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# Religious Radio Across America

*25% of all AM/FM radio stations in the U.S. have a faith focus*

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**RECOMMENDED CITATION**

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## About the Pew-Knight Initiative

The [Pew-Knight Initiative](#) supports new research on how Americans absorb civic information, form beliefs and identities, and engage in their communities.

[Pew Research Center](#) is a nonpartisan, nonadvocacy fact tank that informs the public about the issues, attitudes and trends shaping the world. [Knight Foundation](#) is a social investor committed to supporting informed and engaged communities.

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## About this research

This Pew Research Center report from the Pew-Knight Initiative is about the AM and FM radio stations across the United States that primarily broadcast religious or faith-based content. It looks at the characteristics of these stations and the programming they play, along with who listens to religious programming and why.

The [Pew-Knight Initiative](#) is a research program funded jointly by The Pew Charitable Trusts and the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation.

### Why did we do this?

Pew Research Center does high-quality research to help the public, the media and decision-makers understand important topics. Understanding more about the sources Americans turn to for information – including religious radio stations – is a key part of the Center’s long-standing research agenda on news habits and media. Religious radio stations can be heard in most parts of the U.S. and make up a considerable portion of the country’s media landscape.

Learn more [about Pew Research Center](#) and our [news habits and media research](#).

### How did we do this?

For this study, we used three main data sources to get a broad look at where religious radio stations are, what their programming tends to sound like and reasons their listeners tune in:

- Data about all FCC-licensed terrestrial AM and FM radio stations in the U.S. from [Radio-Locator](#), an industry database with information about where stations are located, the geographical areas they cover and the primary type of programming they air. We also examined the websites of religious stations to learn how they describe their mission and religious affiliation.
- Around 440,000 hours of audio collected from the internet broadcasts of more than 2,000 religious stations during the month of July 2025.
- A survey of 5,023 U.S. adults conducted June 9-15, 2025, that asked members of the Center’s [American Trends Panel](#) about the religious audio programming they listen to and why.

Here are the [survey questions](#) used for this report, the [detailed responses](#) and the study’s [methodology](#).

# Religious Radio Across America

*25% of all AM/FM radio stations in the U.S. have a faith focus*

Faith-based radio has a long history in America, dating back to the earliest broadcasts of Sunday services at the beginning of the 1920s. Today, there are more than 4,000 terrestrial religious radio stations in the United States, according to a Pew Research Center analysis from the [Pew-Knight Initiative](#). That's about a quarter of the roughly 17,000 AM and FM stations in the U.S. that are licensed by the Federal Communications Commission. Almost all U.S. adults – 98% – live within the local coverage range of at least one religious radio station.

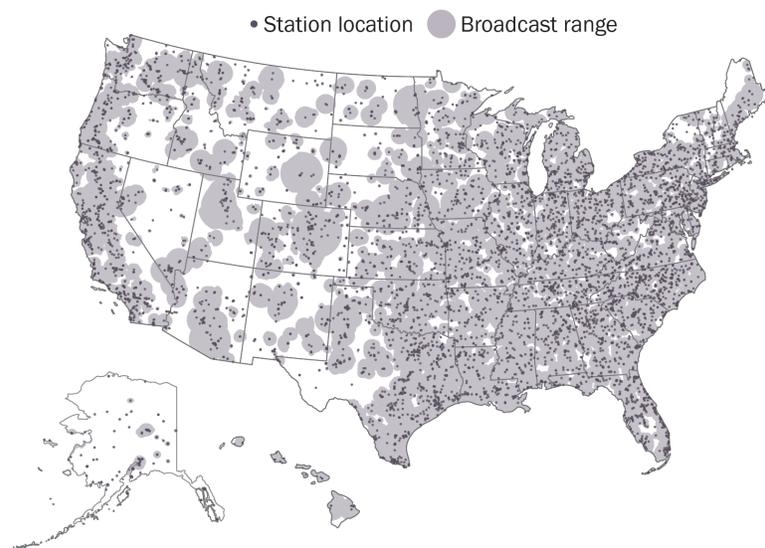
Against this backdrop, we set out to study the landscape of religious radio in the U.S.:

- How widespread are religious stations across the U.S. and in each state?
- Who listens to various types of religious programming and why?
- What kind of programming is broadcast on religious radio stations?

To answer these questions, we analyzed data on the location and broadcast range of every terrestrial religious radio station in the country. We also recorded and analyzed around 440,000 hours of streamed broadcasts from religious stations in July 2025, and we surveyed 5,023 U.S. adults from June 9 to 15, 2025, to understand their experiences with religious audio programming.

## 98% of the U.S. adult population lives within range of at least 1 religious radio station

*Local broadcast range of AM/FM religious radio stations*



Note: Broadcast ranges reflect areas projected to receive strong reception from a local, FCC-licensed terrestrial station. Areas not shown as covered may still be able to receive signals from more distant stations under ideal conditions. Booster and translator stations are included in estimation of coverage range.

Source: FCC-licensed terrestrial AM/FM radio stations from Radio-Locator (accessed March 2025).

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## Key findings

- **Religious radio stations can be heard in every major population center in the country**, and their combined broadcast range covers most of the U.S. landmass. Most U.S. adults can tune into several different religious radio stations on the FM or AM dial from their home address. **An overwhelming majority of these are Christian stations.**
- **45% of U.S. adults say they ever listen to religious audio programming**, and about three-quarters of those listeners at least occasionally tune in on the radio. Podcasts and streaming services are also important sources of religious programming: Seven-in-ten listeners say they get religious programming this way, and nearly all of the most popular radio shows are also available on these platforms.
- **Political commentary makes up only a modest share of all broadcast content on many religious radio stations. But it's a major focus for some stations and for some listeners.** Stations that discuss politics and current events the most tend to present this material in classic “talk radio” formats like host commentary or call-in segments, rather than news reads. Their programming is also much more likely to take a stance on the issues of the day, as opposed to covering them in a neutral way.
- **Religious radio programming addresses a wide range of topics through a religious lens.** Stations on average spend several hours per day discussing topics like lifestyle and personal development, family and parenting, and health and wellness.
- **Certain talk shows and music artists blanket the religious radio airwaves.** Several popular shows are syndicated on as many as half of all religious radio stations nationwide. And the top 1% of music artists accounted for more than half of all song plays on religious radio in July 2025.

### **How we identified religious radio stations**

To identify religious radio stations in the United States, we used data from [Radio-Locator](#), a vendor that compiles up-to-date information on FCC-licensed terrestrial AM and FM radio stations. For this study, we used a snapshot of the database from March 2025.

Radio-Locator assigns each station in the database a genre that reflects the type of content it primarily broadcasts. We classified a station as “religious” if its primary genre was listed as Religious, Christian Contemporary, Gospel Music or Spanish Christian. An overwhelming majority of U.S. religious radio stations are Christian, though a very small share are affiliated with other religious traditions.

Stations that air primarily secular content but occasionally include religious material in their programming (such as a Top 40 hits station that airs local church services on Sunday mornings) are not included in our definition of a religious radio station.

We used two steps to confirm our list of U.S. religious radio stations was accurate. First, we reviewed the websites of religious stations with an online presence recorded in the Radio-Locator database to confirm that they indicate some religious affiliation or mission. Second, during our analysis of the content these stations aired in July 2025, we confirmed that they broadcast either spoken content about religion or music by religious artists.

The Radio-Locator database includes both primary stations and secondary “booster” or “translator” stations that rebroadcast a primary signal. We included these booster and translator stations when estimating where religious radio can be heard across the U.S., but we excluded them from our content analysis since the primary stations they rebroadcast are already represented.

Stations categorized as Spanish Christian are also included in analyses of station characteristics and geographic coverage but are excluded from our content analysis due to limitations in our ability to analyze non-English content.

For more details, read this study’s [methodology](#).

## How religious radio stations describe themselves

As part of this project, we examined the website of every U.S. religious radio station that has one to learn how they describe themselves and their role.<sup>1</sup>

**A large majority of religious radio stations in the U.S. are Christian.** The largest share (63% of religious stations overall) identify as “Christian” without explicitly aligning with a tradition or denomination within Christianity. Another 10% identify with a specific Protestant denomination (such as Baptist or Pentecostal), and 8% identify as Catholic.

Only a handful of stations could be reliably identified as belonging to a different Christian tradition or to a non-Christian faith. And around one-in-five either don’t have a station website or don’t have enough information on their website to assign them to a religious tradition.

### Most religious radio stations describe evangelism as part of their mission.

About three-quarters (77%) of stations with an “About us” page or mission statement on their website mention evangelism or spreading the gospel as a key component.

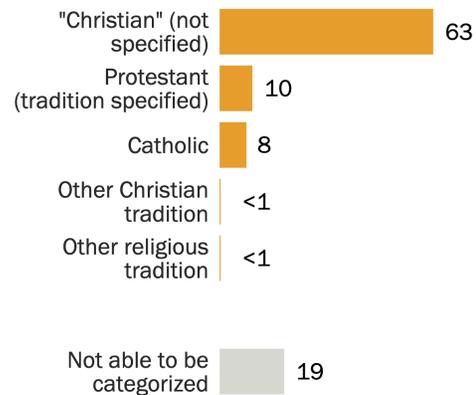
These pages often describe the content the station broadcasts. Some of the more common descriptions include:

- “Uplifting” (36% of station websites mention this)
- “Family friendly” (21%)
- Provides guidance or life advice (19%)

<sup>1</sup> 85% of religious radio stations have a station website.

## A large majority of religious radio stations in the U.S. are Christian

*% of U.S. religious radio stations that identify as ...*



Notes: Categorization of station religious tradition is based on the content of station websites. Stations not able to be categorized include those without a website and those whose religious tradition could not be identified based on their website. “Other Christian tradition” includes denominations that are not Catholic or Protestant, such as Latter-day Saint (Mormon), Orthodox Christian, Jehovah’s Witness and others. “Other religious tradition” includes all non-Christian faiths, such as Judaism, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism and others.

Source: FCC-licensed terrestrial AM/FM radio stations from Radio-Locator (accessed March 2025). “Religious Radio Across America”

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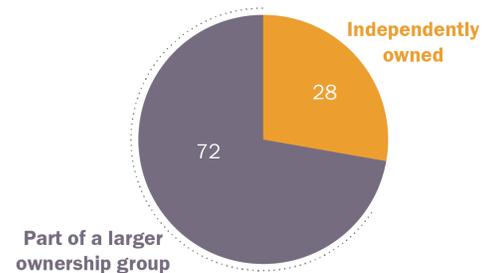
- Helps listeners keep up with news and current events (11%)

These descriptions broadly align with the [reasons listeners give for tuning in](#) to religious audio programming.

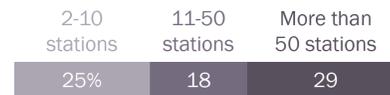
**Most stations are part of larger syndicates.** Around three-in-ten religious radio stations in the U.S. (28%) are independently owned. The other 72% belong to multistation ownership groups of varying sizes, according to our analysis of their FCC licensing information. Religious stations within the same ownership group often share a single online feed and broadcast the same content.

### About 3 in 10 religious radio stations are independently owned

*% of U.S. religious radio stations that are ...*



*% of stations in ownership groups comprised of ...*



Source: FCC-licensed terrestrial AM/FM radio stations from Radio-Locator (accessed March 2025). "Religious Radio Across America"

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## What religious radio stations broadcast

On average, religious radio stations across the U.S. devote about half their broadcast time to music (which includes everything from recorded songs to program theme music and advertising jingles) and half to spoken content. Overall, 81% of spoken content is voiced by a male speaker.<sup>2</sup>

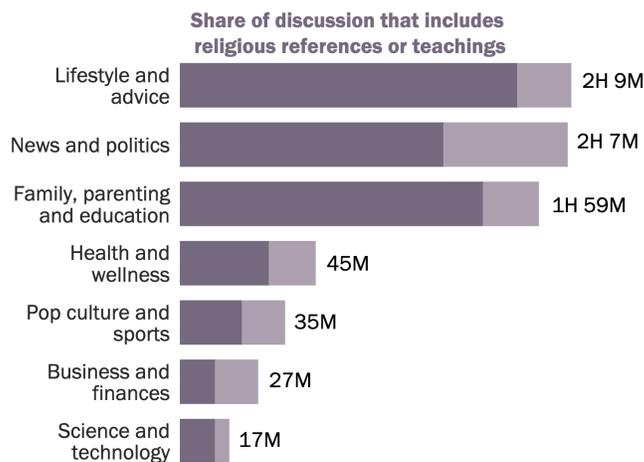
The spoken content on religious radio largely falls into two categories: **classic “talk radio” programming** such as host-led discussions and commentaries, interview segments with guests and audience call-ins, and **religious services or sermons**. Less prominent types of spoken content include ad reads, scripted audio dramas or narratives, and live updates such as news reads, traffic or weather.

**Religion is a constant throughline on these broadcasts, though it is often interwoven with other topics.** The overwhelming majority of broadcast time dedicated to spoken content (86%) contains references to religion or religious teachings, even if that’s not always the primary focus. Across the religious radio landscape, that’s over 10 hours of religion-related discussion per station per day, on average.

Religious stations also discuss other issues and themes within a broadly religious context. Three topics in particular are mentioned in around two hours

### Religious radio programming discusses a range of topics through a religious lens

*Average amount of time per day U.S. religious radio stations spend talking about ...*



Note: Content can contain mentions of multiple topics.

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of 439,711 hours of programming on FCC-licensed terrestrial AM/FM religious radio stations, recorded July 2025.

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<sup>2</sup> This reflects a more significant gender imbalance than the radio industry at large. According to a [Data USA analysis](#) of 2023 occupational data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, broadcast announcers and radio disc jockeys are 30.3% women and 69.7% men.

of programming per station per day, on average:

- Advice about lifestyle or personal development
- Social commentary or discussions of politics and current events
- Discussions of family, parenting and education

Less common subjects include health and wellness, entertainment, pop culture and sports, business and finance, and science and technology.

### **A few popular music artists and talk shows dominate religious radio**

Religious stations play music from a wide range of artists and genres, but the most widely heard genres by far are contemporary Christian music (CCM) and worship music. A relatively small playlist of popular, established artists feature prominently: 16% of all the songs we examined over the month of July 2025 were by just 10 individuals or bands.

Similarly, the most popular talk programs appear on stations across the country. As many as half of all stations nationwide air shows like [Unshackled](#), [Turning Point](#) and [Focus on the Family](#). Nearly all of these shows can also be heard off the airwaves, too. Of the 100 shows that appear on the most stations nationwide, 99 of them are also available on demand online or as podcasts.

### **Beyond the national average, the content mix on individual stations varies widely**

On average, U.S. religious radio stations air an even mix of music and talk, but that conceals a lot of variation between individual stations. Some 37% primarily broadcast music, while 35% focus primarily on talk programming. Another 28% play a more equal mix of the two.

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#### **Similar shares of religious radio stations are talk- and music-focused**

*% of U.S. religious radio stations that play ...*



Source: Pew Research Center analysis of 439,711 hours of programming on FCC-licensed terrestrial AM/FM religious radio stations, recorded July 2025. "Religious Radio Across America"

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## News and politics on religious radio

Beyond how they mix music and talk programming, religious radio stations are also quite diverse in their attention to specific topics, including news, politics and current events.

In our survey of U.S. adults, most people who listen to religious audio programming *do not* point to news and politics coverage as a core reason for doing so. Just 14% of listeners say that keeping up with current events is a major reason they tune in to religious programming, although 40% say it’s at least a minor reason.

These survey findings may seem hard to square with the fact that **religious radio stations spend around two hours a day on average discussing politics, current events and social issues.** But this average hides quite a bit of station-to-station variation.

Some 30% of religious radio stations spend less than half an hour per day talking about news and politics, with many dedicating only a few minutes a day to these issues. A nearly identical share of stations (29%) devote more than two and a half hours each day to discussions of politics and current events. On some of these stations, this content is in focus for 10 or more hours per day.

On stations that discuss news and politics often, a sizable majority of their coverage is presented in long-form talk radio formats like interviews or host commentary. On stations with less of a political focus, these topics are comparatively more likely to come up during short news reads.

