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## CHURCH ATTENDANCE AND PROTEST PARTICIPATION IN THE UNITED STATES\*

### Abstract

While church attendance is linked to many forms of civic and political engagement, the relationship between church attendance and protest participation is underexplored. Drawing on three waves of the Cooperative Election Study, I examine whether church attendance is positively and significantly associated with protest participation among both the general US adult population and specific religious traditions. I find that church attendance is a positive and significant predictor of protest participation among the general population, Catholics, Mainline Protestants, Black Protestants, and Jews. However, church attendance is only moderately associated with protest participation among Evangelicals. These findings further our understanding of the relationship between church attendance and protest participation and civic engagement more broadly.

**Keywords:** religion, religious attendance, protests, social movements, civic engagement

### Introduction

It is well-established that churches are powerful social and political institutions in the United States.<sup>2</sup> Churches are the most widespread and active form of voluntary association in the country.<sup>3</sup> Church is where many learn about and discuss political issues and develop civil skills.<sup>4</sup> Thus, it is no wonder church attendance is linked to higher levels of political and civic engagement.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> I use the term “church” to refer to houses of worship. Similarly, I use “church attendance” and “religious attendance” interchangeably.

<sup>3</sup> Kenneth D. Wald, Dennis E. Owen, and Samuel S. Hill, Churches as Political Communities, *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 82, No. 2, 1988, pp. 531–548; Robert D. Putnam, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*, Simon & Schuster, 2000.

<sup>4</sup> Sydney Verba, Kay Lehman Schlozman, and Henry E. Brady, *Voice and Equality: Civic Voluntarism in American Politics*, Harvard University Press, 1995; Kenneth D. Wald and Allison Calhoun-Brown, *Religion and Politics in the United States*, Rowman & Littlefield, 2018.

<sup>5</sup> Steven J. Rosenstone and John Mark Hansen, *Mobilization, Participation, and Democracy in America*, MacMillan, 1993; Yvette Alex-Assensoh and A.B. Assensoh, Inner-City Contexts, Church Attendance, and African-American Political Participation, *Journal of Politics*, Vol. 63, No. 3, 2001, pp. 886–901; Janelle S. Wong, Pei-Te Lien, and M. Margaret Conway, Group-Based Resources and Political Participation among Asian Americans, *American Politics Research*, Vol. 33, No. 4, 2005, pp. 545–576; Chaeyoon Lim and Carol Ann MacGregor, Religion and Volunteering in Context: Disentangling the Contextual Effects of Religion on Voluntary Behavior, *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 77, No. 5, 2012, pp. 747–779; Sky L. Ammann, Is There an Attendance Effect? Examining the Causal Link Between Religious Attendance

Despite the well-established link between church attendance and many forms of political and civic engagement, the literature on church attendance and protest participation is surprisingly thin.<sup>6</sup> This paucity of scholarship is notable given that protesting is a mainstream and effective form of political participation.<sup>7</sup> Protests shift public opinion,<sup>8</sup> impact voter turnout,<sup>9</sup> shape the legislative agenda,<sup>10</sup> and influence legislative voting.<sup>11</sup> For these reasons, a recent Brookings Institution report asserted that “protesting is as important as voting.”<sup>12</sup>

To be sure, previous studies have examined the relationship between church attendance and protest participation.<sup>13</sup> However, extant research suffers from three

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- <sup>6</sup> Rory McVeigh and David Sikkink, God, Politics, and Protest: Religious Beliefs and the Legitimation of Contentious Tactics, *Social Forces*, Vol. 79, No. 4, 2001, pp. 1425–1458, p. 1426 (“In spite of the prominent role religion has played in a wide variety of protest movements, in contemporary research on social movements and collective action, religion has taken a back seat.”).
- <sup>7</sup> *How Social Movements Matter*, Marco Giugni, Doug McAdam, and Charles Tilly (eds.), University of Minnesota Press, 1999; David S. Meyer, *The Politics of Protest*, Oxford University Press, 2014; Laurence Cox, *Why Social Movements Matter: An Introduction*, Rowman & Littlefield, 2018; David S. Meyer, *How Social Movements (Sometimes) Matter*, Wiley & Sons, 2021.
- <sup>8</sup> Toney E. Carey Jr., Regina P. Branton, and Valerie Martinez-Ebers, “The Influence of Social Protests on Issue Salience Among Latinos,” *Political Research Quarterly*, Vol. 67, No. 3, 2014, pp. 615–627; Regina Branton, Valerie Martinez-Ebers, Tony E. Carey Jr., and Tetsuya Matsubayashi, Social Protest and Policy Attitudes: The Case of the 2006 Immigrant Rallies, *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 59, No. 2, 2015, 390–402; Kenneth T. Andrews, Kraig Beyerlein, and Tuneka Tucker Farnum, The Legitimacy of Protest: Explaining White Southerners’ Attitudes Toward the Civil Rights Movement, *Social Forces*, Vol. 94, No. 3, 2016, pp. 1021–1044; Loren Collingwood, Nazita Lajevardi, and Kassra A. R. Oskooii, A Change of Heart? Why Individual-Level Public Opinion Shifted Against Trump’s Muslim Ban, *Political Behavior*, Vol. 40, No. 4, 2018, pp. 1035–1072; Soumyajit Mazumder, The Persistent Effect of U.S. Civil Rights Protests on Political Attitudes, *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 62, No. 4, 2018, pp. 922–935; Ruud Wouters, The Persuasive Power of Protest: How Protest Wins Public Support, *Social Forces*, Vol. 98, No. 1, 2019, pp. 403–426; Ryan D. Enos, Aaron R. Kaufman, and Melissa L. Sands, “Can Violent Protest Change Local Policy Support? Evidence from the Aftermath of the 1992 Los Angeles Riot,” *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 113, No. 4, 2019, pp. 1012–1028; Omar Wasow, Agenda Seeding: How 1960s Black Protests Moved Elites, Public Opinion and Voting, *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 114, No. 3, 2020, pp. 638–659; Alexander Hertel-Fernandez, Suresh Naidu, and Adam Reich, Schooled by Strikes? The Effects of Large-Scale Labor Unrest on Mass Attitudes toward the Labor Movement, *Perspectives on Politics*, Vol. 19, No. 1, 2021, pp. 73–91; Tyler T. Reny and Benjamin J. Newman, The Opinion-Mobilizing Effect of Social Protest against Police Violence: Evidence from the 2020 George Floyd Protests, *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 115, No. 4, 2021, pp. 1499–1507; Justin Curtis, The Effect of the 2020 Racial Justice Protests on Attitudes and Preferences in Rural and Urban America, *Social Science Quarterly*, Vol. 103, No. 1, 2022, pp. 90–107.
- <sup>9</sup> Andreas Madestam, Daniel Shoag, Stan Veuger, and David Yanagizawa-Drott, Do Political Protests Matter? Evidence from the Tea Party Movement, *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, Vol. 128, No. 4, 2013, pp. 1633–1685; Daniel Q. Gillion and Sarah A. Soule, The Impact of Protest on Elections in the United States, *Social Science Quarterly*, Vol. 99, No. 5, 2018, pp. 1649–1664; Daniel Q. Gillion, *The Loud Minority: Why Protests Matter in American Democracy*, Princeton University Press, 2020.
- <sup>10</sup> Brayden G. King, Keith G. Bentele, and Sarah A. Soule, Protest and Policymaking: Explaining Fluctuation in Congressional Attention to Rights Issues, 1960–1986, *Social Forces*, Vol. 86, No. 1, 2007, pp. 137–163; Daniel Q. Gillion, Protest and Congressional Behavior: Assessing Racial and Ethnic Minority Protests in the District, *Journal of Politics*, Vol. 74, No. 4, 2012, pp. 950–962; Justin Peter Steil and Ion Bogdan Vasi, The New Immigration Contestation: Social Movements and Local Immigration Policy Making in the United States, 2000–2011, *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 119, No. 4, 2014, pp. 1104–1155; Magali Fassiotto and Sarah A. Soule, Loud and Clear: The Effect of Protest Signals on Congressional Attention, *Mobilization: An International Quarterly*, Vol. 22, No. 1, 2017, pp. 17–38; Ruud Wouters and Stefaan Walgrave, Demonstrating Power: How Protest Persuades Political Representatives, *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 82, No. 2, 2017, pp. 361–383; Yuku Sato and Jake Haselswerdt, Protest and State Policy Agendas: Marches and Gun Policy After Parkland, *Policy Studies Journal*, Vol. 50, No. 4, 2022, pp. 877–895.
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- <sup>12</sup> Andre M. Perry and Carol Romer, “Protesting is as Important as Voting,” Brookings Institution, August 28, 2020. Available at: <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/the-avenue/2020/08/28/protesting-is-as-important-as-voting/> (accessed December 28, 2022).
- <sup>13</sup> Philip E. Secret, James B. Johnson, and Audrey W. Forrest, The Impact of Religiosity on Political Participation and Membership in Voluntary

limitations. First, previous studies employ sample sizes that, while sufficient for typical survey research, are ill-suited to study protest participation because protest is a relatively rare form of political participation.<sup>14</sup> Second, prior research focuses on either the general US adult population or racial minorities, and not specific religious traditions. And third, existing scholarship is largely outdated, as most of the underlying data were collected in the twentieth century. Accordingly, we know little about the relationship between church attendance and protest participation today both among the general population and specific religious traditions.

