association between doubt in religion and LGBQ support. To test H4a-H4c, we ran a multiple regression model to examine the associations between literal interpretation, praying alone, praying before eating, and doubt in God with LGBQ support. To test H5a, we conducted moderation analysis, examining the associations between the interaction term between literal interpretation and congregation size on LGBQ support. All regression models included demographic variables (i.e., gender, race, age, education, income) that were statistically significantly associated with explanatory, outcome, or moderating variables as covariates.

To test H5b, we performed multigroup analyses using the lavaan package (Rosseel, 2012), followed by model comparisons with chi-square difference test (Satorra & Bentler, 2010). Specifically, we first examined a model with all the paths freely estimated in every congregation subgroup. Then we examined a series of models with the path between literal interpretation of the Bible and LGBQ support was constrained to be equal across two subgroups at a time. Each of these models was compared with the all-freely estimated model. Significant chi-square test results would indicate significant difference in the association between literal interpretation of the Bible and LGBQ support between the two subgroups.

Deviations from Preregistration

The present study used the “WT_NSRL_ALL_ATTENDEE” survey weight instead of the preregistered “WT_NSRL_PRIMARY_DUP” survey weight, to take into account secondary religious leaders and proportional representation relative to attendees and not congregation (Chaves, 2023). Further, for Hypothesis 5b, co-authors agreed that moderation analysis was not appropriate, because we decided to recode the CONG_RACE variable into four categories (i.e., Black, Diverse, Other, White) instead of only two categories to leverage the differences. We sought to leverage multigroup modeling to identify heterogeneous differences among Non-White congregations. Finally, we omitted the “Years in Ministry” variable to maintain manuscript concision and provide a more thorough analysis of other variables.

Results

Average LGBQ support

Using a probability-proportional-to-size sampling weight, we found relatively moderate ($M = 2.61$, $SD = 2.03$) LGBQ support among our sample, with scores ranging from 1 to 6.5. These findings do support Hypothesis 1, which asserted religious leaders would report relatively moderate (i.e., 2.5–3.5) LGBQ support.

Psychosocial correlates

Analyses revealed several statistically significant positive associations with LGBQ support, including identifying as female ($r = .34$, $p < .001$), white ($r = .12$, $p < .001$), older ($r = .09$, $p = .002$), educational attainment ($r = .13$, $p < .001$), and higher income ($r = .12$, $p < .001$). Conversely, individuals identifying as Black ($r = -.13$, $p < .001$) were negatively associated with LGBQ support. No statistically significant associations were found between LGBQ support and individuals identifying as Hispanic/Latine ($r = -.04$, $p = .160$) or Asian ($r = .00$, $p = .972$) (see Online Supplemental Table S2 for all bivariate correlations). These findings support three of the

eight preregistered hypotheses: H2f (i.e., identifying as a woman), H2g (i.e., higher education), and H2h (i.e., higher income).

Religious and Spiritual Predictors of LGBQ Support

Prior to running the religious regression model, Pearson's correlation coefficients were calculated to identify variables significantly associated with the focal variables (LGBQ support and Doubt in Religion). Identifying as female, Black, Hispanic, educational attainment, age, and income were significantly correlated and were subsequently included in the model as covariates. The religious regression model found Doubt in Religion was a significant predictor of LGBQ support ($\beta = .37, p < .001$). Additionally, several control variables were significantly associated with LGBQ support: identifying as female ($\beta = .65, p < .001$), having higher educational attainment ($\beta = .18, p < .001$), and increasing age ($\beta = .18, p < .001$) were positively associated with LGBQ support. Conversely, identifying as Black was negatively associated with LGBQ support ($\beta = -.17, p = .034$). Identifying as Hispanic and income were not significantly associated with LGBQ support (see Table 3). These findings support Hypothesis 3, which asserted Doubt in Religion as a significant predictor of LGBQ support.