Read more about [how Americans view political commentary in the religious programming they listen to.](#)

### Politics-heavy religious radio stations tend to discuss news and politics in talk formats, rather than news reads

*Comparison of U.S. religious radio stations by how often they discuss news and current events in their programming*

	Stations that <b>often</b> discuss news and politics	Stations that <b>sometimes</b> discuss news and politics	Stations that <b>rarely</b> discuss news and politics
<b>Time spent on news and politics</b>	More than 2.5 hours per day	30 minutes to 2.5 hours per day	Less than 30 minutes per day
<b>% of news and politics coverage that occurs during ...</b>			
<b>Talk formats</b>	76	46	44
<b>News reads</b>	15	36	28

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of 439,711 hours of programming on FCC-licensed terrestrial AM/FM religious radio stations, recorded July 2025. “Religious Radio Across America”

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## How religious radio discusses prominent political figures and issues

To better understand how religious radio stations across the country discuss the issues of the day, we analyzed around 440,000 hours of audio collected in July 2025 and looked for places where they mentioned one of 11 specific issues, entities or people:

- **The economy, crime and immigration,** which Americans often place among the **most important issues** facing the country when surveyed.

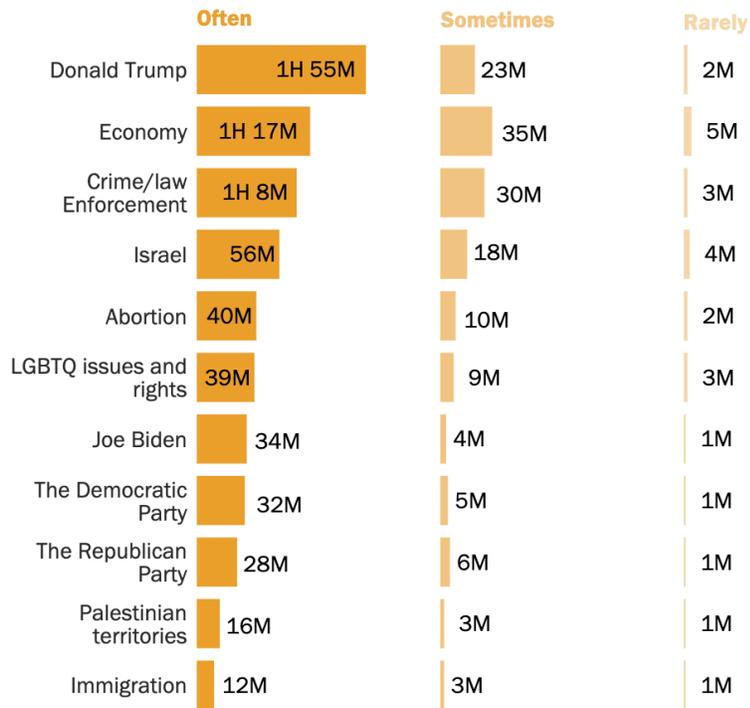
- Two social and cultural issues – **abortion and LGBTQ rights.**

- President **Donald Trump** and former President **Joe Biden**, as well as the **Republican and Democratic parties.**

- Modern-day **Israel** and the **Palestinian territories**, including references to the war in Gaza.

### Religious radio stations with a heavy political focus mentioned Trump in nearly 2 hours of content per day on average in July 2025

*Average minutes per day U.S. religious radio stations talk about \_\_\_\_, by how frequently they discuss news and politics overall*



Note: Content can contain mentions of multiple topics. Mentions of Israel and the Palestinian territories refer to modern geopolitical entities and do not include biblical or historical references. Source: Pew Research Center analysis of 439,711 hours of programming on FCC-licensed terrestrial AM/FM religious radio stations, recorded July 2025. "Religious Radio Across America"

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To the extent that the stations that rarely discuss news and politics mention any of these topics at all, they tend to focus on more

general issues, like the economy or crime. Even so, the most commonly mentioned of these – the

economy – gets five minutes of coverage on these stations in a typical day. Many other topics come up for just two minutes or less daily.

Conversely, **Trump is a much more prominent and consistent focus on religious stations that often emphasize current events and politics in their programming.** On these stations, Trump is mentioned in nearly two hours of coverage per day. That's 38 minutes more than is spent discussing the economy, the second-most common topic.

Politics-heavy stations also frequently mention several topics that are discussed less often on stations with less of a political focus. In a typical day, they broadcast 40 minutes of coverage that mentions abortion, and a similar amount of their time is spent discussing LGBTQ issues. And around a half hour of their coverage mentions the Democratic and Republican parties, which come up far less frequently elsewhere on the religious radio dial.

### **Neutral versus opinionated discussion of political and social issues**

Along with identifying whether stations mentioned these 11 topics at all, we also looked at how those discussions presented each issue:

- **A neutral or factual manner**, as in a traditional news read or update
- **A way that takes a stance or expresses an opinion on the topic.** This could include praising or criticizing an individual or group, aligning with one side of a debate, or promoting a policy position

This analysis finds that **stations that discuss politics often tend to cover nearly all these issues in an opinionated way.** On nine of the 11 topics we studied, the most politics-heavy stations were far more likely than others to express a stance.

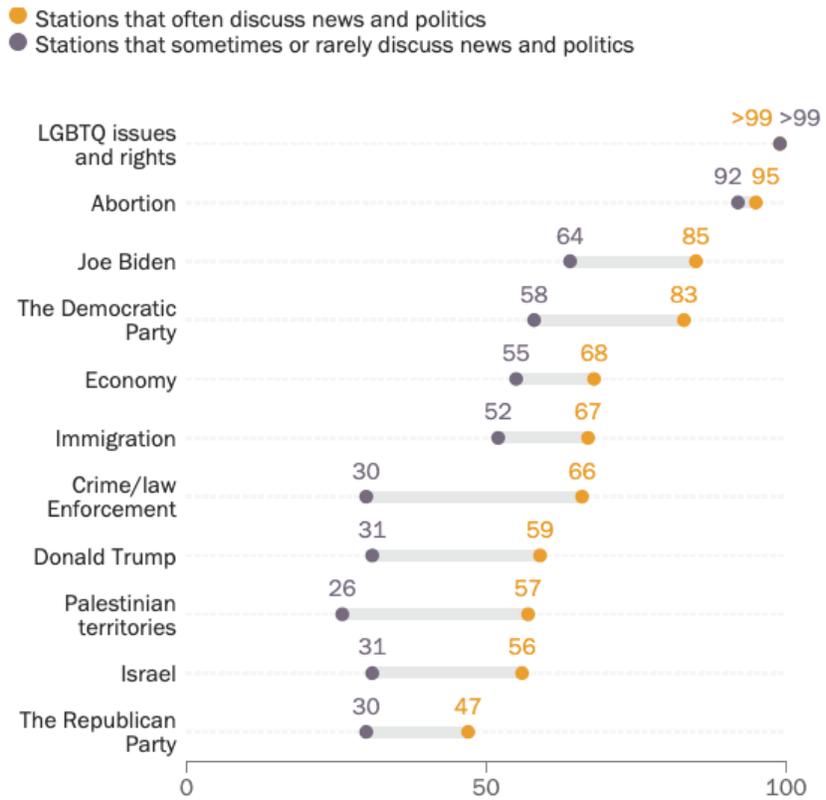
The two topics where this is not true were abortion and LGBTQ rights: Not all religious radio stations discuss these issues, but the ones that do tend to take a stance, regardless of how often they discuss politics overall. Mentions of abortion were almost universally against it; mentions of LGBTQ issues were almost universally against expanded rights or acceptance for same-sex couples or transgender people.

Other findings on how religious radio stations discuss these topics include:

- Around half the time immigration is mentioned, it is presented as something that is undesirable or that should be limited. But 14% of the time, it is spoken of favorably. The remaining mentions of immigration are neutral (about 37% of the time spent discussing this issue.)
- Across all stations, about half of references to both Israel and the Palestinian territories, including the war in Gaza, are framed neutrally. However, 42% of references to Israel and Israeli leaders frame their actions and policies favorably, while 47% of references to the Palestinian territories and their leaders are *unfavorable*.

**Religious radio stations that often discuss politics are more likely to talk about issues in an opinionated way**

% of coverage of each topic on U.S. religious radio stations that *takes a stance or expresses an opinion*



Note: "Often" group includes stations that mention politics or current events in more than two and a half hours of programming daily. "Sometimes or rarely" group includes stations that mention these issues less often. Content can contain mentions of multiple topics. Mentions of Israel and the Palestinian territories refer to modern geopolitical entities and do not include biblical or historical references.

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of 439,711 hours of programming on FCC-licensed terrestrial AM/FM religious radio stations, recorded July 2025.

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- Around eight-in-ten references to Biden or to the Democratic Party express negative sentiments. Fewer than 1% of mentions are positive. By contrast, most references to Trump are neutral (47%) or favorable (40%), while 13% are unfavorable. More than half of references to the Republican Party are neutral, with the remainder a roughly equal mix of favorable and unfavorable.

See the study's [methodology](#) for more detail about how we classified the content of radio broadcasts.

*Read more about:*

- [\*Americans' experiences with religious audio programming\*](#)
- [\*Political commentary on religious radio, and what listeners think about it\*](#)
- [\*How Catholic radio differs from other Christian radio\*](#)
- [\*Music on religious radio\*](#)
- [\*Where religious radio stations are located, and who owns them\*](#)

## Americans' experiences with religious audio programming

Religious audio programming appears across a wide range of platforms, from traditional radio to podcasts and online streaming services. This chapter looks at how Americans consume this programming and the role it plays in their lives, based on a survey of 5,023 U.S. adults conducted June 9-15, 2025.

These findings are part of a [larger study on religious radio](#) in the U.S.

### Religious programming Americans listen to

Roughly half of U.S. adults (45%) say they listen to at least one type of religious programming we asked about:

- Religious music (37% of adults ever listen)
- Sermons and religious services (30%)
- Religious talk shows (18%)
- Religious storytelling or audio dramas (16%)

Large majorities of White evangelical Protestants (76%) and Black Protestants (84%) say they listen to religious programming. Smaller shares of Catholics and White nonevangelical Protestants say they listen to this type of programming – about four-in-ten each.

About four-in-ten U.S. adults who identify with a religion other than Christianity (39%) say they listen to religious programming. These respondents are more likely to say they listen to online platforms than to say they tune in via AM or FM radio.

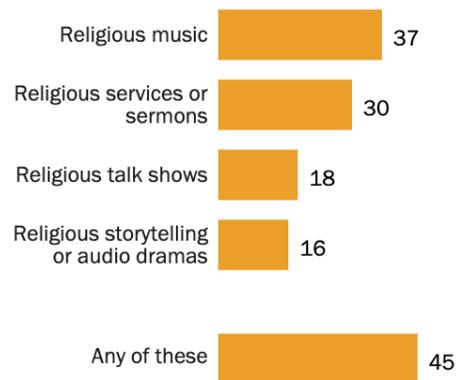
Religious “nones” – those who identify as atheist, agnostic or “nothing in particular” – are the least likely to report listening to religious programming, though 18% say they do.

Differences based on other factors tend to be more modest. For instance, nearly identical shares of adults ages 18 to 49 (44%) and ages 50 and older (47%) listen to religious programming (although

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### 45% of Americans listen to religious programming

*% of U.S. adults who say they ever listen to ...*



Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted June 9-15, 2025. “Religious Radio Across America”

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those 50 and older are a bit more likely to listen to sermons and services specifically). The partisan gap is somewhat pronounced: 53% of Republicans and Republican-leaning independents listen to religious programming, as do 38% of Democrats and Democratic leaners.

Majorities of Americans across age and partisan groups identify with a religion, according to the Center’s [2023-24 Religious Landscape Study](#). For instance, 80% of those aged 50 and older are religiously affiliated, compared with a smaller majority of adults younger than 50 (59%). And around eight-in-ten Republicans identify with a religion, as do around six-in-ten Democrats.

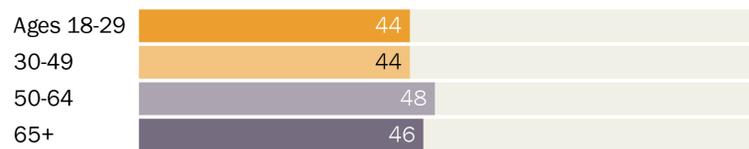
When asked about the platforms they use to listen to religious programming, three-quarters of all listeners say they at least occasionally turn to AM or FM radio. A similar share (70%) listen using an online streaming or podcast platform, while 41% listen on a satellite radio service.

However, Americans of different ages have different listening preferences. Around eight-in-ten listeners ages 50 and older (82%) say they at least occasionally tune into an AM or FM radio station to hear religious programming. By contrast, 87% of listeners ages 18 to 29 say they listen on online streaming platforms.

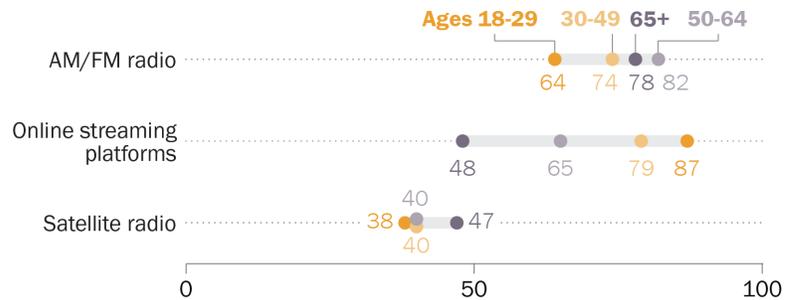
Regardless of how they choose to listen, the vast majority of listeners say they consume religious audio programming at home (93%) or in a car (87%). Around half say they ever listen in public spaces (55%) or at work (51%).

### Younger religious programming listeners prefer streaming platforms over AM/FM radio

% of U.S. adults who say they ever listen to religious audio programming, by age



Among those who say they ever listen, % who ever listen on ...



Note: Respondents can report listening in multiple ways.  
 Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted June 9-15, 2025.  
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## Why people listen to religious programming

Some 37% of Americans who listen to religious audio programming say it is extremely or very important to their religious or spiritual lives. Another 35% say it is somewhat important, while 29% say it is either not too or not at all important.

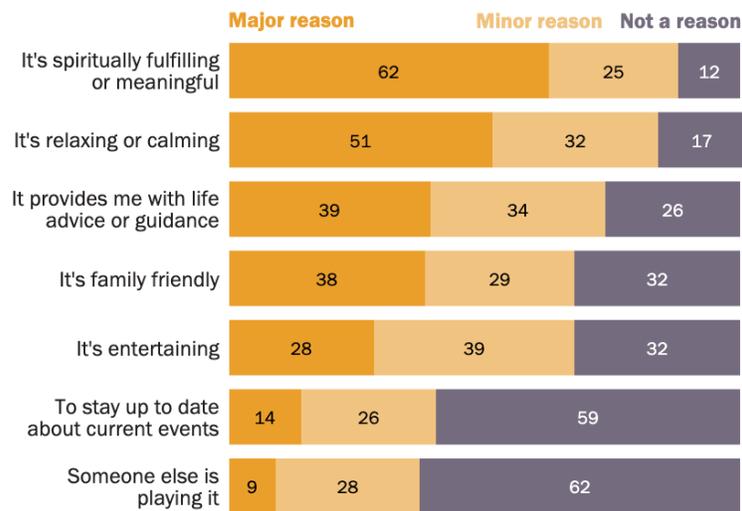
When asked why they listen to religious programming, relatively large shares of listeners cite the following as *major reasons*:

- It's spiritually uplifting (62%)
- It's relaxing or calming (51%)
- It gives them life advice or guidance (39%)
- It's family friendly (38%)

Staying up to date with current events is generally *not* a big factor: 40% of listeners say this is at least a minor reason, but just 14% say it is a major one. About six-in-ten (59%) say it is not a reason they listen at all.

### Spiritual uplift and relaxation are the most common reasons Americans listen to religious programming

*Among U.S. adults who listen to religious audio programming, % saying they listen because ...*



Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted June 9-15, 2025. "Religious Radio Across America"

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Many listeners say they have made changes to their lives or taken specific actions in response to things they heard promoted or advertised on the religious programming. Most notably, around half have watched a movie or read a book they heard about there, and around a third have started a new religious practice in their lives. A quarter of listeners bought something they heard about on these programs or made a change in their financial habits.