What, if anything, do we gain by understanding the relationship between church attendance and protest participation? Protesting, unlike many other forms of political participation, is a collective endeavor.<sup>15</sup> Indeed, few people protest without friends, family members, or others within their social networks.<sup>16</sup> Yet many studies on the predictors of protest participation primarily focus on individual-level characteristics.<sup>17</sup> Therefore, studying the connection between church attendance and protest participation shines light on the importance and power of social ties in encouraging political participation.

Drawing on three waves of the Cooperative Election Study (CES),<sup>18</sup> I answer two questions. First, is church attendance positively associated with protest participation among American adults? And second, among which religious traditions is church attendance positively associated with protest participation? I find that church attendance is a positive and significant predictor of protest participation among the general population, Catholics, Mainline Protestants, Black Protestants, and Jews. However, church attendance is only moderately associated with protest participa-

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Associations Among Black and White Americans, *Journal of Black Studies*, Vol. 21, No. 1, 1990, pp. 87–102; Christopher J. Anderson, Political Action and Social Integration, *American Politics Quarterly*, Vol. 24, No. 1, 1996, pp. 105–124; Rory McVeigh and Christian Smith, Who Protests in America: An Analysis of Three Political Alternatives—Inaction, Institutionalized Politics, or Protest, *Sociological Forum*, Vol. 14, No. 4, 1999, pp. 685–702; Khari R. Brown and Ronald E. Brown, Faith and Works: Church-Based Social Capital Resources and African American Political Activism, *Social Forces*, Vol. 82, No. 2, 2003, pp. 617–641; Scott T. Fitzgerald and Ryan E. Spohn, Pulpits and Platforms: The Role of the Church in Determining Protest among Black Americans, *Social Forces*, Vol. 84, No. 2, 2005, pp. 1015–1048; Lisa M. Martinez, The Individual and Contextual Determinants of Protest Among Latinos, *Mobilization: An International Quarterly*, Vol. 13, No. 2, 2008, pp. 189–204; Lisa M. Martinez, Yes We Can: Latino Participation in Unconventional Politics, *Social Forces*, Vol. 84, No. 1, 2005, pp. 135–155; Randall D. Swain, Shall We March On?: An Analysis of Non-Electoral Participation in the Black Community in the Post-Civil Rights Era, *Journal of Black Studies*, Vol. 40, No. 4, 2010, 566–582; Kraig Beyerlein, David Sikkink, and Edwin Hernandez, Citizenship, Religion, and Protest: Explaining Latinos' Differential Participation in the 2006 Immigrant Rights Marches, *Social Problems*, Vol. 66, No. 2, 2019, pp. 163–193.

<sup>14</sup> Gregory Lyon and Brian F. Schaffner, Labor Unions and Non-Member Political Protest Mobilization in the United States, *Political Research Quarterly*, Vol. 74, No. 4, 2021, pp. 998–1008.

<sup>15</sup> As Barnes and colleagues note, protests only occur “if special events external to the individual call them forth.” Samuel H. Barnes, Max Kaase, Klaus R. Allerbeck, Barbara G. Farah, Felix Heunks, Ronald Inglehart, M. Kent Jennings, Hans D. Klingemann, Alan Marsh, and Leopold Rosenmayr, *Political Action: Mass Participation in Five Western Democracies*, Sage Publications, 1979, p. 59. See also: Bert Klandermans and Dirk Oegema, Potentials, Networks, Motivations, and Barriers: Steps Towards Participation in Social Movement, *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 52, No. 4, 1987, pp. 519–531.

<sup>16</sup> Mattias Wahlström and Magnus Wennerhag, Alone in the Crowd: Lone Protesters in Western European Demonstrations, *International Sociology*, Vol. 29, No. 6, 2014, pp. 565–583.

<sup>17</sup> Alan Schussman and Sarah A. Soule, Process and Protest: Accounting for Individual Protest Participation, *Social Forces*, Vol. 84, No. 2, 2005, pp. 1083–1108. See also: Gregory Lyon and Brian F. Schaffner, Labor Unions and Non-Member Political Protest Mobilization in the United States, *Political Research Quarterly*, Vol. 74, No. 4, 2021, pp. 998–1008. That most research on the predictors of protest participation focuses on individual-level characteristics is consistent with most research on the predictors of political participation more broadly. See: David E. Campbell, Social Networks and Political Participation, *Annual Review of Political Science*, Vol. 16, No. 1, 2013, pp. 33–48.

<sup>18</sup> The CES was previously the CCES (Cooperative Congressional Election Study) but was renamed in 2020.

tion for Evangelicals. In addition, the relationship between church attendance and protest participation is not linear, as those who attend church weekly are no more likely – and in some cases less likely – to protest compared to those who attend church once or twice a month.

## Literature Review and Theoretical Expectations

How might church attendance be associated with protest participation? In addition to the voluminous body of literature church attendance and political and civic engagement, several strands of social science research suggest that church attendance will be positively associated with protest participation.

First, church attendance can increase protest participation via clergy encouragement. Clergy, who are well-respected religious and civic leaders, can influence their congregants via agenda-setting and speaking out on select issues.<sup>19</sup> Clergy often address social and political issues,<sup>20</sup> including issues that draw protests such as environmental issues, civil rights, abortion, and LGBT issues.<sup>21</sup> Research suggests that these political sermons may motivate their congregants, as congregants who report their clergy deliver political sermons are more politically active than congregants whose clergy do not deliver political sermons.<sup>22</sup>

Second, churches are fertile ground for congregants to be recruited to protest. Protests, similar to other social movements, often rely on participants' social networks to recruit new participants.<sup>23</sup> Church networks are not exempt from political recruitment, as there is ample research documenting the prevalence of church-based political recruitment.<sup>24</sup> Notably, congregants are significantly more likely to

<sup>19</sup> Kathleen Murphy Beatty and Oliver Walter, A Group Theory of Religion and Politics: The Clergy as Group Leaders, *Western Political Quarterly*, Vol. 42, No. 1, 1989, pp. 129-146; James L. Guth, John C. Green, Corwin E. Smidt, Lyman A. Kellstedt, and Margaret M. Poloma, *The Bully Pulpit: The Politics of Protestant Clergy*, University of Kansas Press, 1997; Laura R. Olson, *Filled with Spirit and Power: Protestant Clergy in Politics*, SUNY Press, 2000; Paul A. Djupe and Christopher P. Gilbert, *The Prophetic Pulpit: Clergy, Churches, and Communities in American Politics*, Rowman & Littlefield, 2003; Gregory A. Smith, The Influence of Priests on the Political Attitudes of Roman Catholics, *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, Vol. 44, No. 3, 2005, pp. 291-306; Gregory A. Smith, *Politics in the Parish: The Political Influence of Catholic Priests*, Georgetown University Press, 2008; Paul A. Djupe and Christopher P. Gilbert, *The Political Influence of Churches*, Cambridge University Press, 2008; Richard R. Hofstetter, John W. Ayers, and Robert Perry, The Bishops and Their Flock: John Kerry and the Case of Catholic Voters in 2004, *Politics and Religion*, Vol. 1, No. 3, 2008, pp. 435-455; Paul A. Djupe and Brian R. Calfano, Justification Not by Faith Alone: Clergy Generating Trust and Certainty by Revealing Thought, *Politics and Religion*, Vol. 2, No. 1, 2009, pp. 1-30; Corwin E. Smidt, *Pastors and Public Life: The Changing Face of American Protestant Clergy*, Oxford University Press, 2016.

<sup>20</sup> Sydney Verba, Kay Lehman Schlozman, and Henry E. Brady, *Voice and Equality: Civic Voluntarism in American Politics*, Harvard University Press, 1995; Mark D. Brewer, Rogan Kersh, and R. Eric Peterson, Assessing Conventional Wisdom About Religion and Politics: A Preliminary View from the Pews, *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, Vol. 42, No. 1, 2003, pp. 125-136; Constantine Boussalis, Travis G. Coan, and Mirya R. Holman, Political Speech in Religious Sermons, *Politics and Religion*, Vol. 14, No. 2, 2021, pp. 241-268.

<sup>21</sup> Paul A. Djupe and Christopher P. Gilbert, The Political Voice of Clergy, *Journal of Politics*, Vol. 64, No. 2, 2002; Christopher P. Scheitle and Nicole Cornell, Hearing Clergy Speak About Social and Political Issues: Examining the Effects of Religious Tradition and Personal Interest, *Social Science Quarterly*, Vol. 96, No. 1, 2015, pp. 148-160; Constantine Boussalis, Travis G. Coan, and Mirya R. Holman, Political Speech in Religious Sermons, *Politics and Religion*, Vol. 14, No. 2, 2021, pp. 241-268.

<sup>22</sup> Brian D. McKenzie, Religious Social Networks, Indirect Mobilization, and African-American Political Participation, *Political Research Quarterly*, Vol. 57, No. 4, 2004, pp. 621-632; Harwood K. McClerking and Eric L. McDaniel, Belonging and Doing: Political Churches and Black Political Participation, *Political Psychology*, Vol. 26, No. 5, 2005, pp. 721-733.