Prior to running the spiritual regression model, Pearson's correlation coefficients were calculated to identify variables significantly associated with the focal variables (i.e., LGBQ support, Literal Interpretation, praying alone, praying before a meal, and doubt in God). Identifying as female, Black, Hispanic, educational attainment, age, and income were significantly correlated and were subsequently included in the model as covariates. The spiritual regression model identified Literal Interpretation ($\beta = -.50, p < .001$), Praying Alone ($\beta = -.07, p = .001$), Praying before Meals ($\beta = -.14, p < .001$), and Doubt in God ($\beta = .08, p < .001$) as significant predictors of LGBQ support. Additionally, several control variables were

significantly associated with LGBQ support: identifying as female ($\beta = .28, p < .001$), Black ($\beta = .15, p = .017$), Asian ($\beta = .34, p = .028$), and older in age ($\beta = .06, p = .002$) were associated with LGBQ support. Identifying as Hispanic, educational attainment, and income were not significantly associated with LGBQ support (see Table 3). These findings support two of the three preregistered hypotheses: H4a (i.e., literal interpretation) and H4c (i.e., doubting God). Praying alone and before meals (originally preregistered as prayer frequency; see methods for this change) do not support H4b.

Table 3. Religious and Spiritual Regression Models

| Parameters | <i>b</i> | β | SE | p |
|------------------------|----------|---------|------|--------|
| Religious Model | | | | |
| Female | .653 | .653 | .059 | < .001 |
| Black | -.166 | -.166 | .078 | .034 |
| Hispanic | .106 | .106 | .094 | .260 |
| Education | .151 | .180 | .024 | < .001 |
| Age | .124 | .180 | .024 | < .001 |
| Income | .003 | .007 | .024 | .774 |
| Doubt in Religion | .577 | .365 | .024 | < .001 |
| Spiritual Model | | | | |
| Female | .277 | .277 | .049 | < .001 |
| Black | .151 | .151 | .063 | .017 |
| Hispanic | -.002 | -.002 | .074 | .980 |
| Asian | .336 | .336 | .153 | .028 |
| Education | .026 | .062 | .020 | .124 |
| Age | .043 | .031 | .020 | .002 |
| Income | .006 | .016 | .019 | .002 |

| | | | | |
|------------------|-------|-------|------|--------|
| Literal | -.634 | -.504 | .023 | < .001 |
| Praying Alone | -.087 | -.071 | .020 | .001 |
| Praying for Food | -.146 | -.143 | .022 | < .001 |
| Doubt in God | .182 | .081 | .021 | < .001 |

Congregational Moderators of Literal Biblical Interpretation

Congregation Size

Prior to conducting the moderation regression analysis, Pearson's correlation coefficients were calculated to identify variables significantly associated with the focal variables (i.e., LGBQ support, Literal Interpretation, and Congregation size), and all continuous variables were mean-centered. Identifying as female, Black, Hispanic, educational attainment, age, and income were significantly correlated and were subsequently included in the model. The congregation size moderation model identified Literal Interpretation ($\beta = -.60, p < .001$) as a significant predictor of LGBQ support. However, the Congregation Size ($\beta = -.02, p = .302$) and the interaction term between Literal Interpretation and Congregation Size was not significant ($\beta = .01, p = .655$), suggesting the model failed to reject the null hypothesis (i.e., no relationship exists). Among the control variables, identifying as female ($\beta = .32, p < .001$) was positively associated with LGBQ support. Identifying as Black, Hispanic, and Asian, educational attainment, age, and income were not significantly associated with LGBQ support (see Table 4). This finding did not support H5a (i.e., a significant interaction between literal interpretation and congregation size).

Table 4. Results of Congregational Moderation Regression Models

| Parameters | <i>b</i> | β | <i>SE</i> | <i>p</i> |
|------------|----------|---------|-----------|----------|
| Female | .315 | .315 | .051 | < .001 |
| Black | .106 | .106 | .065 | .103 |

| | | | | |
|---------------------|-------|-------|------|--------|
| Hispanic | -.045 | -.045 | .078 | .565 |
| Education | .017 | .020 | .021 | .345 |
| Age | .014 | .020 | .021 | .348 |
| Income | .005 | .014 | .020 | .499 |
| Literal | -.763 | -.603 | .022 | < .001 |
| Cong-Size | -.018 | -.021 | .020 | .302 |
| Literal x Cong-Size | .010 | .009 | .020 | .655 |

Congregation Diversity

Significant differences in the association between literal interpretation of the Bible and LGBQ support were only found between White and Black ($\chi^2 [1] = 6.99, p = .008$). Specifically, in the White group, the same extent of increase in a literal interpretation of the Bible would result in a greater extent of decreases in LGBQ support ($\beta = -.77, p < .001$), compared to the Black group ($\beta = -.47, p < .001$). This finding partially supported Hypothesis 5b, which asserted the Black group would report higher LGBQ support than the White group.