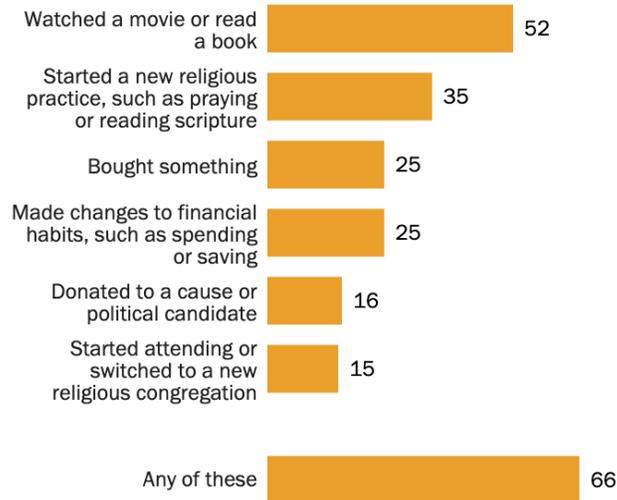
**Around one-in-five listeners (21%) have given money directly to a religious radio station, show or podcast they listen to.** This behavior is a bit more

common among Republican listeners than among Democratic ones, and it is also relatively common among White evangelical Protestant listeners.

In general, listeners feel that the religious views they hear expressed in this programming broadly align with their own: 72% say the content they hear is very or somewhat similar to their personal views, and 74% say it's similar to the views of their congregation. But this also can vary by political leaning, with Democratic listeners more likely than Republican listeners to say the views they hear differ from their own (21% vs. 13%).

### **Around half of religious programming listeners have watched a movie, read a book they heard about there**

*Among U.S. adults who listen to religious audio programming, % saying they have \_\_\_\_ because it was promoted or talked about on the shows they listen to*



Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted June 9-15, 2025.  
"Religious Radio Across America"

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## Political commentary on religious radio, and what listeners think about it

About half of U.S. adults (45%) say they ever listen to religious audio programming – such as music, sermons, talk shows or audio dramas – either via radio or online. Most listeners say they tune in because they find the content spiritually uplifting, relaxing or able to provide guidance for daily life. Fewer point to keeping up with news and current events as a major reason for listening.

Even so, political and social issues do come up in religious programming. About four-in-ten listeners say they hear commentary about these topics at least sometimes. And when we examined a month’s worth of religious radio broadcasts from July 2025, we found that some stations have multiple hours of programming each day that focus on political and social issues. Others seldom reference these topics outside of brief news reads or passing mentions.

The following analysis looks at the experiences of U.S. adults who listen to religious programming and encounter politics there, and how they feel about this type of content.

The findings are part of a [larger study on religious radio](#) in the U.S.

### How listeners encounter political content in religious programming

Many adults who listen to religious programming don’t end up being exposed to much political content this way. About one-third of listeners (35%) say they rarely hear discussions of news and politics, and another 21% say they never do.

This reflects the different types of programming people choose to listen to:

- 37% of Americans listen to religious music, making it the most popular type of programming we asked about. Religious radio stations that primarily play music also tend to include relatively little political content, according to our content analysis.
- Stations that air primarily talk programming devote the most time to politics – a little over four hours per station per day, on average. But the audience for religious talk shows is smaller. About one-in-five Americans (18%) report listening to this type of programming.

Among Americans who listen to religious talk shows, about six-in-ten (56%) say they hear political or social commentary there at least sometimes. A similar share of talk show listeners say they tune in to keep up with news and current events (59% say this is at least a minor reason). By comparison, of *all* religious programming listeners – not just those who listen to talk shows – 40% say that keeping up with news and current events is a reason they listen. And among people who listen to other types of religious programming but *don't* listen to talk shows, just 28% say they tune in to keep up with current events.

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### Political content is common in religious talk programming, but it's not a major reason most listeners tune in

*Among U.S. adults who listen to religious programming, % saying that keeping up with news and current events is a \_\_\_ they listen*



*% of listeners who say they hear political commentary in religious programming ...*



Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted June 9-15, 2025.  
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## How listeners feel about political content in religious programming

Among people who say they ever encounter political or social commentary in the religious radio programming they listen to:

- 48% say they neither like nor dislike it.
- 20% like it; 32% dislike it.

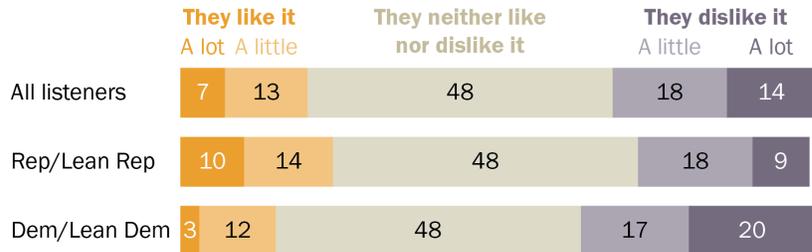
Republicans are more likely than Democrats to say they like it a lot (10% vs. 3%), while Democrats are more likely to dislike it a lot (20% vs. 9%).

(This follow-up question was asked only of survey

respondents who said they encounter political or social commentary in religious programming extremely often, often, sometimes or rarely. Respondents who said they *never* encounter political or social commentary were not asked whether they like it.)

### Most adults who listen to religious programming hear politics discussed there, but few say they like it

Among U.S. adults who listen to programming and say they hear political content there, % who say ...



Note: Based on listeners who say they hear political or social commentary on religious programming extremely often, often, sometimes or rarely.  
 Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted June 9-15, 2025.  
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## How Catholic radio differs from other Christian radio

About a quarter of all the FCC-licensed AM and FM radio stations in the United States are religious radio stations, and a vast majority of those are Christian.

Most of the religious stations we analyzed (63%) identify simply as “Christian” with no additional affiliation given. Another 10% identify with a specific Protestant tradition, and **8% of stations identify as Catholic radio.**

Our analysis finds that Catholic stations stand out in several ways. Compared with other religious stations, Catholic radio contains more talk programming, features a different mix of formats and tends to focus on a different set of topics.

These findings are part of a [larger study on religious radio](#) in the U.S.

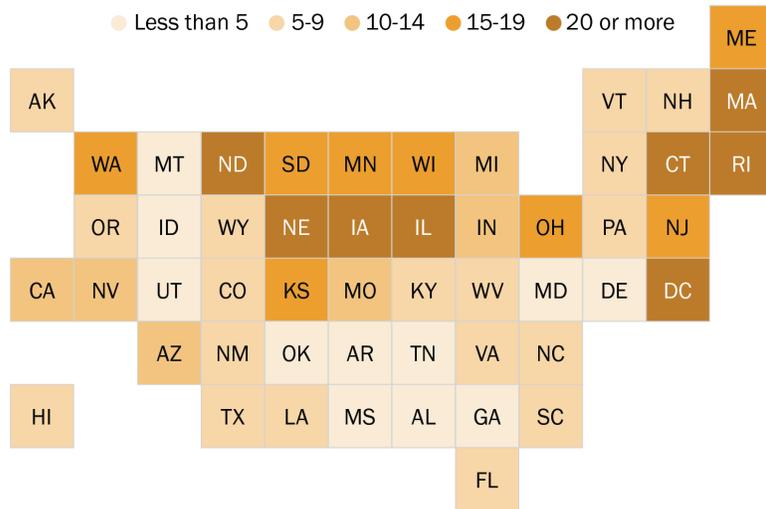
### Where can Catholic radio be heard?

Like religious radio stations more broadly, Catholic radio stations are located across the country. But compared with stations that identify with a Protestant tradition or simply as “Christian,” Catholic stations are more concentrated in the Midwest and Northeast, and less prevalent in the South.

- 17% of all religious radio stations in the Midwest are Catholic stations, as are 12% of religious stations in the Northeast and 9% of those in the West.

### Midwestern states have a higher share of Catholic radio stations than the national average

*% of religious radio stations in each state that are Catholic*



Note: Categorization of station religious tradition is based on the content of station websites.  
 Source: FCC-licensed terrestrial AM/FM radio stations from Radio-Locator (accessed March 2025).  
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- By contrast, just 5% of all religious stations in the South are Catholic stations.

## Typical programming on Catholic radio

Many religious radio stations carry the same popular syndicated talk shows. For instance, about half of all stations carry [Unshackled](#) and [Turning Point](#), and 44% of stations carry [Focus on the Family](#). But these programs almost never appear on the broadcast schedules of Catholic stations. In fact, the typical schedule for a Catholic station has essentially no overlap with non-Catholic religious stations.

Catholic stations also tend to play relatively little music. About half of religious radio airtime overall is dedicated to music. On Catholic stations, this share is just 11%. (These shares cover any and all musical

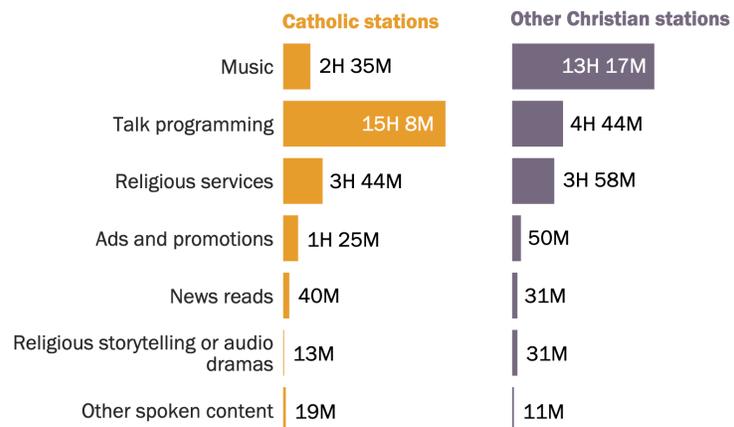
content that might play during the day, including jingles in advertisements, program theme music and music that plays as part of a religious service.) The music that does play on Catholic radio is considerably more likely to be uncategorizable by our automated music recognition system, suggesting that much of it does not come from widely available studio recordings.

Read more about [music on religious radio](#).

The time that Catholic stations *don't* spend broadcasting music is mostly occupied by host-led talk radio formats: discussions, monologues or commentary from hosts, interviews with guests, or caller interaction and audience participation segments. On average, Catholic stations air 15 hours

### Catholic radio stations play less music and more talk programming than other Christian stations

Average amount of time per day U.S. religious radio stations broadcast ...



Note: Categorization of station religious tradition is based on the content of station websites.

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of 439,711 hours of programming on FCC-licensed terrestrial AM/FM religious radio stations, recorded July 2025.

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of talk content per day, compared with under five hours on other Christian stations. During these talk radio broadcasts:

- Catholic talk radio is more likely to include caller interaction or audience participation segments. Some 27% of talk programming on Catholic stations has these interactive elements, compared with around 8% of talk programming on other Christian stations.
- Catholic talk radio is also more likely to contain discussions of family, parenting and education. Some 25% of talk time on Catholic radio mentions these issues, compared with 18% on other Christian stations. Catholic radio is *less* likely to include discussions of pop culture and entertainment, mentioned in 6% of Catholic talk programming versus 13% on other Christian stations.
- And as might be expected, Catholic talk radio is more likely to include mentions of popes, both past and current. Pope Francis or Pope Leo XIV are mentioned by name in 6% of talk programming on Catholic stations, compared with 0.2% on other Christian stations.

Outside of music and talk radio formats, Catholic and non-Catholic stations spend a similar amount of time on content that we broadly categorized as religious services or sermons. And the services broadcast on Catholic stations sound different from those heard on other Christian stations, reflecting the differences between Catholic Mass and services in other Christian traditions.

There is quite a bit of overlap in the books of the Bible that are mentioned on Catholic and non-Catholic radio. The Gospels of Matthew, Luke and John, and the Hebrew scriptures of Psalms, Genesis, Exodus and Isaiah are among the 10 most-mentioned books of the Bible on both types of stations. But at the time this study was conducted, listeners were far more likely to hear references to the Book of Revelation on non-Catholic radio than on Catholic radio.

## Music on religious radio

Music is core to Americans' experiences with religious programming. Around four-in-ten U.S. adults (37%) say they ever listen to religious music. And music of some kind occupies around half of all airtime on religious radio across the United States.

To determine what music is played most often on religious radio, we randomly collected more than 300,000 songs played on religious stations in July 2025. We then used the [AudD music recognition API](#) to identify those songs, their artists and the musical genres those artists are affiliated with. (We use the word "artists" throughout this analysis to refer to both individual recording artists as well as bands or ensembles.)

On one level, music on religious radio is quite diverse. Nearly 14,000 artists appeared in our sample of 300,000 songs, reflecting a range of Christian (and some non-Christian) music genres.

**At the same time, religious radio airplay favors a relatively small set of genres and artists.** The average listener is much more likely to hear artists who play contemporary Christian music (CCM) or worship music than they are to hear artists of other genres. And 16% of all songs we collected were by just 10 artists.

These findings are part of a [larger study on religious radio](#) in the U.S.

## Most common music genres

The vast majority of the music that plays on U.S. religious radio can be identified as Christian music of some kind (88%).

Just 4% of songs could be identified as non-Christian music. (We couldn't collect genre information for the remaining 8%.)

Stylistically, about two-thirds of these songs are by artists who play contemporary Christian music. A similar share are by artists who play worship music.

Other genres that appear often on religious radio include:

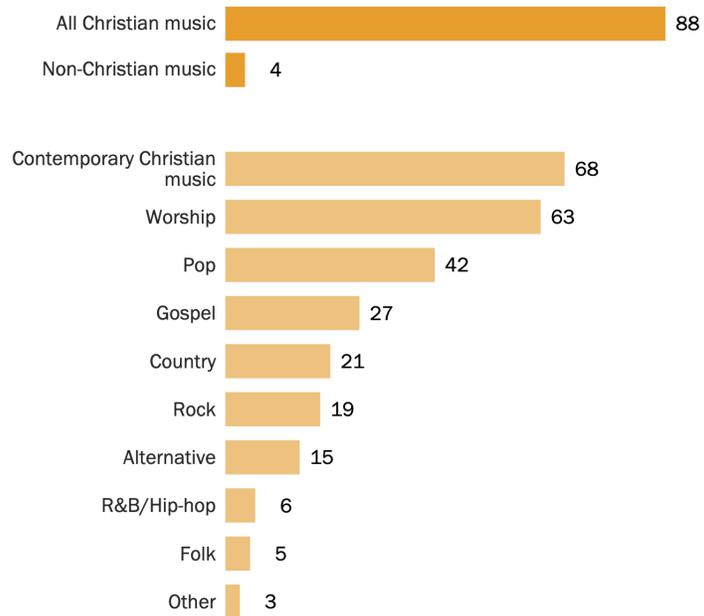
- Pop (42% of tracks are by artists tagged as pop)
- Gospel (27%)
- Country (21%)
- Rock (19%)
- Alternative (15%)

The vast majority of the artists who play on religious radio perform in multiple genres, with CCM/worship and CCM/pop being the two most common combinations.

For the most part, religious stations across the country tend to play similar types of music. However, stations in the South play a larger share of songs by gospel artists (41% of all song plays vs. 20% across other regions) and Christian country artists (30% vs. 17%). Southern stations play correspondingly less worship, pop and rock music than stations elsewhere.

### Music on religious radio is dominated by contemporary Christian and worship music

*% of songs played on U.S. religious radio stations that are by artists who play ...*



Note: Genre data could not be retrieved for 8% of recognized tracks. Songs can belong to multiple genres.

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of 439,711 hours of programming on FCC-licensed terrestrial AM/FM religious radio stations, recorded July 2025; 300,915 tracks sampled for identification using AudD music recognition API.

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## Artists who receive the most airtime

The 300,000 songs we collected for this analysis came from about 14,000 different artists. But despite that overall variety, religious radio stations tend to devote most of their music airtime to a relatively small number of popular performers.

Just 10 artists accounted for 16% of all songs played on religious radio during the month we studied. This list includes contemporary Christian artists like Phil Wickham, Matthew West and the band MercyMe. Wickham, who claimed more airtime than any other artist in July 2025 (about 2.5% of all song plays), had two tracks that appeared on the weekly [Billboard Christian Airplay](#) chart during that month.

The top 10 artists on religious radio by airtime are largely long-standing figures in Christian music. All but one have been releasing music since before 2010, and several have careers stretching back into the 1990s or earlier.

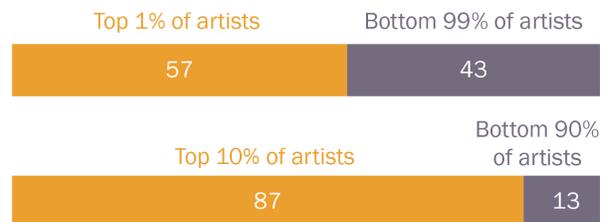
Beyond these 10 artists:

- The top 1% of artists by airtime accounted for 57% of song plays.
- The top 10% of artists accounted for 87% of song plays.