<sup>23</sup> Doug McAdam and Ronnelle Paulsen, Specifying the Relationship Between Social Ties and Activism, *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 99, No. 3, 1993, pp. 640-647; Chaeyoon Lim, Social Networks and Political Participation: How Do Networks Matter?, *Social Forces*, Vol. 87, No. 2, 2008, pp. 961-982.

<sup>24</sup> Paul A. Djupe and J. Tobin Grant, Religious Institutions and Political Participation in America, *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, Vol. 40, No. 2, 2001, pp. 303-314; Michael A. Jones-Correa and David L. Leal, Political Participation: Does Religion Matter?, *Political Research Quarterly*, Vol. 54, No. 4, 2001, pp. 751-770.



be asked to take political action via their church-based networks than they are in other settings such as the workplace.<sup>25</sup> Churches are especially fertile ground for protest recruitment if the protest is connected to one's religious identity or religious issues, as collective identity-based appeals can increase the likelihood of participation.<sup>26,27</sup>

Third, church attendance may be positively associated with protest participation because of the civic skills gained from frequent church attendance. Leading a protest is an activity that requires civic skills to organize.<sup>28</sup> Church attendance and other church-related activities lead to the development of these skills,<sup>29</sup> especially if one serves in a leadership position.<sup>30</sup> In addition, church activities provide attendees with opportunities to hone and practice applying civic skills they've obtained elsewhere.<sup>31</sup>

Other strands of research point in a different direction. Frequent exposure to religious messaging prioritizing individual salvation over caring for and participating in the wider community may encourage separation from the outside world and discourage civic engagement.<sup>32</sup> Frequent religious attendance can expose individuals to conflicting ideas and create uncertainty, which decreases participation, and frequent attendance may satisfy one's desire for group-based activities, thus dampening the appeal of partaking in a protest.<sup>33</sup> Lastly, an economy of time perspective suggests that the more one attends religious services, the less likely they are to protest given that they have less time available.<sup>34</sup>

Might church attendance increase protest participation in some religious traditions but not others? Existing research certainly suggests so. For both Catholics

<sup>25</sup> Sydney Verba, Kay Lehman Schlozman, and Henry E. Brady, *Voice and Equality: Civic Voluntarism in American Politics*, Harvard University Press, 1995.

<sup>26</sup> Johnny E. Williams, Linking Beliefs to Collective Action: Politicized Religious Beliefs and the Civil Rights Movement, *Sociological Forum*, Vol. 17, No. 2, 2002, pp. 203–222.

<sup>27</sup> In addition, churches organize and sponsor protests. See: Kraig Beyerlein and Mark Chaves, The Political Activities of Religious Congregations in the United States, *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, Vol. 42, No. 2, 2003, pp. 229–246; Kraig Beyerlein and Mark Chaves, The Political Mobilization of America's Congregations, *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, Vol. 59, No. 4, 2020, pp. 663–674.

<sup>28</sup> Sydney Verba, Kay Lehman Schlozman, and Henry E. Brady, *Voice and Equality: Civic Voluntarism in American Politics*, Harvard University Press, 1995.

<sup>29</sup> Henry E. Brady, Sidney Verba, and Kay Lehman Schlozman, Beyond SES: A Resource Model of Political Participation, *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 89, No. 2, 1995, pp. 271–294; Sydney Verba, Kay Lehman Schlozman, and Henry E. Brady, *Voice and Equality: Civic Voluntarism in American Politics*, Harvard University Press, 1995; Paul A. Djupe and Christopher P. Gilbert, The Resourceful Believer: Generating Civic Skills in Church, *Journal of Politics*, Vol. 68, No. 1, 2006, pp. 116–127; Robert D. Putnam and David E. Campbell, *American Grace: How Religion Divides and Unites Us*, Simon & Schuster, 2010; Andre P. Audette, Mark Brockway, and Rodrigo Castro Cornejo, Religious Engagement, Civic Skills, and Political Participation in Latin America, *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, Vol. 59, No. 1, 2020, pp. 101–118.

<sup>30</sup> Philip Schwadel, Testing the Promise of the Churches: Income Inequality in the Opportunity to Learn Civic Skills in Christian Congregations, *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, Vol. 41, No. 3, 2002, pp. 565–575.

<sup>31</sup> Paul A. Djupe and Christopher P. Gilbert, The Resourceful Believer: Generating Civic Skills in Church, *Journal of Politics*, Vol. 68, No. 1, 2006, pp. 116–127.

<sup>32</sup> Laurence R. Iannaccone, Why Strict Churches Are Strong, *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 99, No. 5, 1994, pp. 1180–1211; Robyn Driskell, Elizabeth Embry, and Larry Lyon, Faith and Politics: The Influence of Religious Beliefs on Political Participation, *Social Science Quarterly*, Vol. 89, No. 2, 2008, pp. 294–314.

<sup>33</sup> Diana C. Mutz, The Consequences of Cross-Cutting Networks for Political Participation, *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 46, No. 4, 2002, pp. 838–855; Matthew D. Atkinson and Anthony Fowler, Social Capital and Voter Turnout: Evidence from Saint's Day Fiestas in Mexico, *British Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 44, No. 1, 2014, pp. 41–59.

<sup>34</sup> Lauren E. Smith and Lee Demetrius Walker, Belonging, Believing, and Group Behavior: Religiosity and Voting in American Presidential Elections, *Political Research Quarterly*, Vol. 66, No. 2, 2013, pp. 399–413.

and Mainline Protestants, broader community engagement is seen as an important element of their religious practices.<sup>35</sup> Indeed, church attendance is associated with higher levels of volunteering for both denominations.<sup>36</sup> The importance of broader civic engagement for these denominations is evident at the institutional level as well; Mainline Protestant and Catholic churches generally have stronger ties to outside organizations compared to other religious traditions.<sup>37</sup> Additionally, Catholic clergy are more likely than clergy from other faiths and denominations to report that their church had a group demonstrate, march, or protest.<sup>38</sup>

For Evangelical Christians and Black Protestants, existing research provides conflicting expectations. Evangelicals spend a significant amount of time on church activities - more than double the amount of time spent by mainline Protestants and nearly triple that of Catholics - leaving them little time left for other activities.<sup>39</sup> Moreover, Evangelical churches emphasize personal salvation and focus on the individual over collective action and broader community engagement, thus rendering religious attendance a tranquilizer rather than a mobilizer.<sup>40</sup> Accordingly, church attendance is negatively associated with political participation for Evangelicals.<sup>41</sup> However, the especially tight social networks formed through Evangelical church attendance enables rapid political mobilization.<sup>42</sup> Similarly, the high levels of church attendance but relatively lower levels of political participation among Black Protestants is viewed as a consequence of limited time availability.<sup>43</sup> Yet Black Protestant churches are often the hub of African American civil society, suggesting that congregants might learn about protest opportunities and be recruited to protest in these churches.<sup>44</sup>

While it is well-documented that American Jews are generally more politically

<sup>35</sup> Kraig Beyerlein and John R. Hipp, Social Capital, Too Much of a Good Thing? American Religious Traditions and Community Crime, *Social Forces*, Vol. 84, No. 2, 2005, pp. 995-1013; Kraig Beyerlein and John R. Hipp, From Pews to Participation: The Effect of Congregation Activity and Context on Bridging Civic Engagement, *Social Problems*, Vol. 53, No. 1, 2006, pp. 97-117.

<sup>36</sup> John Wilson and Thomas Janoski, The Contribution of Religion to Volunteer Work, *Sociology of Religion*, Vol. 56, No. 2, 1995, pp. 137-152.

<sup>37</sup> Nancy T. Ammerman, "Connecting Mainline Protestant Churches with Public Life," in: *The Quiet Hand of God*, Robert Wuthnow and John H. Evans (eds.), University of California Press, 2002, pp. 129-158.

<sup>38</sup> Kraig Beyerlein and Mark Chaves, The Political Activities of Religious Congregations in the United States, *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, Vol. 42, No. 2, 2003, pp. 229-246; Kraig Beyerlein and Mark Chaves, The Political Mobilization of America's Congregations, *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, Vol. 59, No. 4, 2020, pp. 663-674.

<sup>39</sup> David E. Campbell, Acts of Faith: Churches and Political Engagement, *Political Behavior*, Vol. 26, No. 2, 2004, pp. 155-180.

<sup>40</sup> Brian Steensland, Jerry Z. Park, Nark D. Regnerus, Lynn D. Robinson, W. Bradford Wilcox, and Robert D. Woodberry, The Measure of American Religion: Toward Improving the State of the Art, *Social Forces*, Vol. 79, No. 1, 2000, pp. 291-318; Anna Greenberg, The Church and the Revitalization of Politics and Community, *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 115, No. 3, 2000, pp. 377-394; Robyn Driskell, Elizabeth Embry, and Larry Lyon, Faith and Politics: The Influence of Religious Beliefs on Political Participation, *Social Science Quarterly*, Vol. 89, No. 2, 2008, pp. 294-314.