Table 5. Multigroup Model of LGBQ Support

| | Black | Diverse | Other | White |
|-----------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| | $\beta(SE)$ | $\beta(SE)$ | $\beta(SE)$ | $\beta(SE)$ |
| Female | .033 (.157) | .366 (.163)* | .638 (.239)** | .320 (.099)** |
| Age | .048 (.070) | .039 (.039) | .142 (.062)* | .022 (.025) |
| Education | .146 (.047)** | -.082 (.043) | .051 (.090) | .022 (.031) |
| Income | .030 (.024) | -.004 (.020) | .039 (.049) | -.006 (.019) |
| Literal | -.467 (.108)** | -.687 (.069)** | -.708 (.203)** | -.773 (.037)** |

*Note. To see the full parameters of unconstrained and constrained models, please see the output file in the Open Science Foundation repository. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$.

Conclusion

The State of LGBQ Support

Despite a broad increase in LGBQ support since 1990s, LGBQ support remains low in religious leaders across the U.S.. Indeed, contrary to expectations, older religious leaders reported greater LGBQ support than younger religious leaders. While identifying as a Black religious leader was associated with lower LGBQ support, while White religious leaders with higher LGBQ support. At the same time, identifying as Hispanic or Asian was not associated with LGBQ support. Otherwise, our findings affirm previous findings on gender, education, and income. These unexpected findings suggest an unexpected demographic shift in LGBQ support. For instance, more recent polling shows that support for non-discrimination laws among younger Americans (ages 19-29) has dropped from 83% in 2020 to 75% in 2023 (Public Religion Research Institute, 2024b). Likewise, while a higher proportion of all racial groups (i.e., White, Black, Hispanic, and Asian Americans) support non-discrimination protections, support for same-sex marriages dropped by approximately 10% for Black, Hispanic, and Asian Americans, and a smaller drop for White Americans (Public Religion Research Institute, 2024b).

As outlined in their report, the Public Religion Research Institute (2024b) credits partisanship for the decline in support. Indeed, the Trump administration introduced more anti-LGBTQ+ legislation than any other administration, emboldening more Christian nationalist rhetoric among religious leaders. Religious leaders sympathetic to the increasing presence of Christian nationalism may account for low LGBQ support, another association identified by the Public Religion Research Institute (2024b).

Religious and Spiritual Associations with LGBQ Support

This study sought to examine LGBQ support amongst a nationally representative sample of religious leaders not only for their proximity to and social influence over religious communities but also for their devotion to religious and spiritual beliefs and practices. As

individuals committed to embodying religion and spirituality, how is their religiousness and spirituality connected to LGBQ support? Our findings suggest *it depends*. Contrary to expectations, spiritual practices (e.g., praying alone or before meals) were associated with lower LGBQ support (although not by much), while literal interpretation, doubt in God, and doubt in religion displayed a stronger relationship with LGBQ support. As hypothesized (H3, H4a, and H4b), religious and spiritual struggles likely facilitate greater LGBQ support when religious leaders doubt the validity of God or religion, questioning the rationale for adhering to religious and spiritual traditions. Yet, how should we make sense of the connection between spiritual practices and LGBQ support? Is spirituality itself connected to lower LGBQ support? Spirituality differs from religiousness, but among a group of religious leaders, spirituality may reflect their religious commitment. Therefore, future studies should explore spirituality in samples of non-religious individuals or leaders. We also note that some evidence suggests religious leaders sympathetic to Christian nationalism are more likely to inflate self-report measures of spirituality, indicating the need to include measures of social desirability (Kim et al., 2024).