Meanwhile, the remaining 90% of artists together accounted for just 13% of songs plays in July 2025.

### The most popular 10% of artists account for 87% of song plays on religious radio

*% of songs played on U.S. religious radio stations that are by the ...*



*Top 10 most-played artists on U.S. religious radio stations, July 2025*

Artist	% of all songs played
Phil Wickham	2.47%
MercyMe	2.13%
Matthew West	1.53%
Chris Tomlin	1.44%
Jeremy Camp	1.43%
Zach Williams	1.41%
Casting Crowns	1.39%
Elevation Worship	1.31%
TobyMac	1.23%
Brandon Lake	1.22%

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of 439,711 hours of programming on FCC-licensed terrestrial AM/FM religious radio stations, recorded July 2025; 300,915 tracks sampled for identification using AudD music recognition API. "Religious Radio Across America"

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## Times of day religious radio stations play music

Looking at U.S. religious radio stations collectively, music takes up 52% of all programming time. But there is some variation in how much music the average listener might hear depending on the time of day they tune in. Music is most prevalent during the evening time slot – 7 p.m. to midnight – accounting for 60% of overall broadcast time. And it is least prevalent during the morning drive time slot – 6 a.m. to 10 a.m. – when it occupies 47% of broadcast time.

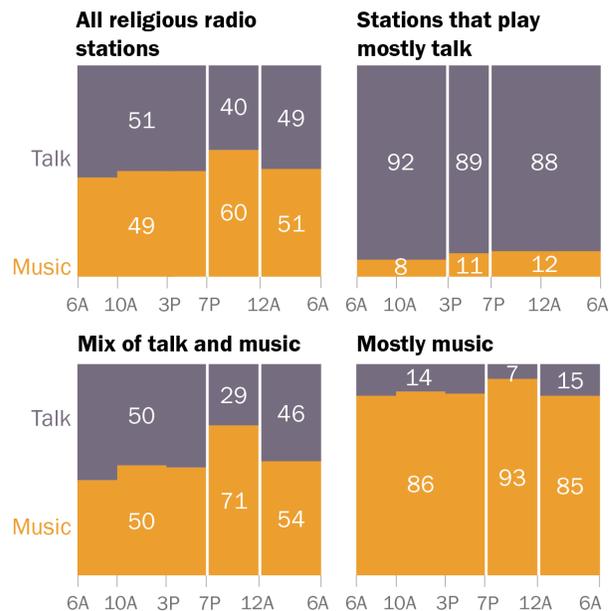
However, not all religious radio stations play the same broad content mix. Similar shares of stations play mostly music (37%), mostly talk programming (35%) or a more even mix of talk and music (28%).

- Among stations that play mostly talk, music takes up 8% to 12% of broadcast time across every major time slot in the typical 24-hour day.
- Conversely, among stations that play mostly music, it occupies 85% of broadcast time or more during every time slot.

Stations that play a more equal mix of talk and music tend to air music and talk programming in roughly equal measures throughout the daytime. But the share of their broadcast time dedicated to music becomes substantially higher in the evening, rising to 71% between 7 p.m. and midnight.

### Religious radio stations play more music in the evenings

*% of broadcast time that U.S. religious radio stations play \_\_\_\_, by station content type*



Source: Pew Research Center analysis of 439,711 hours of programming on FCC-licensed terrestrial AM/FM religious radio stations, recorded July 2025. "Religious Radio Across America"

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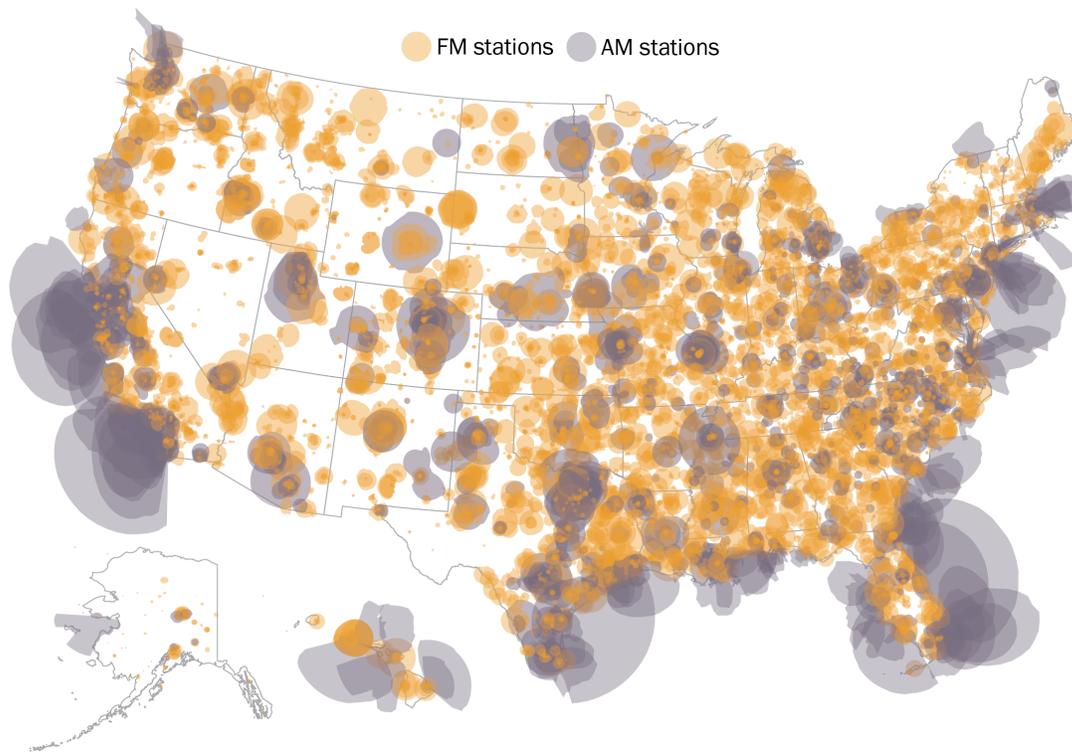
## Where religious radio stations are located, and who owns them

Faith-based radio stations make up a considerable part of the media landscape in the United States. More than 4,000 terrestrial religious stations broadcast throughout the country, according to a Pew Research Center analysis from the [Pew-Knight Initiative](#) – that’s about a quarter of the more than 17,000 FCC-licensed AM and FM stations in the United States. Anywhere people live across the country, there’s probably at least one religious station they can tune in to.

These findings are part of a [larger study on religious radio](#) in the U.S.

### 98% of U.S. adults live within range of at least 1 religious radio station

*Local broadcast range of AM/FM religious radio stations*



Note: Broadcast ranges reflect areas projected to receive strong reception from a local, FCC-licensed terrestrial station. Areas not shown as covered may still be able to receive signals from more distant stations under ideal conditions. Booster and translator stations are included in estimation of coverage range.

Source: FCC-licensed terrestrial AM/FM radio stations from Radio-Locator (accessed March 2025).  
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Religious radio stations are spread widely across the U.S. Every region of the country is served by both independent and syndicated stations featuring religious programming.

The vast majority of the U.S. adult population (98%) lives within local coverage of at least one religious radio station. On average, listeners can tune into six different religious broadcasts from their home address. About two thirds of the country’s entire landmass – and 99% of its urban areas – is in range of at least one of these stations.

While religious radio can be heard from virtually all urban areas in the country, overall coverage by region varies.<sup>3</sup> **The highest concentration of religious radio stations is in the South**, where 87% of the total landmass is served by at least one of these stations.

This is in keeping with the fact that Americans in the South [tend to be more religious](#), on average, than those in other regions: 74% of Southerners identify with a religion, including 68% who are Christian, according to data from the Center’s [2023-24 Religious Landscape Study](#).

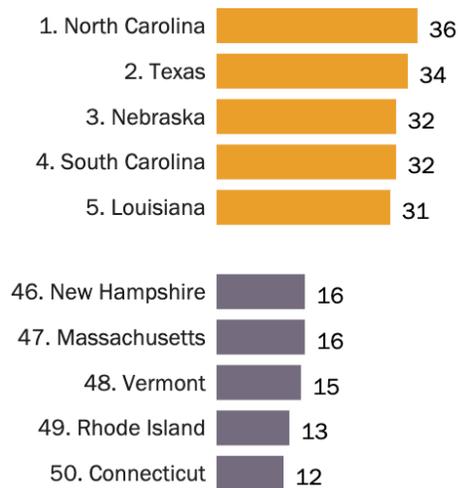
Religious radio’s geographic coverage is lower in other regions of the U.S.:

- 76% of the Midwest
- 78% of the Northeast
- 38% of the West (which notably includes a number of large, sparsely populated areas where coverage is limited)

The median state in the union has 76 religious radio stations broadcasting from within its borders. Texas has the most of any state, with 433. And North Carolina has the highest concentration of religious radio: 36% of all its AM and FM stations have a religious focus. At

### North Carolina has the highest share of religious radio stations

*% of all AM/FM radio stations that are religious, by state*



Source: FCC-licensed terrestrial AM/FM radio stations from Radio-Locator (accessed March 2025). “Religious Radio Across America”

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<sup>3</sup> This analysis uses the U.S. Census Bureau definitions for [regions](#) and [urban areas](#).

the other end of the scale, Connecticut’s 13 religious radio stations make up just 12% of stations in the state.

Nationwide, there are around 1.3 religious radio stations per 100,000 residents. But because there are limits to how far any one radio broadcast can reach, states with small populations distributed over very large geographic areas end up with a much higher ratio of stations to residents. For example, Wyoming has 6.6 religious stations per 100,000 residents, and Alaska has 7.3.

**Related:** [How religious is your state?](#)

## Who owns religious radio stations?

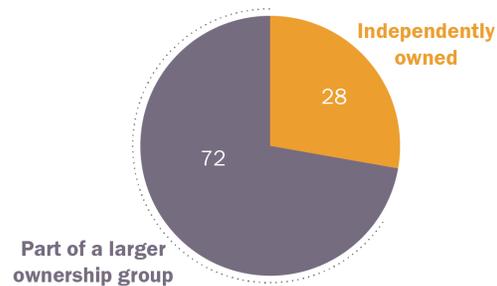
The majority of religious radio stations in the U.S. are owned by an organization that operates multiple stations, according to our analysis of the FCC licenses those stations operate under. Around three-in-ten are part of large ownership groups comprised of more than 50 individual stations. The largest of these groups is [Educational Media Foundation](#), which operates the Air1 and K-LOVE radio networks and owns hundreds of individual stations across the country, as well as an online streaming platform and a podcast network.<sup>4</sup>

Another 42% of stations are part of small or medium-sized ownership groups, and 28% are independent – meaning they are licensed to an entity that doesn’t own any other radio stations.

While similar shares of religious and nonreligious stations belong to ownership groups, religious stations that belong to the same owner are much more likely to broadcast shared content. Most nonreligious stations that stream their broadcasts online do so from their own distinct broadcast URL, even if their licensee

### About 3 in 10 religious radio stations are independently owned

% of U.S. religious radio stations that are ...



% of stations in ownership groups comprised of ...



Source: FCC-licensed terrestrial AM/FM radio stations from Radio-Locator (accessed March 2025). “Religious Radio Across America”

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<sup>4</sup> Other examples of large ownership groups include Relevant Radio, which operates a network of Catholic stations, and the American Family Association’s American Family Radio network.

owns multiple stations. But the typical religious radio station that offers a web stream is one of five stations that share that same online feed.

And regardless of who owns them, many religious radio stations carry the same popular syndicated shows. For example, [Unshackled](#) and [Turning Point](#) appear on the broadcast schedules of about half of all religious radio stations, and [Focus on the Family](#) appears on 44% of schedules.

Nearly all popular syndicated shows on religious radio can also be heard off the airwaves. Of the 100 most widely carried programs, 99 are available on demand as podcasts or on popular platforms such as YouTube.

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### Some popular religious radio programs are carried by around half of stations

*% of U.S. religious radio stations that broadcast popular programs*

<b>Program</b>	<b>% of stations</b>
Unshackled	50%
Turning Point	49%
Focus on the Family	44%
Love Worth Finding	43%
Grace to You	43%

Note: Based on stations with an online broadcast schedule.  
Source: Pew Research Center analysis of station broadcast schedules, collected April-May 2025.  
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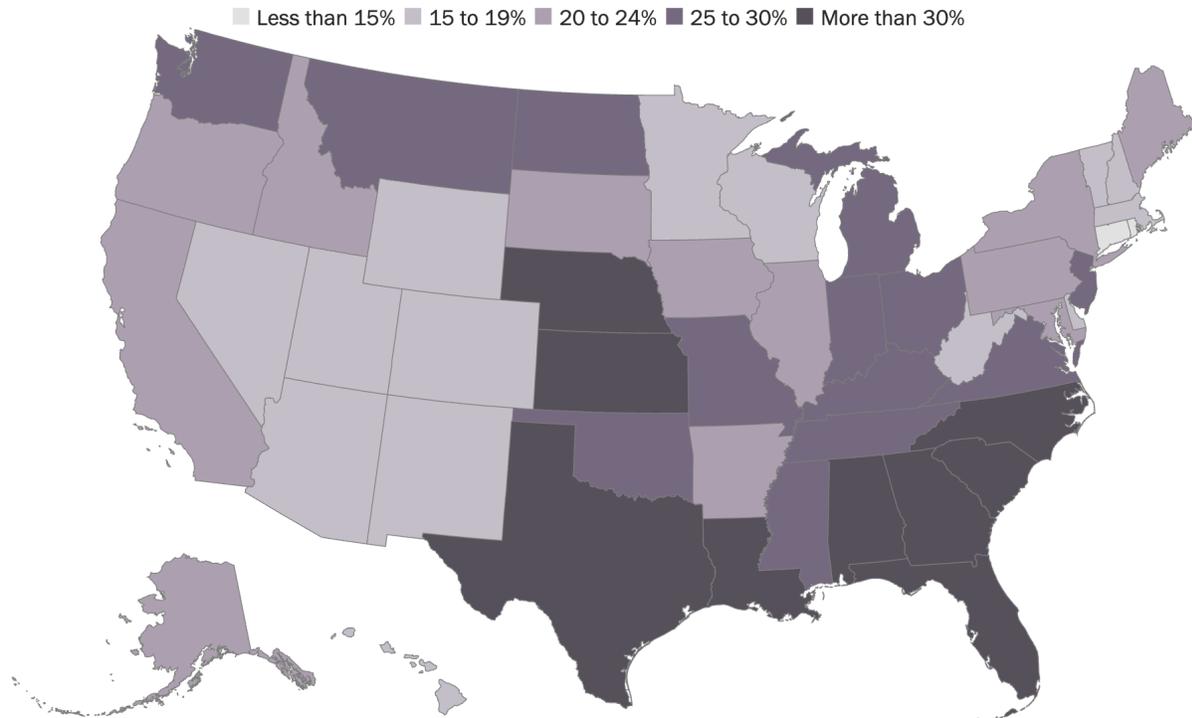
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## What's religious radio like in your state?

### Radio stations in the South are more likely to be religious

*% of all radio stations that are religious, by state.*



Note: Booster and translator stations are excluded from totals.

Source: FCC-licensed terrestrial AM/FM radio stations from Radio-Locator (accessed March 2025).