<sup>41</sup> David E. Campbell, Acts of Faith: Churches and Political Engagement, *Political Behavior*, Vol. 26, No. 2, 2004, pp. 155-180. See also: Jerry Z. Park and Christian Smith, "To Whom Much Has Been Given...": Religious Capital and Community Voluntarism Among Churchgoing Protestants, *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, Vol. 39, No. 3, 2000, pp. 272-286.

<sup>42</sup> David E. Campbell, Acts of Faith: Churches and Political Engagement, *Political Behavior*, Vol. 26, No. 2, 2004, pp. 155-180.

<sup>43</sup> Robyn Driskell, Elizabeth Embry, and Larry Lyon, Faith and Politics: The Influence of Religious Beliefs on Political Participation, *Social Science Quarterly*, Vol. 89, No. 2, 2008, pp. 294-314; Lauren E. Smith and Lee Demetrius Walker, Belonging, Believing, and Group Behavior: Religiosity and Voting in American Presidential Elections, *Political Research Quarterly*, Vol. 66, No. 2 2013, pp. 399-413.

<sup>44</sup> C. Eric Lincoln and Lawrence H. Mamiya, *The Black Church in the African American Experience*, Duke University Press, 1990; Mary Pattillo-McCoy, Church Culture as a Strategy of Action in the Black Community, *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 63, No. 6, 1998, pp. 767-784; Allison Calhoun-Brown, Upon This Rock: The Black Church, Nonviolence, and the Civil Rights Movement, *PS: Political Science and Politics*, Vol. 33, No. 2, 2000, pp. 168-174.

active that non-Jews, we know surprisingly little about the antecedents of their political participation.<sup>45</sup> The small body on the correlates of Jewish American political participation, however, indicates that religious attendance will be linked to protest participation; American Jews located in Jewish social contexts and are a part of Jewish community networks to engage in a range of political behaviors than Jews who are not,<sup>46</sup> and synagogues are more likely than other religious institutions to engage in non-electoral political activities, including protesting.<sup>47</sup>

## Data and Methods

I analyze data from the CES, an online survey administered before and after elections in even years and in November of odd years. The survey is run by YouGov America using a matched random sample design, with post-stratification weights applied to a range of demographic variables. The CES is a widely used survey that produces samples similar to other survey modes.<sup>48</sup> The CES began asking respondents about their protest participation in 2017. I merge the waves from 2017, 2018, and 2019, which results in a dataset of more than 88,000 respondents<sup>49</sup> and includes approximately 8,900 White Catholics, 5,100 non-White Catholics,<sup>50</sup> 9,900 Mainline Protestants, 24,300 Evangelicals, 5,600 Black Protestants, and 1,900 Jews.<sup>51</sup> While I could analyze data from the 2020 and 2021 waves of the CES, I elect not to because COVID-19 forced most churches to halt in-person services. Accordingly, respondents may answer the CES question regarding religious service attendance by thinking about how often they normally attend religious services, how often they normal-

<sup>45</sup> Tom W. Smith, *Jewish Distinctiveness in America: A Statistical Portrait*, American Jewish Committee, 2005; Samuel I. Abrams, "American Jews are More Politically Engaged than Ever," *Forward*, October 5, 2020. Available at: <https://forward.com/opinion/455824/american-jews-are-more-politically-engaged-than-ever/> (accessed June 28, 2023). However, others contend that Jews are no more politically active than non-Jews of similar socioeconomic status. Kenneth D. Wald, "Politically Hyperactive? The Civic Participation of American Jews," *Politics, Groups, and Identities*, Vol. 4, No. 4, 2016, pp. 545–560.

<sup>46</sup> Laurence Kotler-Berkowitz, "Ethnicity and Political Behavior Among American Jews: Findings from the National Jewish Population Survey 2000–01," *Contemporary Jewry*, Vol. 25, No. 1, 2005, pp. 132–157.

<sup>47</sup> Laurence Kotler-Berkowitz, "Political Activity in American Synagogues," *Interdisciplinary Journal of Research on Religion*, Vol. 17, No. 1, 2021, pp. 1–28.

<sup>48</sup> Stephen Ansolabehere and Brian F. Schaffner, "Does Survey Mode Still Matter? Findings from a 2010 Multi-Mode Comparison," *Political Analysis*, Vol. 22, No. 3, 2014, pp. 285–303. See also: Stephen Ansolabehere and Douglas Rivers, "Cooperative Survey Research," *Annual Review of Political Science*, Vol. 16, 2013, pp. 307–329.

<sup>49</sup> While the three waves of the CES surveyed a total of 96,000 respondents, some respondents in the 2018 wave were not asked whether they protested.

<sup>50</sup> I distinguish between White and non-White Catholics because of differences between White and minority Catholic churches. See: James C. Cavendish, "Church-Based Community Activism: A Comparison of Black and White Catholic Congregations," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, Vol. 39, No. 3, 2000, pp. 371–384; Ashley Palmer-Boyes, "The Latino Catholic Parish as a Specialist Organization: Distinguishing Characteristics," *Review of Religious Research*, Vol. 51, No. 3, 2010, pp. 302–323.

<sup>51</sup> Those who identify as Jewish are coded as such. White respondents who identify as Catholic are coded as White Catholics, while non-White respondents who identify as Catholic are coded as non-White Catholics. Black respondents who identify as Protestant are coded as Black Protestant. Non-Black respondents who identify as born-again or Evangelical Christians are coded as Evangelical Christians. Those who identify as Protestants and are not otherwise coded as Black Protestant or Evangelical Christians are coded as Mainline Protestants. This coding scheme is based on the Pew Research Center's self-identification approach. For more on this approach, for classifying Evangelicals, see: Ryan P. Burge and Andrew R. Lewis, "Measuring Evangelicals: Practical Considerations for Social Scientists," *Politics and Religion*, Vol. 11, No. 4, 2018, pp. 745–759; Ryan P. Burge and Andrew R. Lewis, "Measuring Evangelicals: Practical Considerations for Social Scientists—CORRIGENDUM," *Politics and Religion*, Vol. 11, No. 4, 2018, pp. 920–925; Gregory A. Smith, Elizabeth Podrebarac Sciupac, Claire Gecewicz, and Conrad Hackett, "Comparing the RELTRAD and Born-Again/Evangelical Self-Identification Approaches to Measuring American Protestantism," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, Vol. 57, No. 4, 2018, pp. 830–847.

ly attended in-person religious services in 2020, or how often they attended both in-person and virtual religious services.

The dependent variable, protest participation is measured with a question that asks respondents, “during the past year, did you attend a political protest, march, or demonstration?” Respondents who said they attended a protest, march, or demonstration are coded as 1 and all other respondents as 0. The focal independent variable, church attendance, is measured by asking respondents, “aside from weddings and funerals, how often do you attend religious services?” The answer choices are never, seldom, a few times a year, once or twice a month, once a week, and more than once a week. I operationalize church attendance as a series of dichotomous variables so I can test for a non-linear relationship between church attendance and protest participation.

To isolate the relationship between church attendance and protest participation, I control for other characteristics linked to protest participation. College educated adults and men are more likely to protest than those without a college degree and women.<sup>52</sup> Respondents who identified themselves as male are assigned a gender value of 1, and female respondents are assigned a value of 0. Likewise, respondents who have a four-year college degree are assigned a college value of 1, and all other respondents are coded as 0. Income is also linked to higher levels of protest participation.<sup>53</sup> I create a series of dummy variables for five income brackets: under \$50,000, \$50,000 to \$99,999, \$100,000 to \$149,999, \$150,000+, and prefer not to say.

One’s age, marital status, and being a parent influences the likelihood of protest participation.<sup>54</sup> Age is calculated by subtracting a respondent’s birth year from the year the survey was fielded. I construct a “parent variable,” with respondents who are the parent or guardian of a child under the age of 18 coded as 1 and all other respondents coded as 0. Similarly, I create a “married variable,” coding respondents who are currently married or in a civic/domestic partnership as 1 and all others as 0. A respondent’s race and ethnicity also influence the likelihood they protest. I code a series of dummy variables are non-Hispanic White, Black, and Hispanic.<sup>55</sup> All other respondents are collapsed into an “other” racial category.

In addition to these biographical control variables, I also control for sociopolitical

<sup>52</sup> Ronelle Paulsen, Education, Social Class, and Participation in Collective Action, *Sociology of Education*, Vol. 64, No. 2, 1991, pp. 91-110; Doug McAdam, Gender as a Mediator of the Activist Experience: The Case of Freedom Summer, *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 97, No. 5, 1992, pp. 1211-1240; Michelle Petrie, A Research Note on the Determinants of Protest Participation: Examining Socialization and Biographical Availability, *Sociological Spectrum*, Vol. 24, No. 5, 2004, pp. 553-574; Alan Schussman and Sarah A. Soule, Process and Protest: Accounting for Individual Protest Participation, *Social Forces*, Vol. 84, No. 2, 2005, pp. 1083-1108; Russell Dalton, Alix Van Sickle, and Steven Weldon, The Individual-Institutional Nexus of Protest Behaviour, *British Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 40, No. 1, 2010, pp. 51-73.