Congregational Influences

Unsurprisingly, a literal interpretation of the Bible exhibited the strongest relationship with lower LGBQ support. Because literal interpretations allow for little nuance, religious leaders are much less likely to accept nuanced interpretations that posit “homosexuality” is morally acceptable when consensual and within marriage. Religious leaders with a nuanced perspective argue that the Bible's prohibition on “homosexuality” pertains to pederasty and rape, suggesting that, when considered within the scope of consent and marriage, it can be deemed acceptable.

To explore the influence of congregations on religious leaders, we investigated whether congregational attributes impacted the relationship between literal interpretations of the Bible and LGBQ support. Although our research was cross-sectional, focusing on associations at a single time point, our examination of congregational characteristics revealed that congregational size did not change this relationship, while the racial makeup of the congregation did. We found that while *identifying* as Black was associated with lower LGBQ support and *identifying* as White was associated with higher LGBQ support, religious leaders with Black *congregations* reported higher LGBQ support compared to religious leaders with White *congregations*. This finding suggests when it comes to LGBQ support, the racial makeup of the congregation may play a greater role than the racial identity of the religious leader. Indeed, the disconnect between broad support amongst religious Americans of color and religious leaders of color may be exhibited through congregations instead. Aside from Americans of color, religious Black Americans also report high levels of LGBQ support. Thus, the attitudes and values of religious leaders may be a reflection of the religious communities they serve.

Limitations and Future Directions

Despite being one of the first studies to use a nationally representative sample of religious leaders, the inferences of the current findings remain at the cross-sectional association level. Our findings raise new questions about the effect of congregations on religious leaders, yet without longitudinal data, it is challenging to parse out the direction of effects. Another limitation of the present study was the exclusion of Christian nationalism, a key predictor of anti-LGBQ support. We also acknowledge that while support for same-sex marriage and LGBQ leaders demonstrated acceptable internal acceptability as a composite variable, it may conflate support for same-sex marriage and LGBQ religious leaders as the same. The present study created a composite study

to leverage a continuous distribution of values yet disregards the inherent nature of LGBQ religious leader ordination compared to support for same-sex marriage. Most of the existing polls do not ask about attitudes toward LGBQ-religious leaders; thus, fixating on support for same-sex marriage *or* LGBQ religious leaders may provide results that reflect larger correlates. In conclusion, we argue future studies should utilize a longitudinal design, incorporate Christian nationalism and the varying dimensions of LGBQ inclusion.

References

- Alwin, D. F., & Krosnick, J. A. (1991). Aging, Cohorts, and the Stability of Sociopolitical Orientations Over the Life Span. *American Journal of Sociology*, *97*(1), 169–195.
<https://doi.org/10.1086/229744>
- Anshel, M. H., & Smith, M. (2014). The Role of Religious Leaders in Promoting Healthy Habits in Religious Institutions. *Journal of Religion and Health*, *53*(4), 1046–1059.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10943-013-9702-5>
- Badgett, M. V. L., Park, A., & Flores, A. (2018). *Links between economic development and new measures of LGBT inclusion*. The Williams Institute.
- Bailey, Z. D., Krieger, N., Agénor, M., Graves, J., Linos, N., & Bassett, M. T. (2017). Structural racism and health inequities in the USA: Evidence and interventions. *The Lancet*, *389*(10077), 1453–1463. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(17\)30569-X](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(17)30569-X)
- Beagan, B. L., & Hattie, B. (2015). Religion, Spirituality, and LGBTQ Identity Integration. *Journal of LGBT Issues in Counseling*, *9*(2), 92–117.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/15538605.2015.1029204>
- Bjarnason, D. (2007). Concept Analysis of Religiosity. *Home Health Care Management & Practice*, *19*(5), 350–355. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1084822307300883>
- Brammer, J. P. (2018, January 3). None of America's 100 largest churches are LGBTQ-affirming, new report says. *NBC News*. <https://www.nbcnews.com/feature/nbc-out/none-america-s-100-largest-churches-are-lgbtq-affirming-new-n834266>
- Brenan, M. (2024, June 24). *Same-Sex Relations, Marriage Still Supported by Most in U.S.*
<https://news.gallup.com/poll/646202/sex-relations-marriage-supported.aspx>