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**State-level characteristics of religious radio stations**

State	% of all stations that are religious	Number of religious stations	Number of religious stations per 100K residents	% of religious stations that are Catholic	% of religious stations with independent ownership	% of religious stations that play mostly music*	% of religious stations that play mostly talk programming*
AK	23%	54	7.3	7%	28%	12%	15%
AL	30%	113	2.2	1%	39%	55%	29%
AR	24%	79	2.5	2%	27%	18%	45%
AZ	19%	58	0.8	10%	24%	21%	42%
CA	20%	221	0.6	13%	31%	27%	47%
CO	19%	69	1.1	6%	9%	65%	15%
CT	12%	13	0.4	25%	44%	33%	33%
DC	15%	3	0.4	33%	0%	-	-
DE	17%	6	0.6	0%	17%	60%	0%
FL	31%	227	1	8%	39%	43%	26%
GA	31%	161	1.4	4%	34%	42%	20%
HI	17%	20	1.4	8%	40%	0%	67%
IA	23%	72	2.2	21%	36%	22%	56%
ID	23%	44	2.2	3%	31%	35%	42%
IL	23%	117	0.9	20%	19%	31%	48%
IN	27%	108	1.5	11%	26%	48%	25%
KS	31%	92	3.1	17%	25%	29%	56%
KY	26%	102	2.2	8%	35%	33%	22%
LA	31%	100	2.2	8%	35%	24%	54%
MA	16%	37	0.5	23%	30%	19%	44%
MD	20%	30	0.5	4%	29%	59%	24%
ME	20%	30	2.1	19%	27%	37%	42%
MI	26%	135	1.3	12%	21%	56%	29%
MN	17%	67	1.1	18%	20%	16%	16%
MO	27%	116	1.8	14%	28%	41%	51%
MS	29%	85	2.9	1%	24%	33%	62%
MT	26%	68	5.9	3%	29%	7%	30%
NC	36%	182	1.6	5%	35%	52%	18%
ND	26%	35	4.4	21%	34%	14%	43%
NE	32%	76	3.8	25%	34%	22%	46%
NH	16%	18	1.3	6%	33%	0%	50%
NJ	28%	44	0.5	19%	30%	31%	56%
NM	18%	51	2.4	5%	28%	25%	58%
NV	17%	24	0.7	11%	30%	10%	40%
NY	21%	129	0.6	8%	17%	20%	25%
OH	27%	136	1.1	18%	30%	34%	39%
OK	27%	81	2	2%	24%	53%	38%

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OR	23%	87	2	5%	33%	25%	52%
PA	24%	137	1	8%	16%	35%	21%
RI	13%	6	0.5	20%	0%	0%	50%
SC	32%	91	1.6	5%	31%	60%	6%
SD	20%	31	3.3	19%	29%	6%	35%
TN	29%	134	1.8	4%	34%	30%	44%
TX	34%	433	1.4	6%	27%	19%	54%
UT	16%	24	0.7	4%	13%	14%	50%
VA	28%	108	1.2	5%	22%	51%	24%
VT	15%	14	2.2	8%	29%	0%	30%
WA	26%	102	1.3	15%	28%	28%	42%
WI	19%	77	1.3	18%	29%	21%	36%
WV	19%	42	2.4	6%	26%	48%	29%
WY	19%	39	6.6	6%	26%	18%	27%

\* Threshold for “mostly music” and “mostly talk programming” is 70% of that programming type. Stations that don’t meet that threshold are categorized as playing a mix of talk and music (not shown). Shares of stations playing mostly music and mostly talk are based on those that broadcast online and were able to be included in content analysis. The stations located in the District of Columbia did not have available web streams and thus are excluded.

Note: Booster and translator stations are excluded from totals. Categorization of station religious tradition is based on the content of station websites.

Source: Radio-Locator (accessed March 2025) and Pew Research Center analysis of 439,711 hours of programming on FCC-licensed terrestrial AM/FM religious radio stations, recorded July 2025.

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## Methodology

This study of religious radio in the United States uses three different data sources with accompanying methodologies:

- A nationally representative survey of 5,023 U.S. adults conducted June 9-15, 2025
- An external database of administrative information for all FCC-licensed terrestrial AM and FM radio stations in the U.S.
- A computational content analysis of around 440,000 hours of audio recorded from live radio web broadcasts during July 2025

This is a Pew Research Center report from the [Pew-Knight Initiative](#), a research program funded jointly by The Pew Charitable Trusts and the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation.

### The American Trends Panel survey methodology

#### Overview

Data in this report comes from Wave 173 of the American Trends Panel (ATP), Pew Research Center’s nationally representative panel of randomly selected U.S. adults. The survey was conducted June 9-15, 2025. A total of 5,023 panelists responded out of 5,737 who were sampled, for a survey-level response rate of 88%.

The cumulative response rate accounting for nonresponse to the recruitment surveys and attrition is 3%. The break-off rate among panelists who logged on to the survey and completed at least one item is 1%. The margin of sampling error for the full sample of 5,023 respondents is plus or minus 1.6 percentage points.

The survey includes an [oversample](#) of non-Hispanic Asian adults in order to provide more precise estimates of the opinions and experiences of this smaller demographic subgroup. Oversampled groups are weighted back to reflect their correct proportions in the population.

SSRS conducted the survey for Pew Research Center via online (n=4,842) and live telephone (n=181) interviewing. Interviews were conducted in both English and Spanish.

To learn more about the ATP, read “[About the American Trends Panel](#).”

## Panel recruitment

Since 2018, the ATP has used address-based sampling (ABS) for recruitment. A study cover letter and a pre-incentive are mailed to a stratified, random sample of households selected from the U.S. Postal Service’s Computerized Delivery Sequence File. This Postal Service file has been estimated to cover 90% to 98% of the population.<sup>5</sup> Within each sampled household, the adult with the next birthday is selected to participate. Other details of the ABS recruitment protocol have changed over time but are available upon request.<sup>6</sup> Prior to 2018, the ATP was recruited using landline and cellphone random-digit-dial surveys administered in English and Spanish.

A national sample of U.S. adults has been recruited to the ATP approximately once per year since 2014. In some years, the recruitment has included additional efforts (known as an “oversample”) to improve the accuracy of data for underrepresented groups. For example, Hispanic adults, Black adults and Asian adults were oversampled in 2019, 2022 and 2023, respectively.

## Sample design

The overall target population for this survey was noninstitutionalized persons ages 18 and older living in the United States. It featured a stratified random sample from the ATP in which non-Hispanic Asian adults were selected with certainty. The remaining panelists were sampled at rates designed to ensure that the share of respondents in each stratum is proportional to its share of the U.S. adult population to the greatest extent possible. Respondent weights are adjusted to account for differential probabilities of selection as described in the Weighting section below.

## Questionnaire development and testing

The questionnaire was developed by Pew Research Center in consultation with SSRS. The web program used for online respondents was rigorously tested on both PC and mobile devices by the SSRS project team and Pew Research Center researchers. The SSRS project team also populated test data that was analyzed in SPSS to ensure the logic and randomizations were working as intended before launching the survey.

## Incentives

All respondents were offered a post-paid incentive for their participation. Respondents could choose to receive the post-paid incentive in the form of a check or gift code to Amazon.com, Target.com or Walmart.com. Incentive amounts ranged from \$5 to \$20 depending on whether the respondent belongs to a part of the population that is harder or easier to reach. Differential

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<sup>5</sup> AAPOR Task Force on Address-based Sampling. 2016. “AAPOR Report: Address-based Sampling.”

<sup>6</sup> Email [pewsurveys@pewresearch.org](mailto:pewsurveys@pewresearch.org).

incentive amounts were designed to increase panel survey participation among groups that traditionally have low survey response propensities.

### Data collection protocol

The data collection field period for this survey was June 9 to June 15, 2025. Surveys were conducted via self-administered web survey or by live telephone interviewing.

**For panelists who take surveys online:**<sup>7</sup> Postcard notifications were mailed to a subset on June 9.<sup>8</sup> Survey invitations were sent out in two separate launches: soft launch and full launch. Sixty panelists were included in the soft launch, which began with an initial invitation sent on June 9. All remaining English- and Spanish-speaking sampled online panelists were included in the full launch and were sent an invitation on June 10.

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### Invitation and reminder dates for web respondents, ATP Wave 173

	Soft launch	Full launch
Initial invitation	June 9, 2025	June 10, 2025
First reminder	June 12, 2025	June 12, 2025
Final reminder	June 14, 2025	June 14, 2025

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Panelists participating online were sent an email invitation and up to two email reminders if they did not respond to the survey. ATP panelists who consented to SMS messages were sent an SMS invitation with a link to the survey and up to two SMS reminders.

**For panelists who take surveys over the phone with a live interviewer:** Prenotification postcards were mailed on June 6. Soft launch took place on June 9 and involved dialing until a total of seven interviews had been completed. All remaining English- and Spanish-speaking sampled phone panelists' numbers were dialed throughout the remaining field period. Panelists who take surveys via phone can receive up to six calls from trained SSRS interviewers.

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<sup>7</sup> The ATP does not use routers or chains in any part of its online data collection protocol, nor are they used to direct respondents to additional surveys.

<sup>8</sup> Postcard notifications for web panelists are sent to 1) panelists who were recruited within the last two years and 2) panelists recruited prior to the last two years who opt to continue receiving postcard notifications.

**Data quality checks**

To ensure high-quality data, Center researchers performed data quality checks to identify any respondents showing patterns of satisficing. This includes checking for whether respondents left questions blank at very high rates or always selected the first or last answer presented. As a result of this checking, three ATP respondents were removed from the survey dataset prior to weighting and analysis.

**Weighting**

The ATP data is weighted in a process that accounts for multiple stages of sampling and nonresponse that occur at different points in the panel survey process. First, each panelist begins with a base weight that reflects their probability of recruitment into the panel. These weights are then calibrated to align with the population benchmarks in the accompanying table to correct for nonresponse to recruitment surveys and panel attrition. If only a subsample of panelists was invited to participate in the wave, this weight is adjusted to account for any differential probabilities of selection.

Among the panelists who completed the survey, this weight is then calibrated again to align with the population benchmarks identified in the accompanying table and trimmed at the 1st and 99th percentiles to reduce the loss in precision stemming from variance in the weights. Sampling errors and tests of statistical significance take into account the effect of weighting.

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## American Trends Panel weighting dimensions

Variable	Benchmark source
Age (detailed)	2023 American Community Survey (ACS)
Age x Gender	
Education x Gender	
Education x Age	
Race/Ethnicity x Education	
Race/Ethnicity x Gender	
Race/Ethnicity x Age	
Born inside vs. outside the U.S. among Hispanics and Asian Americans	
Years lived in the U.S.	
Census region x Metropolitan status	
Volunteerism	2023 CPS Volunteering & Civic Life Supplement
Frequency of internet use	2024 National Public Opinion Reference Survey (NPORS)
Religious affiliation	
Party affiliation x Race/Ethnicity	
Party affiliation x Age	
Validated 2024 presidential election turnout and vote choice	Candidate vote share is based on official results from the Federal Election Commission. Turnout is based on estimates from the Election Lab at the University of Florida. The size of the voting-eligible population is based on the 2023 ACS.

Note: Estimates from the ACS are based on noninstitutionalized adults. For weighting to the 2024 presidential election results, panelists are considered validated voters if their self-report of having voted was confirmed after matching to a national voter registry.

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The following table shows the unweighted sample sizes and the error attributable to sampling that would be expected at the 95% level of confidence for different groups in the survey.

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### Sample sizes and margins of error, ATP Wave 173

<b>Group</b>	<b>Unweighted sample size</b>	<b>Plus or minus ...</b>
Total sample	5,023	1.6 percentage points
All religious programming listeners	2,190	2.4 percentage points
Religious talk programming listeners	843	3.9 percentage points

Note: This survey includes an oversample of non-Hispanic Asian respondents. Unweighted sample sizes do not account for the sample design or weighting and do not describe a group's contribution to weighted estimates. Refer to the Sample design and Weighting sections above for details.

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Sample sizes and sampling errors for other subgroups are available upon request. In addition to sampling error, one should bear in mind that question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of opinion polls.

## Dispositions and response rates

### Final dispositions, ATP Wave 173

	AAPOR code	Total
Completed interview	1.1	5,023
Logged in (web) / Contacted (CATI), but did not complete any items	2.11	117
Started survey; broke off before completion	2.12	46
Never logged on (web) / Never reached on phone (CATI)	2.20	548
Survey completed after close of the field period	2.27	0
Other noninterview	2.30	0
Completed interview but was removed for data quality	2.90	3
<b>Total panelists sampled for the survey</b>		<b>5,737</b>
Completed interviews	I	5,023
Partial interviews	P	0
Refusals	R	163
Noncontact	NC	548
Other	O	3
Unknown household	UH	0
Unknown other	UO	0
Not eligible	NE	0
<b>Total</b>		<b>5,737</b>
<b>AAPOR RR1 = I / (I+P+R+NC+O+UH+UO)</b>		<b>88%</b>

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### Cumulative response rate, ATP Wave 173

	Total
Weighted response rate to recruitment surveys	11%
% of recruitment survey respondents who agreed to join the panel, among those invited	73%
% of those agreeing to join who were active panelists at start of Wave 173	34%
Response rate to Wave 173 survey	88%
<b>Cumulative response rate</b>	<b>3%</b>

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## Identifying religious radio stations

To identify the population of religious radio stations broadcasting throughout the United States, we relied on data from [Radio-Locator](#), a vendor specializing in up-to-date administrative data on U.S. and international radio stations. Radio-Locator uses FCC licensing information to maintain a database of terrestrial radio stations, including details such as each station’s location, call sign, band and frequency, and owner or licensee. This station-level data is enriched with additional fields, including each station’s primary genre, website, live audio stream URL and coverage area. For this analysis, we used a snapshot of the Radio-Locator database from March 2025.

The Radio-Locator database contains 25,753 stations located in the 50 U.S. states and the District of Columbia. Of these, 17,115 are primary stations broadcasting on the AM or FM band, and an additional 8,638 are secondary “booster” or “translator” stations that extend or rebroadcast a primary station. In this research, we include booster and translator stations when estimating geographic coverage but filter the data to include only primary stations for the rest of the analysis.

All stations in the Radio-Locator database have been assigned a genre label indicating the type of content that primarily makes up that station’s broadcast schedule. We consider a station “religious” if its content is categorized as Religious, Christian Contemporary, Gospel Music or Spanish Christian. In total, 7,366 such stations appear in the database, 4,328 of which are primary stations included in the main analysis. Stations categorized as Spanish Christian were included in all analyses of administrative data, including geographic coverage, but were excluded from the live radio content analysis.

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### Religious genres in the Radio-Locator database

Genre	Number of primary stations	Number of booster/translator stations
Religious	2,231	1,617
Christian Contemporary	1,228	1,063
Gospel Music	445	206
Spanish Christian	424	152
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,328</b>	<b>3,038</b>

Note: Counts reflect FCC-licensed AM and FM stations in the 50 U.S. states and the District of Columbia.

Source: Radio-Locator (accessed March 2025).  
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The population of religious stations was further validated in two ways:

- Researchers reviewed station websites and recorded information about the religious tradition of the station from any available “About us” statements. Read more about how we [analyzed stations websites](#) below.

- During the content analysis stage of the study, researchers confirmed that all stations with available recorded content had a non-zero quantity of either spoken content classified under the topic “Religion” or played music by identifiably religious artists. Read more about how we [categorized spoken content](#) and [identified music](#) below.<sup>9</sup>

This report focuses on radio stations with primarily religious programming, and at the station level, a large majority of U.S. religious radio is Christian. We encountered just two stations that could be definitively identified as part of a different religious tradition: a low-power FM station in Lakewood, New Jersey, operated by a Jewish organization (WMDI-LP) and an AM station in Spanish Fork, Utah, operated by a Hare Krishna temple (KHQN).

Other religious content may also appear as intermittent programming on other public, talk or community radio stations. However, because these stations do not broadcast religious content as their primary genre of programming, they are not considered for this analysis.

### **Analysis of station websites**

For each of the 3,332 stations with an accessible website (85% of included stations), researchers recorded available information about the station itself, the religious tradition or denomination affiliated with the station and any “About us” statements or similar text.

We also coded the full broadcast schedules of a sample of 300 stations randomly selected from those with both a website and an audio stream URL. Researchers accessed each station’s 24-hour broadcast schedule and divided it into 15-minute time blocks. They recorded program names, host information, program type (talk or music), and start and end times rounded to the nearest 15 minutes.<sup>10</sup> Seven days’ worth of scheduling information was collected for each sampled station.

If the broadcast schedule appeared to change week to week or month to month, coders were instructed to input the schedule for the second week of July 2025, if available. If July 2025 was not available, they used the schedule for the current week at the time of coding (April-May 2025).

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<sup>9</sup> One station was identified as nonreligious at the content analysis stage: WPCM out of Burlington-Graham, North Carolina, was categorized as Christian Contemporary by Radio-Locator but was not observed to broadcast any religious content. Upon further review, we discovered WPCM had changed its format to Classic Hits in April 2025. It was excluded from the analysis.

<sup>10</sup> In cases where multiple short programs were scheduled within the same 15-minute time block, coders assigned the block to the program occupying the majority of the time. If no single program took up the majority of the block, all scheduled programs were coded.