<sup>53</sup> Christopher J. Anderson, Political Action and Social Integration, *American Politics Quarterly*, Vol. 24, No. 1, 1996, pp. 105-124.

<sup>54</sup> Alan Schussman and Sarah A. Soule, Process and Protest: Accounting for Individual Protest Participation, *Social Forces*, Vol. 84, No. 2, 2005, pp. 1083-1108; Russell J. Dalton, Citizenship Norms and the Expansion of Political Participation, *Political Studies*, Vol. 56, No. 1, 2008, pp. 76-98; Eric Swank and Breanne Fahs, Explaining the Sexuality Gap in Protest Participation, *Journal of Homosexuality*, Vol. 66, No. 3, 2019, pp. 324-348.

<sup>55</sup> Hispanic includes those who identify their race as Hispanic and those who do not racially identify as Hispanic but, in a separate question, identified themselves as Hispanic.

characteristics that can shape a respondent's likelihood to engage in protest. Those who are liberal and identify as Democrats are more likely to protest than those who are not.<sup>56</sup> Political ideology is measured on a five-point scale, ranging from 1 (very conservative) to 5 (very liberal). I construct a Democrat [Republican] variable, coding respondents who identify as strong, not very strong, or weak Democrats [Republicans] as 1 and all other respondents as 0. Respondents who are neither Democrats nor Republicans are coded as "Independent/Other." Union membership and living with someone who is a member of a union increase protest participation.<sup>57</sup> Respondents who are in a labor union or live with someone who is are assigned a "union ties" value of 1 and all other respondents are assigned a 0.

Lastly, to isolate the relationship between church attendance and protest participation, rather than relationship between overall religiosity and protest participation, I control for other components of a respondent's religious practice and beliefs. The importance of religion in a respondent's life is measured on a 4-point scale, which has a minimum of 1 (not at all important) and a maximum of 4 (very important). How much a respondent prays outside attending religious services ranges from 1 (never) to 7 (several times a day). I summarize how each variable is coded in Appendix A and present summary statistics in Appendix B.

## Results

The lefthand column of Table 1 presents the result of a logit regression model predicting protest participation among the general population. All else being equal, age, being a parent, being married, and being non-White are negatively associated with protest participation, whereas being male, having a college degree having a higher income, liberal, being a Democrat, and having union ties are positively associated with protest participation. The directions of these control variables are consistent with the literature.

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<sup>56</sup> Alan Schussman and Sarah A. Soule, Process and Protest: Accounting for Individual Protest Participation, *Social Forces*, Vol. 84, No. 2, 2005, pp. 1083–1108; Kraig Beyerlein, David Sikkink, and Edwin Hernandez, Citizenship, Religion, and Protest: Explaining Latinos' Differential Participation in the 2006 Immigrant Rights Marches, *Social Problems*, Vol. 66, No. 2, 2019, pp. 163–193.

<sup>57</sup> Gregory Lyon and Brian F. Schaffner, Labor Unions and Non-Member Political Protest Mobilization in the United States, *Political Research Quarterly*, Vol. 74, No. 4, 2021, pp. 998–1008.

**Table 1. Determinants of Protest Among Full Sample and Religious Traditions**

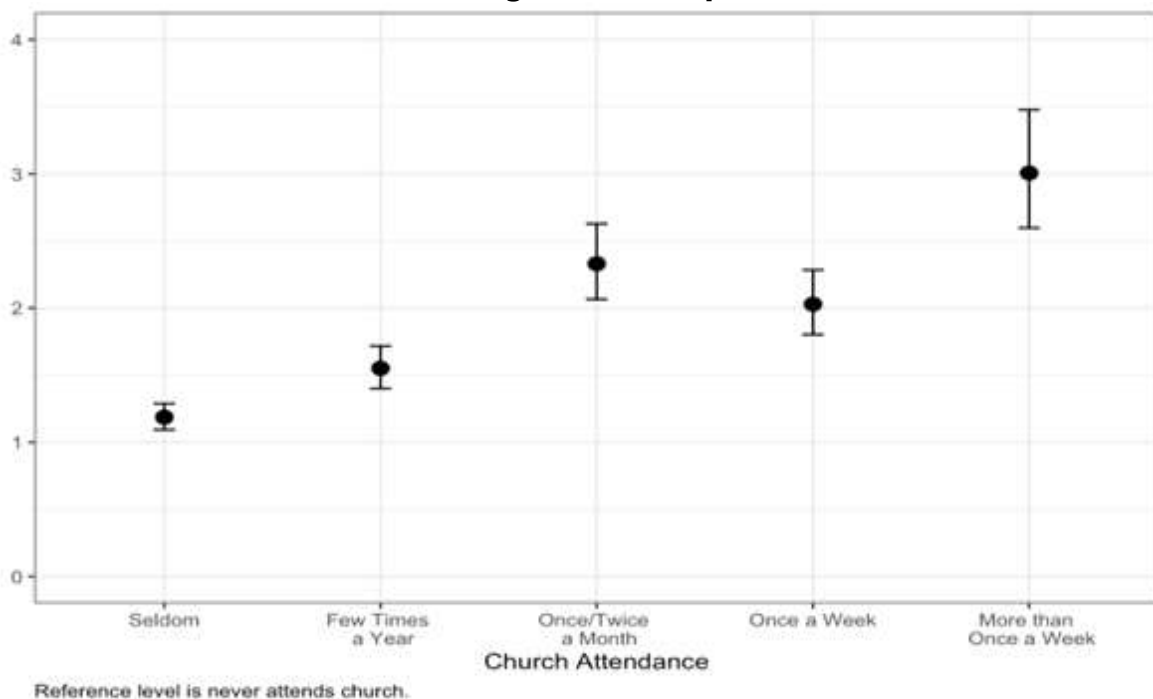
	<i>Dependent variable: Protest Participation</i>						
	Full Sample	White Catholics	Non-White Catholics	Mainline Protestants	Evangelicals	Black Protestants	Jews
Church: Seldom	0.172*** (0.042)	0.416** (0.177)	0.226 (0.231)	0.365** (0.152)	-0.161 (0.180)	1.268*** (0.448)	0.253 (0.215)
Church: Few Times Per Year	0.439*** (0.052)	0.711*** (0.188)	0.488** (0.236)	0.665*** (0.161)	0.428** (0.169)	1.054** (0.483)	0.729*** (0.232)
Church: Once/Twice Per Month	0.846*** (0.061)	1.082*** (0.218)	0.914*** (0.261)	1.103*** (0.176)	0.275 (0.178)	2.117*** (0.454)	0.899*** (0.271)
Church: Weekly	0.707*** (0.060)	1.232*** (0.210)	0.827*** (0.257)	1.005*** (0.178)	0.221 (0.166)	1.922*** (0.457)	0.916*** (0.333)
Church: More Than Weekly	1.101*** (0.074)	1.725*** (0.275)	2.071*** (0.332)	1.312*** (0.263)	0.464*** (0.175)	2.368*** (0.472)	1.229*** (0.442)
Age	-0.007*** (0.001)	-0.014*** (0.003)	-0.023*** (0.004)	-0.009*** (0.003)	-0.019*** (0.002)	-0.020*** (0.004)	-0.012*** (0.004)
Male	0.153*** (0.028)	0.105 (0.096)	0.249** (0.124)	0.254*** (0.084)	0.722*** (0.073)	0.015 (0.135)	0.090 (0.142)
Parent	-0.167*** (0.036)	-0.571*** (0.137)	0.099 (0.144)	-0.438*** (0.118)	0.248*** (0.083)	-0.241 (0.160)	-0.442** (0.205)
Married	-0.167*** (0.032)	-0.170 (0.110)	-0.353** (0.143)	0.115 (0.096)	-0.420*** (0.084)	-0.456*** (0.153)	-0.009 (0.167)
College	0.619*** (0.030)	0.390*** (0.098)	0.400*** (0.139)	0.605*** (0.091)	0.615*** (0.078)	0.314** (0.147)	0.663*** (0.168)
Black	-0.619*** (0.051)						-0.269 (0.530)
Hispanic	-0.021 (0.043)		0.367* (0.190)	0.213 (0.171)	0.200** (0.092)		0.186 (0.304)
Race: Other	-0.219*** (0.054)		0.058 (0.238)	-0.354* (0.196)	-0.054 (0.136)		0.433 (0.305)
Income: 50k to 100k	0.318*** (0.035)	0.210 (0.130)	0.620*** (0.145)	0.426*** (0.111)	0.559*** (0.088)	0.614*** (0.152)	-0.036 (0.195)
Income: 100k to 150k	0.457*** (0.047)	0.332** (0.160)	0.361* (0.218)	0.427*** (0.143)	0.670*** (0.122)	0.767*** (0.220)	0.145 (0.235)
Income: 150k+	0.649*** (0.054)	0.862*** (0.170)	1.123*** (0.232)	0.845*** (0.156)	0.747*** (0.152)	0.627** (0.318)	0.288 (0.241)
Income: Other	0.236*** (0.051)	0.271 (0.166)	-0.265 (0.307)	0.488*** (0.148)	0.172 (0.141)	-0.592* (0.349)	-0.167 (0.236)
Ideology	0.543*** (0.017)	0.487*** (0.056)	0.353*** (0.070)	0.546*** (0.052)	0.225*** (0.038)	0.373*** (0.068)	0.783*** (0.092)
Democrat	0.781*** (0.051)	0.973*** (0.206)	0.739*** (0.214)	1.203*** (0.173)	1.030*** (0.129)	0.146 (0.253)	0.670* (0.356)
Republican	0.089 (0.060)	0.511** (0.212)	0.579** (0.250)	0.119 (0.194)	0.138 (0.130)	0.911*** (0.305)	0.391 (0.396)
Union Ties	0.410*** (0.036)	0.302*** (0.116)	0.596*** (0.142)	0.324*** (0.112)	0.614*** (0.083)	0.501*** (0.162)	0.171 (0.192)
Prayer Frequency	-0.015 (0.010)	0.006 (0.032)	0.158*** (0.042)	0.039 (0.026)	0.057* (0.029)	-0.038 (0.051)	-0.039 (0.045)
Religious Importance	-0.201*** (0.022)	-0.209*** (0.078)	-0.343*** (0.094)	-0.146** (0.064)	-0.112* (0.066)	-0.401*** (0.120)	-0.043 (0.100)
Constant	-4.701*** (0.101)	-4.832*** (0.383)	-4.440*** (0.513)	-5.605*** (0.342)	-4.751*** (0.341)	-4.002*** (0.641)	-5.264*** (0.618)
Observations	80,362	9,819	4,442	10,779	19,341	4,048	2,122
Log Likelihood	-19,415.540	-1,838.900	-995.196	-2,177.220	-3,370.535	-921.021	-741.997
Akaike Inf. Crit.	38,883.080	3,723.800	2,040.393	4,404.439	6,791.071	1,888.041	1,535.994