- Butcher, J. (2019). *A Study Of Identity Issues That Affect Clergy Leadership On LGBTQ Inclusion* [Dissertation, University of New England]. <https://dune.une.edu/theses/193>
- Catechism of the Catholic Church. (2000). *Catechism of the Catholic Church, Second Edition* (2nd ed.). Continuum International. <https://www.christianbook.com/catechism-catholic-second-edition-gift-edition/9780385508193/pd/08198>
- Chaves, M. (1999). *Ordaining Women: Culture and Conflict in Religious Organizations*. Harvard University Press.
- Chaves, M. (2023). *National Survey of Religious Leaders*. <https://doi.org/10.17605/OSF.IO/JE82R>
- David, E. J. R., & Derthick, A. O. (2017). *The Psychology of Oppression* (1st ed., pp. 978-0-8261-7817-6). Springer Publishing Company. <https://doi.org/10.1891/9780826178176>
- Demmrich, S. (2015). Prayer in Religiously Affiliated and Non-affiliated Adolescents: An Exploratory Study on Socialization, Concept of Prayers and the God Image in East Germany. *International Journal of Practical Theology*, 19(1), 40–59. <https://doi.org/10.1515/ijpt-2014-1001>
- Edwards, K. L., & Oyakawa, M. (2022). *Smart Suits, Tattered Boots: Black Ministers Mobilizing the Black Church in the Twenty-First Century*. NYU Press.
- Eisinga, R., Grotenhuis, M. te, & Pelzer, B. (2013). The reliability of a two-item scale: Pearson, Cronbach, or Spearman-Brown? *International Journal of Public Health*, 58(4), 637–642. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00038-012-0416-3>
- Estelhomme, C. D., Lane, W. D., & Lane, D. E. (2020). African American Clergy Attitudes Regarding Affirmative Counseling with Sexual Minorities. *Journal of Psychology & Christianity*, 39(2), 134–140.

- Exline, J. J., Pargament, K. I., Grubbs, J. B., & Yali, A. M. (2014). The Religious and Spiritual Struggles Scale: Development and initial validation. *Psychology of Religion and Spirituality, 6*(3), 208–222. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0036465>
- Flores, A. R., & Conron, K. J. (2023). *Adult LGBT Population in the United States*. The Williams Institute.
- Flores, A. R., Mallory, C., & Conron, K. J. (2020). Public attitudes about emergent issues in LGBTQ rights: Conversion therapy and religious refusals. *Research & Politics, 7*(4), 2053168020966874. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2053168020966874>
- Gaddini, K. (2022). 4. Purity Culture. In *The Struggle to Stay: Why Single Evangelical Women Are Leaving the Church* (pp. 75–112). Columbia University Press.
<https://doi.org/10.7312/gadd19674-005>
- Gallup Inc. (2022, February 17). *LGBT Identification in U.S. Ticks Up to 7.1%*. Gallup.Com.
<https://news.gallup.com/poll/389792/lgbt-identification-ticks-up.aspx>
- Graham, R. (2024, May 1). United Methodist Church Reverses Ban on Practicing Gay Clergy. *The New York Times*. <https://www.nytimes.com/2024/05/01/us/methodist-church-gay-ban-lgbtq.html>
- Green, E. Y. (2023). *The Ordination of Women: The Persistence of Women in Restricted and Non-Restricted Denominations* [Ph.D., Regent University].
<https://www.proquest.com/docview/2827394124/abstract/FAA3490218A3459CPQ/1>
- Hamm, A. K., & Eagle, D. E. (2021). Clergy Who Leave Congregational Ministry: A Review of the Literature. *Journal of Psychology and Theology, 49*(4), 291–307.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/00916471211011597>