This process yielded detailed data on the named programs that appear on stations' published broadcast schedules, which was used to estimate which shows appear across the largest number of stations.

## **Recording internet broadcasts from religious radio stations**

To better understand the content of religious radio broadcasts, we attempted large-scale recording, transcription and analysis of the internet radio streams from 2,083 religious radio stations with primarily English-language content that stream their live broadcasts online. It's common for a group of individual stations to share the same live broadcast stream, so this set of 2,083 stations is represented by a set of 785 unique web stream URLs.

### **Sampling time frames to record**

For this study, we had the computational capacity to monitor, record and process 250 audio streams simultaneously. Rather than selecting a subset of the population of stations that broadcast online – recording *some* stations *all the time* during the data collection window – we recorded in 15-minute time blocks uniformly distributed across all the available web streams – recording *all* stations *some of the time*.

Our data collection window was the month of July 2025. We scheduled 250 recording blocks every 15 minutes, 24 hours a day for the entire month. That amounts to 24,000 recordings per day, for a total of 744,000 over the 31 days of July. To maximize coverage within these parameters, in cases where multiple stations shared a single broadcast stream, we included it once (rather than multiple times) in the sampling frame, then assigned recordings from that stream to all stations that shared its URL. On average, each station's web stream was scheduled for about 237 hours of dedicated recording time during the data collection window.

## Recording infrastructure

To complete this data collection at the required scale, we developed and deployed a cluster of 250 containerized stream listener applications. Each listener operated using a dedicated schedule, which determined the broadcast stream it connected to during each 15-minute recording time slot. At the beginning of a time slot, the assigned listener would connect to the scheduled URL and process the incoming audio data using the multimedia framework software [FFmpeg](#). After 15 minutes, the listener would disconnect from the stream URL and save the recorded audio file as a low-bit rate (64 kbps) MP3.

Using this procedure, we successfully recorded and processed a total of 716,626 15-minute recordings – 96% of the scheduled time slots we attempted to capture. This represents roughly 230 hours of audio from each distinct web stream URL and totals nearly 440,000 hours of audio once we accounted for multiple stations sharing a web stream.

## Speech-to-text transcription

Each recorded audio file was then passed through a machine transcription pipeline which produced line-level transcripts for all spoken content. This pipeline was based on the [WhisperX](#) system, which extends basic speech-to-text transcription models with speaker differentiation (diarization) and time stamp alignment. Our implementation of the WhisperX system included:

- [whisper-large-v3-turbo](#) transcription models from OpenAI
- [speaker-diarization-community-1](#) diarization/voice activity detection models from pyannoteAI

Our line-level transcripts for each recording not only capture what was said, but also break the conversation up into individual statements or “utterances,” each of which are time-stamped within the audio file and tagged with a speaker ID number to help differentiate between the various

## A note about Educational Media Foundation stations

Educational Media Foundation (EMF) is the largest ownership group in American religious radio, operating both the Air1 and K-LOVE networks of stations. These primarily air Christian music. On-demand online listening is available for both the Air1 and K-LOVE networks. However, these streams are delivered through proprietary web players and mobile applications that do not provide publicly accessible stream URLs that could be reliably integrated into our automated recording system.

Because our recording infrastructure relied on FFmpeg to connect directly to scheduled stream URLs at fixed intervals, we were unable to capture audio from Air1 and K-LOVE stations in a consistent, automated way. As a result, they were excluded from the recorded content collection and subsequent content analysis. They are included in analyses based on administrative data, such as station counts and geographic coverage.

voices heard throughout the recording. When transcribed line-by-line like this, the audio collected for this study makes up over 186 million lines of dialogue. An example transcript is included below:

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### Example transcript from WBNH (88.5 FM) in Pekin, Illinois

*Segment recorded on July 3, 2025, starting at 7:45 p.m.*

Line number	Start time (seconds)	End time (seconds)	Speaker ID	Text
1	0	540	--	<MUSIC>
2	540.522	544.384	SPEAKER_1	Wow, you've heard some great gospel music in this last hour.
3	544.404	550.448	SPEAKER_1	I want to say thank you for being a part of Gospel Radio Favorites right here on Good News Radio.
4	550.868	555.611	SPEAKER_1	As always, my friends, until next time, may God richly bless you.
5	555.772	556.292	SPEAKER_1	Take care.
6	556.872	560.434	SPEAKER_1	Lord willing, we'll be back here tomorrow on the Fourth of July.
7	560.494	570.138	SPEAKER_1	We've got some special patriotic music, a very special patriotic program coming out right here on the next Gospel Radio Favorites.
8	570.218	570.678	SPEAKER_1	Take care.
9	571.799	577.181	SPEAKER_2	You've been listening to America's favorite Southern gospel music program, Gospel Radio Favorites.
10	577.642	584.985	SPEAKER_2	Be sure to tune in next time for more great Southern gospel music, music news, concert announcements, artist interviews and so much more.
11	585.76	589.761	SPEAKER_2	It's Gospel Radio Favorites, right here on this great station.

Note: Transcription performed using WhisperX, with openai/whisper-large-v3-turbo transcription and pyannote/speaker-diarization-community-1 models for transcription and speaker diarization, respectively.  
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## Categorizing spoken content in religious radio recordings

Each approximately 15-minute radio transcript was passed to a large language model (GPT-4.1) to be partitioned into substantively coherent topical segments, rather than relying on fixed time intervals or arbitrary line counts. Because the transcripts were already diarized and line-numbered at the utterance level, the model could evaluate speaker turns and lexical continuity to identify these segment boundaries.

The classifier was instructed to group contiguous utterances into segments that reflected a shared primary format or communicative function (e.g., monologue, interview, news read). Researchers validated the segment breaks throughout the qualitative coding processes. Segment breaks were placed at points where there was a clear shift in subject matter, interactional format or program structure (such as transitions to advertisements, new stories or caller participation). For each resulting segment, the model returned structured metadata, including start and end line numbers and descriptive labels, enabling downstream analyses at the segment level rather than at the raw transcript level.

Read the [full prompt](#) we used for this process. The specific classifications created are discussed in more detail below.

### Identifying radio segment formats

The first level of classification concerns the segment **format**. This process identified the basic type of programming occurring in a given segment that contained speaking, and added more specific content labels.

We began by developing a codebook with a number of format categories we expected to find in our audio recordings. These included things like talk programming, news reads, sermons, audience participation and advertisements. Members of the research team then classified a sample of segments. This human coding process involved multiple rounds of iteration where disagreements and edge cases were discussed and the codebook was subsequently updated, until we finalized the format categories as follows:

- **Ad/promotion.** An advertisement or promotion of a product, service or event.
- **Audio drama/narrative.** A dramatized production or audio play.

- **Caller interaction/audience participation.** A host or DJ interacting with listeners. This includes taking calls from the audience and reading audience mail or comments but does *not* include interaction with program guests.
- **Discussion/monologue/commentary.** One or more speakers discussing a topic or providing commentary. This includes typical “talk radio” content, banter, religious opinions, and discussions or dialogues between hosts or DJs.
- **Interview.** An interview with a program guest. This does *not* include dialogue between station hosts or DJs.

- **News read/traffic/weather.** Straightforward reads of the news, or local traffic and weather conditions (e.g., “It’s the top of the hour, here’s Bob with the news”). Note that long-form commentary about news or current events is categorized as discussion/monologue/commentary.
- **Religious services or sermons.** A single speaker preaching or delivering a religious message. This includes prayer, Mass or liturgy.
- **Transition/filler.** Administrative or logistical announcements, including show introductions, outros, segment transitions or station identification (e.g., “You’re listening to 99.1 FM”).

These format categories are mutually exclusive – that is, each segment could only be assigned to one format category.

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### Model performance: Format classification

<b>Model</b>	GPT-4.1	
<b>Validation data</b>	640 transcript segments	
<i>Aggregate performance metrics</i>		
<b>Macro F1</b>	0.77	
<b>Micro F1</b>	0.74	
<b>Overall % agreement</b>	74%	
<i>Category-level performance</i>		
<b>Format (mutually exclusive)</b>	<b>F1 score</b>	<b>% agreement</b>
Ad/promotion	0.83	92%
Audio drama/narrative	*	*
Caller interaction/audience participation	0.75	97%
Discussion/monologue/commentary	0.63	84%
Interview	*	*
News read/traffic/weather	0.84	98%
Religious service/sermon	0.81	95%
Transition/filler	0.60	86%

\* Not enough cases in validation sample to calculate metric for individual label (n < 25).

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Once the codebook was finalized, it was integrated into the segmentation and processing pipeline and passed to GPT-4.1 for format classification. Read the [full prompt](#) we used for this process. A random sample of transcript segments were hand-coded for validation of this task by three

researchers. Disagreements were resolved using a [Dawid-Skene aggregation model](#). Performance metrics appear in the table “Model performance: Format classification.”

## Named entity recognition

Named entity recognition (NER) is an information extraction task that involves identifying and classifying words or phrases within a longer text that refer to real-world entities. As part of our segmentation and processing pipeline, we instructed a model to perform NER to identify people, groups and places mentioned in the radio segments. We also used NER to flag titles of stories or books (including religious scriptures, such as the Bible) as well as references to specific passages or verses of scripture.

Read the [full prompt](#) we used for this process. Specific NER categories and definitions we used were:

- **Person.** A named individual (e.g., “Donald Trump,” “the Pope,” “Jesus”). This includes both real people and fictional characters, as well as references to deities in a religious context (e.g., “Holy Spirit,” “Heavenly Father”).
- **Group.** A group of people referred to collectively, but who are not a named organization (e.g., “the congregation,” “the audience”). This includes groups of people referred to by nationality (e.g., “the French”) and religious groups or denominations (e.g., “Catholics,” “Muslims,” “Baptists”).
- **Organization.** A named organization or agency (e.g., “Pew Research Center,” “NASA,” “the Southern Baptist Convention”).
- **Title.** A named book, song, film, show, or other piece of art or media (e.g., “The Great Gatsby,” “the Bible”). This includes titles of religious stories (e.g., “The Parable of the Good Samaritan,” “The Sermon on the Mount”). It does *not* include occupational titles (e.g., “President,” “Doctor,” “Reverend”).

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### Model performance: Named entity recognition

Model	GPT-4.1
<b>Validation data</b>	327 transcript lines with identified entities
<i>% agreement</i>	
<b>Entity name</b>	93%
<b>Entity type</b>	90%

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- **Place.** A named location or geopolitical entity (e.g., “the United States,” “New York,” “Mount Sinai,” “Mar-a-Lago”).
- **Scripture reference.** A reference to a passage or verse in scripture (e.g., “John 3:16,” “Genesis 1:1”).

To validate the NER results, three researchers reviewed a sample of transcript lines with identified entities and independently coded both the predicted entity name (e.g. “Donald Trump”) and the predicted entity type (e.g. “Person”). Disagreements were resolved using a [Dawid-Skene aggregation model](#). Performance metrics appear in the table “Model performance: Named entity recognition.”

### Identifying broad topics

We further classified recording talk segments by the **topics** mentioned or discussed therein. These labels were intended to reflect general, high-level topical areas so we could broadly categorize the content of religious talk radio.

Similar to the process for determining which formats we would use for categorizing segments, an iterative human coding process was used to determine the final list of topics to identify in the data. Unlike formats, however, topics were *not* mutually exclusive. A segment could be labeled with as many topics as applicable. The final set of topic categories used was:

- **Business/economy/finance.** Discussion of economic and financial topics, including tax or tariff policies, personal financial advice, stock markets or investments, and cryptocurrency.
- **Entertainment/pop culture/sports.** Discussion of pop culture topics including film, television, music, sports and celebrities.
- **Family/parenting/education.** Discussion of family-related topics including marriage, having children, child care, child-rearing, schools and education standards.
- **Health/wellness.** Discussion of wellness-related topics including health care, abortion, vaccination, medication, mental health, fitness and exercise.
- **Lifestyle/advice/personal development.** Direct and prescriptive recommendations for lifestyle, actions or behaviors.

- **Politics/current events/social commentary.** Discussion of or commentary on topics including news or current events, local updates, politics and policy, and social issues. This does *not* include community updates or weather/traffic segments that do not touch on broader political or news topics.
- **Religion.** Discussion of religious topics, including religious beliefs, scripture and religious figures.
- **Science/technology.** Discussion of science-related topics, including climate change and evolution.

Once the codebook was finalized, it was integrated into the segmentation and processing pipeline and passed to GPT-4.1 for topic classification. Read the [full prompt](#) we used for this process. A sample of the model’s predictions for this task were hand coded for validation by three researchers. Disagreements were resolved using a [Dawid-Skene aggregation model](#). Performance metrics appear in the table “Model performance: Broad topic classification.”

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### Model performance: Broad topic classification

Model	GPT-4.1	
<b>Validation data</b>	352 transcript segments	
<i>Aggregate performance metrics</i>		
<b>Macro F1</b>	0.71	
<b>Micro F1</b>	0.79	
<b>Overall % agreement:</b>	91%	
<i>Category-level performance</i>		
Topic (choose any that apply)	F1 score	% agreement
Business/economics/finance	*	*
Entertainment/pop culture/sports	*	*
Family/parenting/education	0.73	94%
Health/wellness	0.84	98%
Lifestyle/advice/personal development	0.46	84%
Politics/current events/social commentary	0.71	92%
Religion	0.93	91%
Science/technology	*	*

(Model and annotators agreed on ≥1 label in 83% of cases)

\* Not enough cases in validation sample to calculate metric for individual label (n < 25).  
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## Identifying more specific subtopics

Beyond the broader topics that we identified, we further examined specific **subtopics** of interest. Any segments with a topic label of *Religion, Politics/current events/social commentary, Health/wellness, Business/economy/finance* or *Science/technology* were passed to a subtopic model.

Similar to the processes for format and topic categorization, an iterative human coding process was used to determine the final set of subtopics to be identified. Just as with topics, subtopics were *not* mutually exclusive. A segment could be labeled with as many subtopics as applicable. We defined the final list of topics to as the following:

- **Abortion.** Faith-based discussions about the morality of abortion, debates between policy positions, discussion of abortion alternatives (e.g., crisis pregnancy centers) or reproductive health clinics that commonly offer abortion procedures, and general references to abortion, even if the term “abortion” is not explicitly mentioned. This also includes discussion of federal laws or court decisions related to abortion rights (e.g., *Roe v. Wade*, *Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health*) and state laws or abortion bans. This does *not* include general discussions of women’s health or reproductive health (e.g., IVF, birth control).
- **Crime/law enforcement.** Discussion of crime, law enforcement and the justice system. This includes references to specific crimes (for example, in a news read or while discussing a high-profile court case), references to crime, crime waves, “law and order” or lawlessness in the abstract, actions taken by police or other law enforcement agencies such as U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, crime or property destruction during protests, and police actions during protests. This does *not* include discussion of protests more generally (that is, protests not involving crime, property destruction or police actions).
- **Economy.** Discussion of the economy or economic conditions, including global trade or tariff policy, “kitchen table” issues (e.g., cost of groceries or child care), cost of living, inflation, tax policies, unemployment, hiring or layoffs, poverty, and the stock market. This does *not* include general references to economic or social class (e.g., “the middle class”).
- **Foreign policy/international politics.** Discussion of U.S. policy toward other countries, domestic politics within other countries, and international politics between other countries, including global trade or tariff policy, and contemporary wars and conflicts. This does *not* include discussion of historical wars and conflicts.

- **Immigration.** Discussion of immigration or immigrants, both in a U.S. context and in a global context. This includes actions of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) or Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) (e.g., deportation or detention of immigrants), actions of immigrants, and immigration policies.
- **LGBTQ issues and rights.** Discussion of LGBTQ issues, rights and identities, including related laws or court rulings (e.g. Obergefell v. Hodges), same-sex marriage, the compatibility or incompatibility of religion and LGBTQ identities, issues related to transgender individuals or identities (e.g., the availability of gender-affirming care, bathroom bans, sports bans, etc.), references to conversion therapy, and discussion of homophobic or transphobic rhetoric or actions.