Notes: \*p<0.1; \*\*p<0.05; \*\*\*p<0.01. Logit regression. Standard errors are in parentheses. Reference levels for church attendance, income, and party are never, under \$50K, and independent. The reference level for race is White except for non-White Catholics, for whom it is Black. Year fixed effects included but not shown.



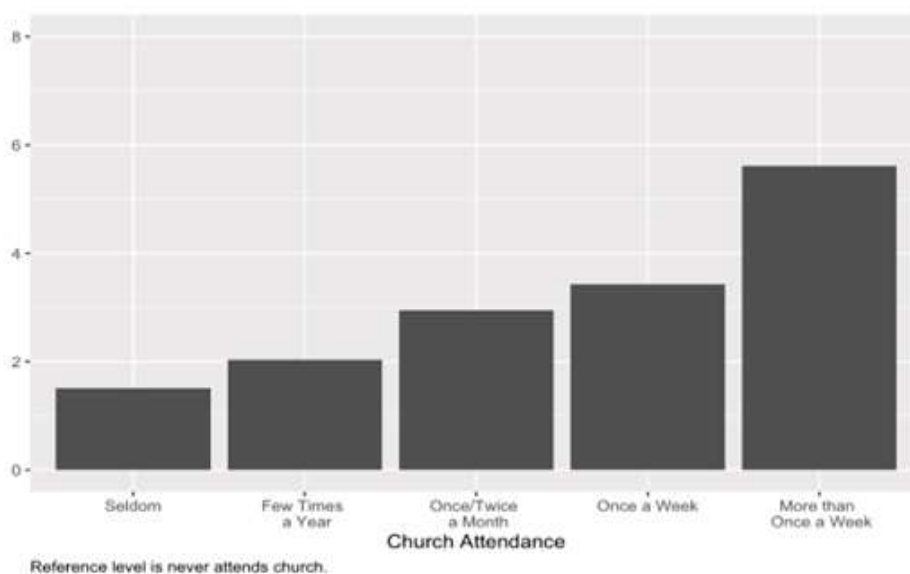
To interpret the coefficients for the focal independent variable, church attendance, I exponentiate them and plot their odds ratios and 95% confidence intervals in Figure 1. Overall, an increase in church attendance corresponds to a higher odds ratio for protest participation among the general population. However, the relationship between church attendance and protest participation is not linear: while weekly church attendance increases the probability of protesting by a factor greater than that for attending church a few times a year, it is less than the factor for attending church once or twice a month.

**Figure 1. Odds Ratios of Protesting by Level of Church Attendance Among the Full Sample**

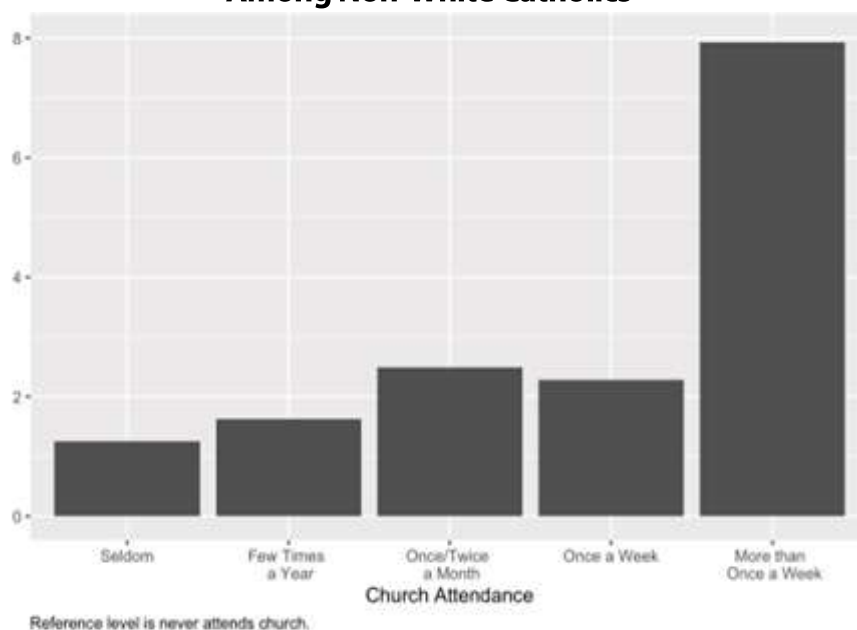


As shown in Figure 2, the relationship between church attendance and protest participation among White Catholics is quite linear; an increase in church attendance corresponds to an increase in the probability in protesting. On average, a one-unit increase in church attendance corresponds to a near-doubling of the probability of protesting relative to White Catholics who never attend church. As with White Catholics, the relationship between church attendance and protest participation among non-White Catholics is positive and significant. However, it is not linear. As shown in Figure 3, relative to those who never attend church, non-White Catholics who attend church once a week are no more likely to protest than those who attend once or twice a month.