- Hatzenbuehler, M. L. (2014). Structural Stigma and the Health of Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Populations. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 23(2), 127–132.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0963721414523775>
- Hixenbaugh, M., & Hylton, A. (2023, October 4). Inside the anti-LGBTQ effort to put Christianity back in schools. *NBC News*. <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/christianity-evangelical-schools-anti-lgbtq-grapevine-podcast-rcna118114>
- Hope, E. C., Pender, K. N., & Riddick, K. N. (2019). Development and Validation of the Black Community Activism Orientation Scale. *Journal of Black Psychology*, 45(3), 185–214.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0095798419865416>
- Jacobs, L., & Meeusen, C. (2021). Coming Out of the Closet, Also on the News? A Longitudinal Content Analysis of Patterns in Visibility, Tone and Framing of LGBTs on Television News (1986-2017). *Journal of Homosexuality*, 68(13), 2144–2168.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/00918369.2020.1733352>
- Johnston, B. M., & Glasford, D. E. (2018). Intergroup contact and helping: How quality contact and empathy shape outgroup helping. *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations*, 21(8), 1185–1201. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1368430217711770>
- Jones, K. N., & Brewster, M. E. (2017). From awareness to action: Examining predictors of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) activism for heterosexual people. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 87(6), 680–689.
<https://doi.org/10.1037/ort0000219>
- Kabeer, N., & Natali, L. (2013). Gender Equality and Economic Growth: Is there a Win-Win? *IDS Working Papers*, 2013(417), 1–58. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.2040-0209.2013.00417.x>

Kazyak, E., Burke, K., & Schwadel, P. (2023, May 4). “Nones” and LGBTQ Politics | PRRI.

PRRI | At the Intersection of Religion, Values, and Public Life.

<https://www.ppri.org/spotlight/nones-and-lgbtq-politics/>

Kim, S., Jankowski, P., Hawkins, H., & Wang, D. (2024). *Patterns of Christian Nationalist*

Engagement and Connections to Spirituality. OSF. <https://doi.org/10.31234/osf.io/9xt8r>

Kitaen, L., & Xu, J. (2023). Open Doors: Understanding LGBTQ-Affirming Perspectives in

Church Leadership. *Journal of Student Research*, 12(4).

<https://doi.org/10.47611/jsrhs.v12i4.5160>

Knepp, M. M. (2022). Closeness of relationship to LGBTQ individuals is associated with

increases in ally identity and behavior. *Journal of LGBT Youth*, 19(2), 135–151.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/19361653.2020.1761924>

Krivulskaya, S. (2023, December 21). Mainline Protestant Clergy’s Support for LGBTQ+ Rights

Has Grown | PRRI. *PRRI | At the Intersection of Religion, Values, and Public Life.*

[https://www.ppri.org/spotlight/protection-from-discrimination-or-the-right-to-](https://www.ppri.org/spotlight/protection-from-discrimination-or-the-right-to-discriminate-changing-public-perceptions-of-lgbtq-rights-and-religious-freedom-2/)

[discriminate-changing-public-perceptions-of-lgbtq-rights-and-religious-freedom-2/](https://www.ppri.org/spotlight/protection-from-discrimination-or-the-right-to-discriminate-changing-public-perceptions-of-lgbtq-rights-and-religious-freedom-2/)

Kwilecki, S. (1987). Contemporary Pentecostal Clergywomen: Female Christian Leadership, Old

Style. *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion*, 3(2), 57–75.

Lechuga, V. M., Clerc, L. N., & Howell, A. K. (2009). Power, Privilege, and Learning:

Facilitating Encountered Situations to Promote Social Justice. *Journal of College Student*

Development, 50(2), 229–244.

Lefevor, G. T., Sorrell, S. A., Burke, K., & Flores, A. R. (2024). The Influence of Religious

Affiliation on the Political Views of LGBT Americans. *Journal for the Scientific Study of*