---

### Model performance: Additional subtopic classification

<b>Model</b>	Fine-tuned ModernBERT model trained on synthetic labels produced by GPT-4.1	
<b>Validation data</b>	1,327 transcript segments	
<i>Aggregate performance metrics</i>		
<b>Macro F1</b>		78%
<b>Micro F1</b>		75%
<b>Overall % agreement</b>		97%
<i>Category-level performance</i>		
<b>Topic (choose any that apply)</b>	<b>F1 score</b>	<b>% agreement</b>
Abortion	0.93	99.5%
Crime/law enforcement	0.63	96%
Economy	0.71	96%
Foreign policy/international politics	0.71	97%
Immigration	0.82	99.2%
LGBTQ issues and rights	0.89	99.4%
		(Model and annotators agreed on $\geq 1$ label in 83% of cases)

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Once the codebook was finalized, we fine-tuned a [ModernBERT](#) model on a set of synthetic topic labels generated by GPT-4.1 for a random sample of segments from the broader collection of data. We then used this model to further classify the remaining segments at scale. Read the [full prompt](#) we used for this process. A random sample of transcript segments were hand-coded for validation of this task by three researchers. Disagreements were resolved using a [Dawid-Skene aggregation model](#). Performance metrics appear in the table “Model performance: Additional subtopic classification.”

## Classifying issue stance

In addition to categorizing segments by detailed subtopic and identifying key individuals and groups mentioned using NER, we also wanted to assess speakers' attitudes toward a set of key issues. To achieve this, we developed a **stance** classification system which, given a target issue, could identify whether a text about that issue is *neutral* or *opinionated*, and if opinionated, whether the speaker expresses a *favorable* or *unfavorable* opinion toward the issue.

We coded stance for a selection of issues, individuals and groups drawn from both our [NER process](#) and our [subtopic classification process](#).

- From the NER results, we identified mentions of Donald Trump, Joe Biden, the Democratic Party and the Republican Party. We also used the NER results to identify references to Israel and the Palestinian territories – but only in segments with the *Foreign policy/international politics* subtopic label, which allowed us to narrow our analysis to opinions about contemporary events in the region rather than discussions related to its biblical context.
- From the subtopic categorizations, we coded stance for five additional issues: abortion, LGBTQ issues and rights, immigration, economy, and crime/law enforcement.

For most of these issues, individuals and groups, we coded segments as *neutral* or *opinionated*, and opinionated text was further coded as *favorable/unfavorable* with respect to the subject. The crime/law enforcement and economy subtopics do not map as cleanly onto specific positions, so these were only coded as *neutral* or *opinionated*.

The full set of issues, individuals and groups analyzed for stance was:

- **Donald Trump:** *Neutral* coverage includes segments that mention Trump, his actions or the actions of his administration in a factual, value-neutral way. *Opinionated* coverage includes segments that express a position about Trump, his actions or the actions of his administration. If the speaker indicates that their position is aligned with or supportive of Trump, the segment is coded as *favorable*. If they express disagreement or criticism, the segment is coded as *unfavorable*.
- **Joe Biden:** *Neutral* coverage includes segments that mention Biden, his actions or the actions of his administration in a factual, value-neutral way, including retrospective references to his presidency. *Opinionated* coverage includes segments that express a position about Biden, his actions or the actions of his administration. If the speaker indicates that their

position is aligned with or supportive of Biden or his administration, the segment is coded as *favorable*. If they express disagreement or criticism, the segment is coded as *unfavorable*.

- **Republican Party:** *Neutral* coverage includes segments that mention the Republican Party by name and discuss its members, leadership, platform or actions in a factual, value-neutral way. *Opinionated* coverage includes segments that express a position about the Republican Party, including evaluations of its elected officials, policy positions, electoral performance or broader direction. If the speaker indicates that their position is aligned with or supportive of the Republican Party, the segment is coded as *favorable* toward the party. If they express disagreement, criticism or disapproval, the segment is coded as *unfavorable* toward the party.
- **Democratic Party:** *Neutral* coverage includes segments that mention the Democratic Party by name and discuss its members, leadership, platform or actions in a factual, value-neutral way. *Opinionated* coverage includes segments that express a position about the Democratic Party, including evaluations of its elected officials, policy positions, electoral performance or broader direction. If the speaker indicates that their position is aligned with or supportive of the Democratic Party, the segment is coded as *favorable* toward the party. If they express disagreement, criticism, or disapproval, the segment is coded as *unfavorable* toward the party.
- **Israel:** *Neutral* coverage includes segments that mention Israel, the Israeli government or Israeli actions in a factual, value-neutral way, including descriptions of ongoing hostilities, diplomatic activity or other foreign policy developments. *Opinionated* coverage includes segments that express a position about Israel or the actions of its government or military, including the conduct of the Israel-Hamas war and broader policy questions related to the conflict. If the speaker indicates that their position is aligned with, supportive of or sympathetic toward Israel or its actions, the segment is coded as *favorable* toward Israel. If the speaker expresses criticism or disapproval of Israel or its actions, the segment is coded as *unfavorable* toward Israel.
- **Palestinian territories:** *Neutral* coverage includes segments that mention the Palestinian territories, governing authorities or the Palestinian people in a factual, value-neutral way, including descriptions of ongoing hostilities, diplomatic activity or other foreign policy developments. *Opinionated* coverage includes segments that express a position about the Palestinian territories, authorities or the Palestinian people, including the conduct of the Israel-Hamas war and broader policy questions related to the conflict. If the speaker indicates that their position is aligned with, supportive of or sympathetic toward the Palestinian territories or people, the segment is coded as *favorable* toward the Palestinian territories. If

the speaker expresses criticism or disapproval of the Palestinian territories or people, the segment is coded as unfavorable toward the Palestinian territories.

- **Abortion:** *Neutral* coverage includes segments that mention abortion, abortion rights, legislation, court cases, ballot initiatives or related medical procedures in a factual, value-neutral way. *Opinionated* coverage includes segments that express a position on the legality, morality, availability or regulation of abortion, or that advocate for particular abortion policies. If the speaker expresses a position supporting abortion rights or access to abortion, the segment is coded as *favorable* toward abortion rights. If the speaker expresses a position opposing abortion or supporting restrictions or bans, the segment is coded as *unfavorable* toward abortion rights.
- **LGBTQ issues and rights:** *Neutral* coverage includes segments that mention LGBTQ people, issues, rights, legislation, court cases, public debates or related policies in a factual, value-neutral way. *Opinionated* coverage includes segments that express a position on LGBTQ rights, legal protections, social acceptance, education policy, gender identity and related policy, or other issues affecting LGBTQ people. If the speaker indicates support for LGBTQ rights, protections or social acceptance, the segment is coded as *favorable*. If the speaker expresses opposition to LGBTQ rights, advocates for restricting protections or recognition, or frames LGBTQ identities or policies negatively, the segment is coded as *unfavorable*.
- **Immigration:** *Neutral* coverage includes segments that mention immigration, migrants, border crossings, asylum processes, deportations or related policies in a factual, value-neutral way. *Opinionated* coverage includes segments that express a position on immigration levels, border enforcement, deportation policy, pathways to legal status or citizenship, or the broader social and economic effects of immigration. If the speaker empathizes with immigrant communities or presents immigration as beneficial, desirable, or something that should be maintained or expanded, the segment is coded as *favorable*. If the speaker presents immigration as harmful, threatening, or something that should be restricted or reduced, the segment is coded as *unfavorable*.
- **Economy:** *Neutral* coverage includes segments that discuss the economy or economic conditions in a factual, value-neutral way. This can include macroeconomic discussions as well as “kitchen table” issues. In *opinionated* coverage, the speaker takes a position, which could include an opinion on the overall state or direction of the economy, a statement for or against a certain economic policy, or advice about how individual consumers should adapt to economic conditions. (*Opinionated* coverage of the economy was not further delineated as *favorable* or *unfavorable*.)

- **Crime/law enforcement:** *Neutral* coverage includes segments that discuss crime, law enforcement or the justice system in a factual, value-neutral way. This can include reporting on specific crimes, descriptions of high-profile court cases, references to crime trends or “law and order” in the abstract, or accounts of actions taken by police, ICE or other law enforcement agencies, including during protests. *Opinionated* coverage includes segments in which the speaker takes a position on crime rates, the causes of crime, the performance or conduct of law enforcement, the fairness or effectiveness of the justice system, or proposed policy responses to crime. (*Opinionated* coverage of crime/law enforcement was not further delineated as *favorable* or *unfavorable*.)

Once the codebook was finalized, we fine-tuned a [ModernBERT](#) model on a set of synthetic stance labels generated by GPT-4.1 for a random sample of segments from the broader collection of data. We then used this model to further classify the remaining segments at scale. Read the [full prompt](#) we used for this process. A random sample of the production model’s predictions for this task were hand-coded for validation by up to three researchers. Disagreements were resolved using a [Dawid-Skene aggregation model](#). Performance metrics appear in the table “Model performance: Issue stance classification.”

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### Model performance: Issue stance classification

<b>Model</b>	Fine-tuned ModernBERT model trained on synthetic labels produced by GPT-4.1	
<b>Validation data</b>	358 transcript segments	
<i>Aggregate performance metrics</i>		
<b>Macro F1</b>	0.75	
<b>Micro F1</b>	0.76	
<b>Overall % agreement</b>	76%	
<b>Opinionated % agreement</b>	77%	
<b>Directional % agreement</b>	99%	
<i>Category-level performance</i>		
<b>Stance (mutually exclusive)</b>	<b>F1 score</b>	<b>% agreement</b>
Favorable	0.65	84%
Neutral	0.74	77%
Unfavorable	0.86	91%

Note: “Opinionated” agreement evaluates the model’s ability to distinguish between neutral and any opinion. “Directional” agreement evaluates the model’s ability to distinguish between favorable and unfavorable categories, ignoring neutral. “Religious Radio Across America”

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## Speaker gender prediction

To estimate the gender of speakers in recorded broadcasts, we used [audeering/wav2vec2-large-robust-24-ft-age-gender](#), a pretrained wav2vec2 model fine-tuned to predict speaker characteristics from vocal audio.

Because our transcription pipeline produces time-stamped transcripts with speaker labels, we were able to identify all the individual utterances for each speaker in a given recording, extract the corresponding audio clip based on these time stamps, and pass the audio segments to the wav2vec2 model. The model generates predictions based on vocal characteristics and outputs a gender classification for each segment. We aggregated these predictions at the speaker level to assign a single gender classification to each speaker in the analysis. This is a probabilistic approach that relies solely on the acoustic features of a speaker’s voice to determine gender and is limited to a binary classification of male/female categories.

To validate the results of the gender prediction model, a researcher coded a stratified random sample of 50 utterances (30 predicted male voices, 20 predicted female) for apparent vocal gender. Their judgement aligned with the model’s in 98% of cases.

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### Model performance: Speaker gender prediction

<b>Model</b>	Fine-tuned <a href="#">wav2vec2</a>
<b>Validation data</b>	Stratified sample of 50 single-speaker audio clips (30 predicted male, 20 predicted female)
<b>% agreement</b>	98%
<b>F1 score</b>	0.97

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## Identifying musical content in religious radio recordings

### Differentiating music from speech

One of the first steps in processing the raw radio broadcast audio we recorded was to differentiate the segments that were music from those that were spoken content. We did this using [MIT/ast-finetuned-audioset-10-10-0.4593](#), a pretrained Audio Spectrogram Transformer (AST) model fine-tuned on the [AudioSet](#) dataset. AudioSet features a wide variety of short audio clips, so we adapted this model to our 15-minute radio recordings by chunking the full recordings into overlapping 10-second segments. All segments were classified as speech or music independently, then merged back together into continuous regions of either category. In cases where the model applied both the speech and music labels (likely indicating someone speaking over music), we considered that segment to be speech.

Independently of this process, all raw audio was being passed through the [transcription pipeline](#) discussed above. When the music detection model classified a segment as music, that section of the transcript was notated as <MUSIC> regardless of whether the transcription model attempted to transcribe lyrics.

### Identifying tracks, artists and music genres

The approach to speech and music identification outlined above does not differentiate between commercially available studio recordings and other musical elements that might play during the broadcast, including things like advertising jingles, theme music for program intros, and music that plays as part of a religious service. To recognize the specific tracks that played on religious radio stations throughout July 2025, we used [AudD](#), a music recognition API that can analyze a short segment of a song, match it to a track in its database and return metadata about the track, including its artist, genre and identification in the Spotify music library for further details (if applicable).

Rather than attempting to classify *all* of the musical elements we had collected, we randomly sampled 249,076 of the raw 15-minute recordings we had captured and selected one 12-second clip of music for identification out of the recordings that contained at least two minutes of continuous music.

Using this sampling procedure, 131,825 recordings (53% of those sampled) had identifiable music, totaling 39,262 distinct tracks by 13,594 different artists, and representing 300,915 unique instances of a track playing when we account for the fact that multiple stations share a broadcast

stream in many cases. Tracks identified through AudD contained title, artist and album information.

About 93% of all distinct identified tracks also had associated metadata in the Spotify music library, which allowed us to retrieve more detailed information about the artists who created them, including the genres they are associated with if any were listed. Because genre tags are not always standardized across artists within these types of databases, researchers reviewed the top 25 most common genre tags (collectively accounting for 97% of identified tracks that had any associated genre information at all) and merged/unified them into the following set of standardized categories for analysis:

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### Music genre labels and consolidated categories

Genre description used in analysis	Labels consolidated under this music genre
Christian contemporary music	Christian, CCM
Worship	Worship, Pop Worship
Pop	Christian Pop, Pop Worship
Gospel	Gospel, Southern Gospel, Gospel R&B
Country	Country, Christian Country, Bluegrass
Rock	Rock, Christian Rock, Christian Alternative Rock
Alternative	Christian Alternative Rock
R&B/Hip-Hop	R&B, Gospel R&B, Christian Hip-Hop
Folk	Christian Folk, Bluegrass
Other	<i>Substantive genres not listed above</i>
Any Christian	Christian, Worship, CCM, Christian Pop, Gospel, Christian Country, Christian Rock, Christian Alternative Rock, Southern Gospel, Pop Worship, CEDM, Christian Folk, Gospel R&B, Christian Hip-Hop, Pentecostal

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## Mapping programming categories onto a 24-hour schedule

The content analysis in this study is based on around 440,000 hours of audio recorded from religious radio stations collected throughout July 2025. As described above, this recording process occurred in 15-minute blocks, uniformly distributed across all the stations we were monitoring. While we captured about 230 combined hours of content per station and have broad coverage of what each station broadcast over the month, what we recorded is not necessarily continuous.

For ease of interpretation, we report various findings that describe the content of religious radio in terms of “hours per day” on a given station or group of stations. But because we don’t have continuous recordings for each station over a 24-hour period, these “hours per day” figures are not measured directly. Instead, they are calculated from the content categories observed in the data. This is a straightforward process: If we observe that half of the material we recorded for a given station is music, then we can multiply that proportion by the 24 hours in a day to arrive at a figure of 12 hours of music per day for that station, on average.

This approach relies on the assumption that the stations in question do, in fact, broadcast 24 hours per day and do not sign off overnight. Our analysis indicates that this is the case for the vast majority of religious stations in America, at least when tuning in via their web streams. We encountered no difficulty recording content overnight during the data collection period.

We also performed a validation check on a sample of 2,500 recordings looking for dead air. We found that on average, a total of less than 30 seconds of silence occurs across an entire 15-minute recording block, and there is no statistically significant difference in the amount of silence heard overnight compared with other times of day. (These tests were performed based on the stations’ local time zones.)

# Questionnaire

SSRS Job# X4129

**2025 PEW RESEARCH CENTER'S AMERICAN TRENDS PANEL  
WAVE 173 ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE/RELIGIOUS RADIO/HEALTH AND WELLNESS  
FINAL QUESTIONNAIRE  
JUNE 9 – 15, 2025**

**Note:** The questions presented below are part of a larger survey conducted on the American Trends Panel. For all questions, the 98 ("don't know" in phone mode) and 99 (refusal in phone mode and no answer in web mode) codes are combined in the data for analytical purposes.

**PN = Programming note**

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**\*CODEBOOK FOR ATP SAMPLE VARIABLES TO BE USED IN SURVEY PROGRAMMING LOGIC\***

**X\_FORM**

- 1 Form 1
- 2 Form 2

Note: Flag to randomly assign panelists to one of two forms (Form 1, Form 2) and weight within form  
Source: Randomly assigned for each survey.

**X\_ATTENDPER**

- 1 More than once a week
- 2 Once a week
- 3 Once or twice a month
- 4 A few times a year
- 5 Seldom
- 6 Never
- 99 Refused

Note: Flag to identify ATP panelists who attend service at least a few times a year, for RRRELVIEWS.  
Source: Frame file variable F\_ATTENDPER. Same codes as F\_ATTENDPER.