**Figure 2. Odds Ratios of Protesting by Level of Church Attendance Among White Catholics**

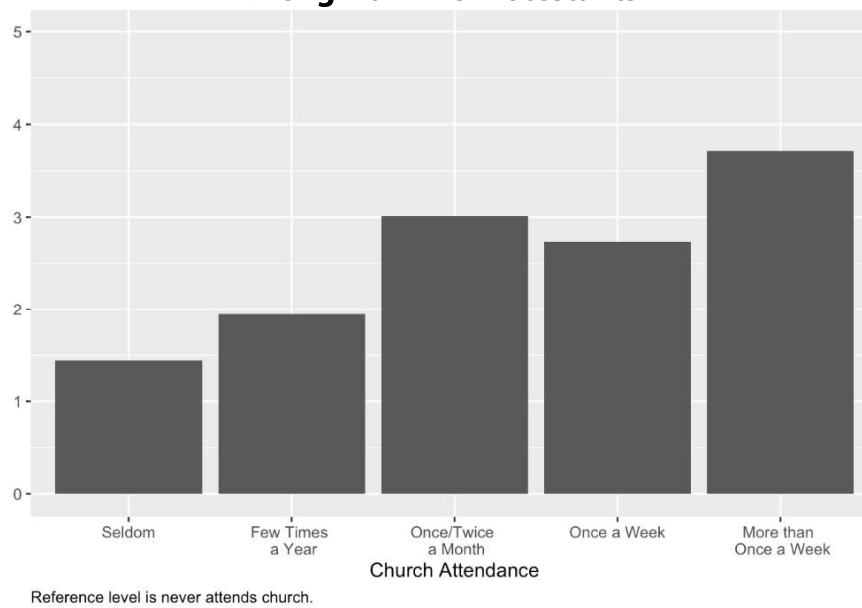


**Figure 3. Odds Ratios of Protesting by Level of Church Attendance Among Non-White Catholics**

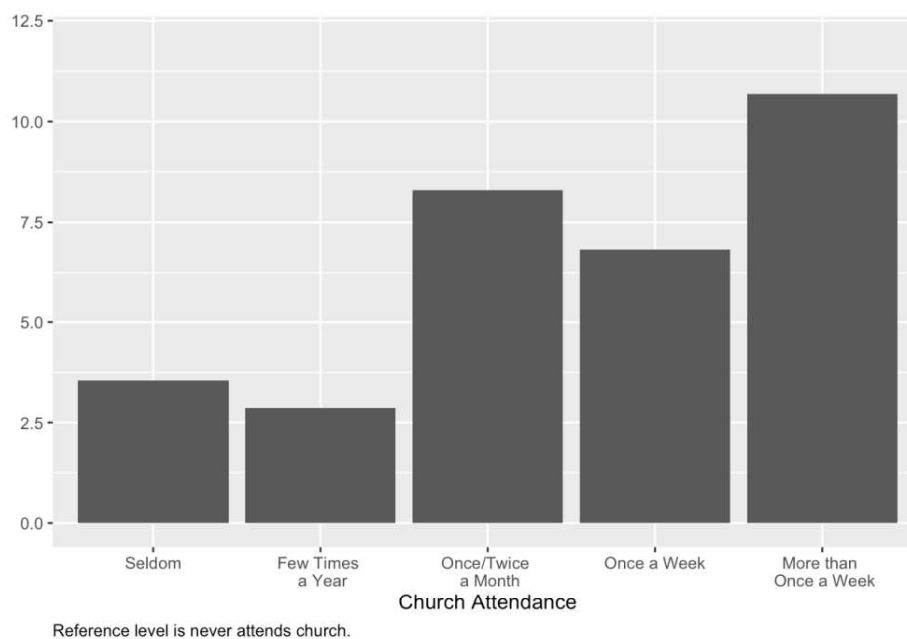


A similar picture emerges for the relationship between church attendance among Mainline and Black Protestants (Figures 4 and 5). Here, too, church attendance is positively and significantly associated with protest participation. However, compared to Mainline and Black Protestants who attend church weekly, Mainline and Black Protestants who attend church only once or twice a month are actually more likely to protest. And while religious attendance is positively associated with protest participation for Jews and is generally linear, those who weekly attendees are no more likely to protest than those who attend once or twice a month (Figure 6).

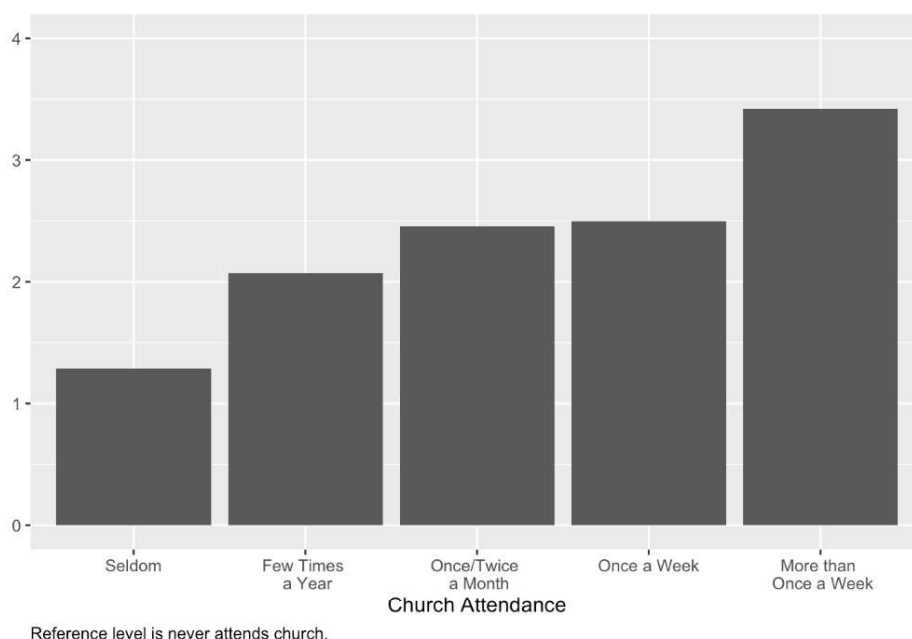
**Figure 4. Odds Ratios of Protesting by Level of Church Attendance Among Mainline Protestants**



**Figure 5. Odds Ratios of Protesting by Level of Church Attendance Among Black Protestants**

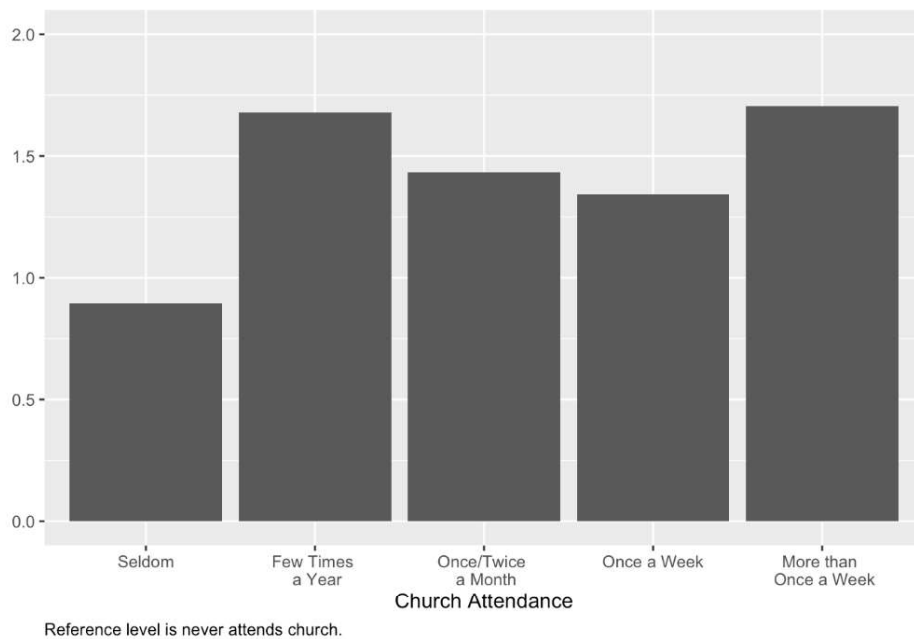


**Figure 6. Odds Ratios of Protesting by Level of Church Attendance Among Jews**



Lastly, for Evangelicals, church attendance is positively associated with protest participation only among those who attend church a few times a year, once or twice a month, and more than once week (Figure 7). For all other levels of church attendance, their likelihood of protesting is statistically indistinguishable from the likelihood an Evangelical who never attends church protests using conventional levels of statistical significance ( $p < .05$ , two-tailed).

**Figure 7. Odds Ratios of Protesting by Level of Church Attendance Among Evangelicals**



It is notable that across most models, with the exception of the model for Jews, religious important exhibits a significant and negative association with protest participation. These results are consistent with a Marxist approach to politics and religion, which posits that religious beliefs serve as an “opiate” and thus decrease protest participation.<sup>58</sup>

## Conclusion

As is the case with all research, this article has several limitations. First, I cannot and do not claim that church attendance causes an increase in protest participation. While this is more plausible than any possible reverse causality (that protesting is a cause of church attendance), the CES’s cross-sectional nature precludes me from making causal inferences. Additionally, an unobserved third variable may affect both church attendance and protest participation. For example, prior research finds that extraversion increases political participation,<sup>59</sup> and it is plausible that extroversion is also linked to participation in group-based activities such as frequent church attendance.

Second, measurement error of both the dependent variable (protest participation) and the focal independent variable (church attendance) may be cause for

<sup>58</sup> Gary T. Marx, Religion: Opiate or Inspiration of Civil Rights Militancy Among Negroes, *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 32, No. 1, 1967, pp. 64–72; Chan S. Suh, In the Smoke of the People’s Opium: The Influence of Religious Beliefs and Activities on Protest Participation, *International Sociology*, Vol. 36, No. 3, 2021, pp. 378–397.

<sup>59</sup> Alan S. Gerber, Gregory A. Huber, David Doherty, Conor M. Dowling, Connor Raso, Shang E. Ha, Personality Traits and Participation in Political Processes, *Journal of Politics* Vol. 73, No. 3, 2011, pp. 692–706; Brigitte Huber, Manuel Goyanes, and Homero Gil de Zúñiga, Linking Extraversion to Collective and Individual Forms of Political Participation: The Mediating Role of Political Discussion, *Social Science Quarterly*, Vol. 102, No. 4, 2021, pp. 1289–1310.

concern. It is well documented that survey respondents overreport their frequency of church attendance due to social desirability bias.<sup>60</sup> However, the CES is self-administered, a method theorized to decrease the effects of social desirability bias.<sup>61</sup> In addition, the CES may overreport protest participation because social desirability bias induces respondents to report protesting even though they did not do so. However, this is unlikely to be a serious issue, as protesting is not seen as a socially desirable activity.<sup>62</sup>

These limitations notwithstanding, my findings are clear. First, consistent with the voluminous body of literature on the relationship between church attendance and political participation, I find that church attendance is a positive and significant predictor of protest participation among U.S. adults. Second, church attendance is a positive and significant predictor of protest participation among Catholics, Main-line Protestants, and Black Protestants, while church attendance is only moderately associated with protest participation for Evangelicals. Third, the positive relationship between church attendance and protest participation is not linear.