Religion, n/a(n/a). <https://doi.org/10.1111/jssr.12918>

- Lefevor, G. T., Sorrell, S. A., Virk, H. E., Huynh, K. D., Paiz, J. Y., Stone, W.-M., & Franklin, A. (2021). How do religious congregations affect congregants' attitudes toward lesbian women and gay men? *Psychology of Religion and Spirituality, 13*(2), 184–193.
<https://doi.org/10.1037/rel0000290>
- Liu, J. (2012, December 7). Religious Groups' Official Positions on Same-Sex Marriage. *Pew Research Center*. <https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2012/12/07/religious-groups-official-positions-on-same-sex-marriage/>
- London, H. B. J., & Wiseman, N. B. (2011). *Pastors at Greater Risk*. Baker Books.
- Maton, K. I., Sto. Domingo, M. R., & Westin, A. M. L. (2013). Addressing religion and psychology in communities: The congregation as intervention site, community resource, and community influence. In *APA handbook of psychology, religion, and spirituality (Vol 2): An applied psychology of religion and spirituality* (pp. 613–632). American Psychological Association. <https://doi.org/10.1037/14046-032>
- Mosley, E. A., Narasimhan, S., Blevins, J., Dozier, J. L., Pringle, J., Clarke, L. S., Scott, C., Kan, M., Hall, K. S., & Rice, W. S. (2022). Sexuality-based Stigma and Inclusion Among Southern Protestant Religious Leaders. *Sexuality Research and Social Policy, 19*(4), 1519–1532. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13178-021-00662-y>
- Nagle, J., & Fakhoury, T. (2021). Between Co-Option and Radical Opposition: A Comparative Analysis of Power-Sharing on Gender Equality and LGBTQ rights in Northern Ireland and Lebanon. In *Power-Sharing Pacts and the Women, Peace and Security Agenda*. Routledge.
- Orcés, D. (2023, August 24). Americans' Perspectives on Gender and Proximity to the LGBTQ Community | PRRI. *PRRI / At the Intersection of Religion, Values, and Public Life*.

<https://www.ppri.org/spotlight/americans-perspectives-on-gender-and-proximity-to-the-lgbtq-community/>

Pargament, K. I., Mahoney, A., Exline, J. J., Jones, J. W., & Shafranske, E. P. (2013).

Envisioning an integrative paradigm for the psychology of religion and spirituality. In K. I. Pargament, J. J. Exline, & J. W. Jones (Eds.), *APA handbook of psychology, religion, and spirituality (Vol 1): Context, theory, and research*. (pp. 3–19). American Psychological Association. <https://doi.org/10.1037/14045-001>

Pauken, T. J. (2020). *Variation in Clergy Attitudes Toward Subgroups of the LGBTQ+ Community* [Psy.D., Adler University].

<https://www.proquest.com/docview/2447297045/abstract/12A7BC7622454C3CPQ/1>

Peele, C. (2023, May 23). Roundup of Anti-LGBTQ+ Legislation Advancing In States Across the Country. *Human Rights Campaign*. <https://www.hrc.org/press-releases/roundup-of-anti-lgbtq-legislation-advancing-in-states-across-the-country>

Pettigrew, T. F. (1998). INTERGROUP CONTACT THEORY. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 49(Volume 49, 1998), 65–85. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.psych.49.1.65>

Pettigrew, T. F., & Tropp, L. R. (2006). A meta-analytic test of intergroup contact theory.

Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 90(5), 751–783.

<https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.90.5.751>

Pew Research Center. (2024, April 9). 2. Partisanship by race, ethnicity and education. *Pew Research Center*. <https://www.pewresearch.org/politics/2024/04/09/partisanship-by-race-ethnicity-and-education/>

- Przeworski, A., Peterson, E., & Piedra, A. (2021). A systematic review of the efficacy, harmful effects, and ethical issues related to sexual orientation change efforts. *Clinical Psychology: Science and Practice*, 28(1), 81–100. <https://doi.org/10.1111/cpsp.12377>
- Public Religion Research Institute. (2021, March 23). Despite Partisan Rancor, Americans Broadly Support LGBTQ Rights | PRRI. *PRRI / At the Intersection of Religion, Values, and Public Life*. <https://www.ppri.org/research/despite-partisan-rancor-despite-partisan-rancor-americans-broadly-support-lgbtq-rights-broadly-support-lgbtq-rights/>
- Public Religion Research Institute. (2023, September 13). Clergy and Congregations in a Time of Transformation: Findings from the 2022-2023 Mainline Protestant Clergy Survey | PRRI. *PRRI / At the Intersection of Religion, Values, and Public Life*. <https://www.ppri.org/research/clergy-and-congregations-in-a-time-of-transformation-findings-from-the-2022-2023-mainline-protestant-clergy-survey/>
- Public Religion Research Institute. (2024a, March 12). New Survey Shows Broad Support for LGBTQ Rights Nationally, Despite Overall Declines in the Past Year | PRRI. *PRRI / At the Intersection of Religion, Values, and Public Life*. <https://www.ppri.org/press-release/new-survey-shows-broad-support-for-lgbtq-rights-nationally-despite-overall-declines-in-the-past-year/>
- Public Religion Research Institute. (2024b, March 12). Views on LGBTQ Rights in All 50 States: Findings from PRRI's 2023 American Values Atlas | PRRI. *PRRI / At the Intersection of Religion, Values, and Public Life*. <https://www.ppri.org/research/views-on-lgbtq-rights-in-all-50-states/>
- R Core Team. (2024). *R: A Language and Environment for Statistical Computing*. R Foundation for Statistical Computing. <https://www.R-project.org/>

- Robitzsch, A., Kiefer, T., & Wu, M. (2024). *TAM: Test Analysis Modules*. <https://CRAN.R-project.org/package=TAM>
- Ronald, E. K. (2012). More than “Alone with the Bible”: Reconceptualizing Religious Reading. *Sociology of Religion*, 73(3), 323–344. <https://doi.org/10.1093/socrel/srs001>
- Roso, J., Chaves, M., & Keskindürk, T. (2024). Clergy Political Actions and Agendas: New Findings from the National Survey of Religious Leaders. *Sociological Focus*, 57(3), 351–368. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00380237.2024.2357784>
- Rosseel, Y. (2012). lavaan: An R Package for Structural Equation Modeling. *Journal of Statistical Software*, 48(2), 1–36. <https://doi.org/10.18637/jss.v048.i02>
- Ruijs, W. L., Hautvast, J. L., Kerrar, S., van der Velden, K., & Hulscher, M. E. (2013). The role of religious leaders in promoting acceptance of vaccination within a minority group: A qualitative study. *BMC Public Health*, 13(1), 511. <https://doi.org/10.1186/1471-2458-13-511>
- Saroglou, V. (2011). Believing, bonding, behaving, and belonging: The Big Four religious dimensions and cultural variation. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 42(8), 1320–1340. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022022111412267>
- Satorra, A., & Bentler, P. M. (2010). Ensuring positiveness of the scaled difference chi-square test statistic. *Psychometrika*, 75(2), 243–248. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11336-009-9135-y>
- Searcy, D. K. (2011). Does Visibility Actually Help?: Televised Popular Culture and Support for LGBT Causes. *SSRN Electronic Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.1802879>
- Skidmore, S. J., Lefevor, G. T., Perez-Figueroa, A. M., & Gonzalez, K. A. (2022). “I Just Wanted Support”: Examining how LDS Clergy May Effectively Minister to Sexual and

Gender Minority Congregants. *Review of Religious Research*, 64(4), 665–685.

<https://doi.org/10.1007/s13644-022-00510-4>

Stanley, D. (2023). *apaTables: Create American Psychological Association (APA) Style Tables*.

<https://github.com/dstanley4/apaTables>

Toni-Uebari, T. K., & Inusa, B. P. (2009). The role of religious leaders and faith organisations in haemoglobinopathies: A review. *BMC Hematology*, 9(1), 6. <https://doi.org/10.1186/1471-2326-9-6>

Turner, E. A., Harrell, S. P., & Bryant-Davis, T. (2022). Black Love, Activism, and Community (BLAC): The BLAC Model of Healing and Resilience. *Journal of Black Psychology*, 48(3–4), 547–568. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00957984211018364>

Umaru, T. B. (2019). The Responsibility of Religious Leaders in the Promotion of Dialogue for Peace in a Religious Diverse Society. *JORAS - Nigerian Journal of Religion and Society*, 9. <https://www.acjoi.org/index.php/joras/article/view/2042>

Wilkins, C. L., Lisnek, J. A., Saadatian, K., & Martin, L. A. (2024). Congregation Over Denomination: Analyzing Psychological Reactions to a Church Ruling on Same Sex Marriage. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, n/a(n/a). <https://doi.org/10.1111/jssr.12905>

Zinnbauer, B. J., Pargament, K. I., Cole, B., Rye, M. S., Butter, E. M., Belavich, T. G., Hipp, K. M., Scott, A. B., & Kadar, J. L. (1997). Religion and Spirituality: Unfuzzifying the Fuzzy. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 36(4), 549–564. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1387689>