Despite these clear findings, there is much that remains unknown. First, why are weekly church attendees no more likely to protest than those who attend church once or twice a month among several faiths and traditions? Second, is the relationship between church attendance and protest participation causal or merely correlational? Third, is religious attendance positively associated with protest participation among harder-to-sample religious minorities, such as Muslims and Mormons?<sup>63</sup> Fourth, to what extent, if any, are the results presented herein a reflection of the sheer volume of protests during the 2017-2019 period, including many protest movements associated with the Left (e.g., Black Lives Matter) and the Right (e.g., MAGA Rallies)? And fifth, through which mechanism(s) does church attendance lead to higher rates of protest participation? Is it through clergy encouragement, church-based recruitment, the development of civic skills, or some combination? To this end, I hope scholars pick up where I leave off and further our understanding of the relationship between religious attendance and protest participation.

<sup>60</sup> C. Kirk Hadaway, Penny Long Marler, and Mark Chaves, What the Polls Don't Show: A Closer Look at U.S. Church Attendance, *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 58, No. 6, 1993, pp. 741-752; Mark Chaves and James C. Cavendish, More Evidence on U.S. Catholic Church Attendance, *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, Vol. 33, No. 4, 1994, pp. 376-381; Philip S. Brenner, Cross-National Trends in Religious Services Attendance, *Public Opinion Quarterly*, Vol. 80, No. 2, 2016, pp. 563-583.

<sup>61</sup> Stanley Presser and Linda Stinson, Data Collection Mode and Social Desirability Bias in Self-Reported Religious Attendance, *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 63, No. 1, 1998, pp. 137-145. The CES is also a web-based survey, which further reduces social desirability bias. See: Frauke Kreuter, Stanley Presser, and Roger Tourangeau, Social Desirability Bias in CATI, IIVR, and Web Surveys, *Public Opinion Quarterly*, Vol. 72, No. 5, 2008, pp. 847-865.

<sup>62</sup> Russell J. Dalton, Citizenship Norms and the Expansion of Political Participation, *Political Studies*, Vol. 56, No. 1, 2008, pp. 76-98.

<sup>63</sup> Existing research on the political participation of US Muslims suggests the answer to this question is "yes." See: Amaney Jamal, The Political Participation and Engagement of Muslim Americans: Mosque Involvement and Group Consciousness, *American Politics Research*, Vol. 33, No. 4, 2005, pp. 521-544; John W. Ayers and C. Richard Hofstetter, American Muslim Political Participation Following 9/11: Religious Belief, Political Resources, Social Structures, and Political Awareness, *Politics and Religion*, Vol. 1, No. 1, 2008, pp. 3-26; Karam Dana, Matt A. Barreto, and Kassra A.R. Oskooii, Mosques as American Institutions: Mosque Attendance, Religiosity and Integration into the Political System Among American Muslims, *Religion*, Vol. 2, No. 4, 2011, pp. 504-524; Karam Dana, Bryan Wilcox-Archuleta, and Matt Barreto, The Political Incorporation of Muslims in the United States: The Mobilizing Role of Religiosity in Islam, *Journal of Race, Ethnicity, and Politics*, Vol. 2, No. 2, 2017, pp. 170-200.

Research on the political participation of US Mormons suggests the same. See: David E. Campbell and J. Quin Monson, "Dry Kindling: A Political Profile of American Mormons," in: *From Pews to Polling Places: Faith and Politics in the American Religious Mosaic*, J. Matthew Wilson (ed.), Georgetown University Press, 2007, pp. 105-130; David E. Campbell, John C. Green, and J. Quin Monson, *Seeking the Promised Land: Mormons and American Politics*, Cambridge University Press, 2014.



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## Appendix A. Variable Coding

Variable	Code/Range
Protest	0, 1 (attended political protest, march, or demonstration in the previous year)
Church: Never	0, 1 (never attends church aside from weddings and funerals)
Church: Seldom	0, 1 (seldom attends church aside from weddings and funerals)
Church: Few Times/Year	0, 1 (attends church a few times a year aside from weddings and funerals)
Church: Once/Twice a Month	0, 1 (attends church once or twice a month aside from weddings and funerals)
Church: Once a Week	0, 1 (attends church once a week aside from weddings and funerals)
Church: More than Weekly	0, 1 (attends church more than once a week aside from weddings and funerals)
Age	Year survey was fielded minus year of birth
Male	0, 1 (gender is male)
Parent	0, 1 (parent or guardian of a child under age 18)
Married	0, 1 (married or in a civic/domestic partnership)
College Degree	0, 1 (has 4-year college degree)
White	0, 1 (race is White and is not of Spanish, Latino, or Hispanic descent)
Black	0, 1 (race is Black and is not of Spanish, Latino, or Hispanic descent)
Hispanic	0, 1 (race is Hispanic or is of Spanish, Latino, or Hispanic descent)
Race: Other	0, 1 (race is not White, Black, Hispanic, and is not of Spanish, Latino, or Hispanic descent)
Income: Other	0, 1 (household annual income not disclosed)
Income: Under \$50k	0, 1 (household annual income under \$50,000)
Income: \$50k to \$100k	0, 1 (household annual income between \$50,000 and \$99,999)
Income: \$100k to \$150k	0, 1 (household annual income between \$100,000 and \$149,999)
Income: \$150k+	0, 1 (household annual income \$150,000 or more)
Ideology	1=very conservative, 2=conservative, 3=moderate, 4=liberal, 5=very liberal
Republican	0, 1 (strong Republican, Republican, or leans Republican)
Democrat	0, 1 (strong Democrat, Democrat, or leans Democrat)
Independent/Other	0, 1 (not Republican and not Democrat)
Union Ties	0, 1 (current member of a labor union or member of the household is labor union member)
Prayer Frequency	1=never, 2=seldom, 3=few times a month, 4=once a week, 5=few times a week, 6=once a day, 7=several times a day
Religious Importance	1=not at all important, 2=not too important, 3=somewhat important, 4=very important

## Appendix B. Summary Statistics

	Full Sample	White Catholics	Non-White Catholics	Mainline Protestants	Evangelicals	Black Protestants	Jews
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
<b>Protest Participation</b>							
Protested	0.08	0.06	0.07	0.08	0.04	0.05	0.17
<b>Church Attendance</b>							
Never	0.29	0.16	0.15	0.18	0.07	0.07	0.23
Seldom	0.22	0.27	0.25	0.32	0.17	0.19	0.27
Few Times per year	0.14	0.20	0.23	0.20	0.14	0.13	0.24
Once or Twice per Month	0.08	0.09	0.11	0.10	0.10	0.13	0.12
Once a Week	0.18	0.23	0.20	0.16	0.31	0.30	0.09
More Than Once a Week	0.08	0.04	0.03	0.03	0.19	0.18	0.05
<b>Demographic Characteristics</b>							
Age	48.1	53.4	45.0	54.0	50.8	49.3	51.5
Male	0.48	0.48	0.47	0.47	0.46	0.42	0.48
Parent	0.24	0.20	0.30	0.19	0.27	0.26	0.18
Married/Partnership	0.53	0.59	0.52	0.56	0.61	0.39	0.53
White	0.68	1.00	0.00	0.89	0.80	0.00	0.86
Black	0.12	0.00	0.13	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.03
Hispanic	0.13	0.00	0.71	0.06	0.14	0.00	0.07
Race: Other	0.07	0.00	0.16	0.05	0.07	0.00	0.04
<b>Socioeconomic Characteristics</b>							
4-year College Degree	0.30	0.38	0.23	0.37	0.25	0.23	0.58
Income: Under \$50K	0.45	0.32	0.49	0.40	0.47	0.55	0.29
Income: \$50K to \$100K	0.29	0.33	0.27	0.31	0.29	0.27	0.28
Income: \$100K to \$150K	0.10	0.14	0.90	0.11	0.08	0.07	0.14
Income: \$150K+	0.05	0.80	0.05	0.07	0.04	0.03	0.13
Income: Undisclosed	0.11	0.13	0.09	0.11	0.11	0.08	0.15
<b>Sociopolitical Characteristics</b>							
Republican	0.37	0.50	0.21	0.45	0.64	0.08	0.27
Independent	0.19	0.14	0.21	0.16	0.15	0.12	0.10
Democrat	0.44	0.36	0.59	0.39	0.20	0.80	0.63
Ideology (Liberal)	2.90	2.69	3.10	2.83	2.19	3.20	3.41
Union Ties	0.12	0.15	0.15	0.11	0.12	0.12	0.13
<b>Religious Characteristics</b>							
Importance of Religion	2.82	3.02	3.11	2.98	3.68	3.66	2.58
Prayer Frequency	4.36	4.70	4.55	4.52	6.00	5.85	3.47

Џошуа Хохберг

## ЦРКВЕНОСТ И УЧЕШЋЕ У ПРОТЕСТИМА У АМЕРИЦИ

### Сажетак

Иако је црквеност повезана са друштвеним и политичким ангажовањем, однос између црквености и учешћа на протестима није довољно истражена област. Ослањајући се на три таласа истраживања Cooperative Election Study, у овом раду истражујем да ли је црквеност има позитиван или негативан ефекат на учешће на протестима код америчке популације и код посебних верских традиција. Налазим да је црквеност позитиван предиктор учешћа на протестима код опште популације, католика, протестаната, црних протестаната, и јевреја. Међутим, то није случај када су у питању евангелици. Ови налази доприносе нашем разумевању односа између црквености и друштвеном активизма уопште.

**Кључне речи:** религија, црквеност, протести, друштвени покрети, цивилно ангажовање