-----  
 -----**MAIN QUESTIONNAIRE BEGINS HERE**-----  
 -----

**ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS PREVIOUSLY RELEASED****ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE****TXT:**

[ PN: DISPLAY TO ALL: ]

On another topic...

**BAT: RRSOUNDS****ASK ALL:**

[ PN: RANDOMIZE ITEMS INCLUDE RANDOMIZATION IN DATA FILE ]

[ PN: IF WEB: ] Do you ever listen to each of the following, whether on the radio, podcasts, online, or on a streaming service like Spotify?

[ PN: IF CATI: **READ FOR FIRST ITEM:** ] Do you ever listen to each of the following, whether on the radio, podcasts, online or on a streaming service like Spotify? First, **(INSERT ITEM)**. **(READ LIST IF NECESSARY)**

[ PN: IF CATI: **READ FOR SUBSEQUENT ITEMS:** ] Next, **(INSERT ITEM)**. **(READ AS NECESSARY:** Do you ever listen to this, whether on the radio, podcasts, online or on a streaming service like Spotify? **(READ LIST IF NECESSARY))**

**BATTERY ITEMS:**

MUS Religious music

TALK Religious talk shows

SERM Religious services or sermons

DRAM Religious storytelling or audio drama shows

**RESPONSE CATEGORIES:**

1 Yes

2 No

98 [ PN: IF CATI: ] **(DO NOT READ)** Don't know99 [ PN: IF WEB: ] Web blank / [ PN: IF CATI: ] **(DO NOT READ)** Refused

**BAT: RRMEDIUM**

**ASK IF LISTEN TO RELIGIOUS CONTENT (RRSOUNDS\_MUS=1 OR RRSOUNDS\_TALK=1 OR RRSOUNDS\_SERM=1 OR RRSOUNDS\_DRAM= 1):**

**[ PN: RANDOMIZE ITEMS; ROTATE RESPONSE OPTIONS 1-5/5-1 IN THE SAME ORDER AS AI\_KNOWUSE, HOLDING 98 AND 99 LAST; INCLUDE RANDOMIZATION AND ROTATION IN DATA FILE ]**

**[ PN: IF WEB: ]** Thinking about the religious music, shows, or services you listen to, how often do you listen to them on...

**[ PN: IF CATI: READ FOR FIRST ITEM: ]** Thinking about the religious music, shows, or services you listen to, how often do you listen to them on **(INSERT ITEM) (READ LIST)?**

**[ PN: IF CATI: READ FOR SUBSEQUENT ITEMS: ]** What about on **(INSERT ITEM)**. **(READ AS NECESSARY: How often do you listen to religious music, shows, or services on (INSERT ITEM)? (READ LIST AS NECESSARY))**

**BATTERY ITEMS:**

AMFM **[ PN: IF WEB: ]** AM or FM radio (including radio stations streamed online)

**[ PN: IF CATI: ]** AM or FM radio, including radio stations streamed online

SAT A satellite radio service like SiriusXM

SPOT A music or podcast platform like Spotify, Apple Podcasts, or Pandora

**RESPONSE CATEGORIES:**

1 Extremely often

2 Often

3 Sometimes

4 Rarely

5 Never

98 **[ PN: IF CATI: ] (DO NOT READ)** Don't know

99 **[ PN: IF WEB: ]** Web blank / **[ PN: IF CATI: ] (DO NOT READ)** Refused

**BAT: RRWHERE**

**ASK IF LISTEN TO RELIGIOUS CONTENT (RRSOUNDS\_MUS=1 OR RRSOUNDS\_TALK=1 OR RRSOUNDS\_SERM=1 OR RRSOUNDS\_DRAM= 1):**

**[ PN: RANDOMIZE ITEMS; ROTATE RESPONSE OPTIONS 1-5/5-1 IN THE SAME ORDER AS AI\_KNOWUSE, HOLDING 98 AND 99 LAST; INCLUDE RANDOMIZATION AND ROTATION IN DATA FILE ]**

**[ PN: IF WEB: ]** How often do you listen to religious music, shows, or services...

**[ PN: IF CATI: READ FOR FIRST ITEM: ]** Thinking about the religious music, shows, or services you listen to, how often do you listen to them **(INSERT ITEM)? (READ LIST)**

**[ PN: IF CATI: READ FOR SUBSEQUENT ITEMS: ]** What about **(INSERT ITEM)? (READ AS NECESSARY: How often do you listen to religious music, shows, or services (INSERT ITEM)? (READ LIST))**

**BATTERY ITEMS:**

HOME At home

CAR In a car

WORK At work

PUB In public spaces, such as a coffee shop, a store, or at the gym

**RESPONSE CATEGORIES:**

1 Extremely often

2 Often

3 Sometimes

4 Rarely

5 Never

98 **[ PN: IF CATI: ] (DO NOT READ)** Don't know

99 **[ PN: IF WEB: ]** Web blank / **[ PN: IF CATI: ] (DO NOT READ)** Refused

**QUE: RRDONATE**

**ASK IF LISTEN TO RELIGIOUS CONTENT (RRSOUNDS\_MUS=1 OR RRSOUNDS\_TALK=1 OR RRSOUNDS\_SERM=1 OR RRSOUNDS\_DRAM= 1):**

Have you ever directly given money to support a religious radio station, religious radio show, or religious podcast?

**[ PN: IF CATI: ] (READ LIST IF NECESSARY)**

1 **[ PN: IF WEB: ]** Yes, I have done this **[ PN: IF CATI: ]** Yes, you have done this

2 **[ PN: IF WEB: ]** No, I have not done this **[ PN: IF CATI: ]** No, you have not done this

98 **[ PN: IF CATI: ] (DO NOT READ)** Don't know

99 **[ PN: IF WEB: ]** Web blank / **[ PN: IF CATI: ] (DO NOT READ)** Refused

---

**QUE: RRIMPORT****ASK IF LISTEN TO RELIGIOUS CONTENT (RRSOUNDS\_MUS=1 OR RRSOUNDS\_TALK=1 OR RRSOUNDS\_SERM=1 OR RRSOUNDS\_DRAM= 1):****[ PN: ROTATE RESPONSE OPTIONS 1-5/5-1 IN THE SAME ORDER AS AI\_KNOWUSE, HOLDING 98 AND 99 LAST; INCLUDE ROTATION IN DATA FILE ]**How important is listening to religious music, shows, or services to your religious or spiritual life?**[ PN: IF CATI: ] (READ LIST)**

- 1 Extremely important
- 2 Very important
- 3 Somewhat important
- 4 Not too important
- 5 Not at all important
- 98 **[ PN: IF CATI: ] (DO NOT READ)** Don't know
- 99 **[ PN: IF WEB: ]** Web blank / **[ PN: IF CATI: ] (DO NOT READ)** Refused

**BAT: RRENG**

**ASK IF LISTEN TO RELIGIOUS CONTENT (RRSOUNDS\_MUS=1 OR RRSOUNDS\_TALK=1 OR RRSOUNDS\_SERM=1 OR RRSOUNDS\_DRAM= 1):**

**[ PN: RANDOMIZE ITEMS; INCLUDE RANDOMIZATION IN DATA FILE ]**

**[ PN: IF WEB: ]** Have you done any of the following activities because they were promoted or talked about on religious music, shows, or services that you listen to?

**[ PN: IF CATI: READ FOR FIRST ITEM: ]** Have you done any of the following activities because they were promoted or talked about on religious music, shows, or services that you listen to? First, **(INSERT ITEM)**. **(READ LIST AS NECESSARY)**

**[ PN: IF CATI: READ FOR SUBSEQUENT ITEMS: ]** Next, **(INSERT ITEM)**. **(READ AS NECESSARY: Have you done this because it was promoted or talked about on religious music, shows, or services that you listen to? (READ LIST AS NECESSARY))**

**BATTERY ITEMS:**

MED Watched a movie or read a book

BUY Bought something

DON Donated to a cause or political candidate

FIN **[ PN: IF WEB: ]** Made changes to your financial habits (such as your spending or saving) **[ PN: IF CATI: ]** Made changes to your financial habits, such as your spending or saving

ATT Started attending a religious congregation, or switched to a new congregation

PRAY Started a new religious practice, such as praying or reading scripture

**RESPONSE CATEGORIES:**

- 1 **[ PN: IF WEB: ]** Yes, I have done this because of something I heard on the religious music, shows, or services I listen to **[ PN: IF CATI: ]** Yes, you have done this because of something you heard on the religious music, shows, or services you listen to
- 2 **[ PN: IF WEB: ]** No, I have not done this **[ PN: IF CATI: ]** No, you have not done this
- 98 **[ PN: IF CATI: ] (DO NOT READ)** Don't know
- 99 **[ PN: IF WEB: ]** Web blank / **[ PN: IF CATI: ] (DO NOT READ)** Refused

**BAT: RRREASON**

**ASK IF LISTEN TO RELIGIOUS CONTENT (RRSOUNDS\_MUS=1 OR RRSOUNDS\_TALK=1 OR RRSOUNDS\_SERM=1 OR RRSOUNDS\_DRAM= 1):**

**[ PN: RANDOMIZE ITEMS; INCLUDE RANDOMIZATION IN DATA FILE ]**

**[ PN: IF WEB: ]** How much of a reason is each of the following for why you listen to religious music, shows, or services?

**[ PN: IF CATI: READ FOR FIRST ITEM: ]** How much of a reason is each of the following for why you listen to religious music, shows, or services? First, **(INSERT ITEM)**. **(READ LIST)**

**[ PN: IF CATI: READ FOR SUBSEQUENT ITEMS: ]** Next, **(INSERT ITEM)**. **(READ AS NECESSARY: How much of a reason is this for why you listen to religious music, shows, or services? (READ LIST))**

**BATTERY ITEMS:**

- SPIR It's spiritually fulfilling or meaningful
- ENT It's entertaining
- RLX It's relaxing or calming
- GUID **[ PN: IF WEB: ]** It provides me with life advice or guidance **[ PN: IF CATI: ]** It provides you with life advice or guidance
- NEWS To stay up to date about current events
- ELSE Someone else is playing it
- FAM It's family-friendly

**RESPONSE CATEGORIES:**

- 1 Major reason
- 2 Minor reason
- 3 Not a reason
- 98 **[ PN: IF CATI: ] (DO NOT READ)** Don't know
- 99 **[ PN: IF WEB: ]** Web blank / **[ PN: IF CATI: ] (DO NOT READ)** Refused

**BAT: RRRELVIEWS**

**ASK IF LISTEN TO RELIGIOUS CONTENT (RRSOUNDS\_MUS=1 OR RRSOUNDS\_TALK=1 OR RRSOUNDS\_SERM=1 OR RRSOUNDS\_DRAM= 1):**

**[ PN: RANDOMIZE ITEMS; ROTATE RESPONSE OPTIONS 1-4/4-1, HOLDING 5 AND 99 LAST; INCLUDE RANDOMIZATION AND ROTATION IN DATA FILE ]**

**[ PN: IF WEB: ]** Thinking about the religious views you hear on the religious music, shows, or services you listen to, how different or similar are they from...

**[ PN: IF CATI: READ FOR FIRST ITEM: ]** Thinking about the religious views you hear on the religious music, shows, or services you listen to, how different or similar are they from **(INSERT ITEM)? (READ LIST)**

**[ PN: IF CATI: READ FOR SUBSEQUENT ITEMS: ]** What about **(INSERT ITEM)? (READ AS NECESSARY: How different or similar are the religious views you hear on the religious music, shows, or services from (INSERT ITEM)? (READ LIST))**

**BATTERY ITEMS:**

OWN Your own religious views

CHUR **ASK IF ATTEND RELIGIOUS SERVICES (X\_ATTENDPER=1-5):** The religious views you hear at your church or other place of worship

**RESPONSE CATEGORIES:**

- 1 Very different
- 2 Somewhat different
- 3 Somewhat similar
- 4 Very similar

**[ PN: INSERT A LINE OF SPACE ]**

5 **[ PN: IF WEB: ]** Not sure **[ PN: IF CATI: ]** Or are you not sure?

99 **[ PN: IF WEB: ]** Web blank / **[ PN: IF CATI: ] (DO NOT READ)** Refused

**QUE: RRPOL**

**ASK IF LISTEN TO RELIGIOUS CONTENT (RRSOUNDS\_MUS=1 OR RRSOUNDS\_TALK=1 OR RRSOUNDS\_SERM=1 OR RRSOUNDS\_DRAM= 1):**

**[ PN: ROTATE RESPONSE OPTIONS 1-5/5-1 IN THE SAME ORDER AS AI\_KNOWUSE, HOLDING 98 AND 99 LAST; INCLUDE ROTATION IN DATA FILE ]**

How often do you hear about political or social issues in the religious music, shows, or services you listen to?

**[ PN: IF CATI: ] (READ LIST)**

- 1 Extremely often
- 2 Often
- 3 Sometimes
- 4 Rarely
- 5 Never

98 **[ PN: IF CATI: ] (DO NOT READ)** Don't know

99 **[ PN: IF WEB: ]** Web blank / **[ PN: IF CATI: ] (DO NOT READ)** Refused

**QUE: RRPOLCH****ASK IF HEAR ABOUT POLITICAL OR SOCIAL ISSUES IN RELIGIOUS CONTENT (RRPOL=1-4):**

Have you ever changed your views about a political or social issue because of something you heard on religious music, shows, or services you listen to?

[ PN: IF CATI: ] (READ LIST IF NECESSARY)

- 1 Yes
- 2 No
- 98 [ PN: IF CATI: ] (DO NOT READ) Don't know
- 99 [ PN: IF WEB: ] Web blank / [ PN: IF CATI: ] (DO NOT READ) Refused

**QUE: RRPOLLIKE****ASK IF HEAR ABOUT POLITICAL OR SOCIAL ISSUES IN RELIGIOUS CONTENT (RRPOL=1-4):**

[ PN: ROTATE RESPONSE OPTIONS 1-5/5-1, HOLDING 98 AND 99 LAST; INCLUDE ROTATION IN DATA FILE ]

What is your reaction when the religious music, shows, or services you listen to discuss political or social issues?

[ PN: IF CATI: ] (READ LIST)

- 1 [ PN: IF WEB: ] I like it a lot [ PN: IF CATI: ] You like it a lot
- 2 [ PN: IF WEB: ] I like it a little [ PN: IF CATI: ] You like it a little
- 3 [ PN: IF WEB: ] I neither like nor dislike it [ PN: IF CATI: ] You neither like nor dislike it
- 4 [ PN: IF WEB: ] I dislike it a little [ PN: IF CATI: ] You dislike it a little
- 5 [ PN: IF WEB: ] I dislike it a lot [ PN: IF CATI: ] You dislike it a lot
- 98 [ PN: IF CATI: ] (DO NOT READ) Don't know
- 99 [ PN: IF WEB: ] Web blank / [ PN: IF CATI: ] (DO NOT READ) Refused

**QUE: RRCHECK****ASK IF LISTEN TO RELIGIOUS CONTENT (RRSOUNDS\_MUS=1 OR RRSOUNDS\_TALK=1 OR RRSOUNDS\_SERM=1 OR RRSOUNDS\_DRAM= 1):**

The previous questions asked about "religious music, shows, or services you listen to."

In just a few words, what kinds of things did you have in mind when asked about that?

- \_\_\_ [ PN: PROGRAM OPEN END TEXT BOX WITH NO CHARACTER LIMIT ]
- 98 [ PN: IF CATI: ] (DO NOT READ) Don't know
- 99 [ PN: IF WEB: ] Web blank / [ PN: IF CATI: ] (DO NOT READ) Refused

**ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS PREVIOUSLY RELEASED****ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE**

# Topline

**2025 PEW RESEARCH CENTER'S AMERICAN TRENDS PANEL  
WAVE 173 JUNE 2025  
FINAL TOPLINE  
JUNE 9-15, 2025  
TOTAL N=5,023**

**Note: All numbers are percentages unless otherwise noted. Percentages less than 0.5% are replaced by an asterisk (\*). Rows/columns may not total 100% due to rounding. The questions presented below are part of a larger survey conducted on the American Trends Panel.**

**"No answer" includes web respondents who do not answer the question as well as telephone respondents who refuse to answer or who say they don't know how to answer. In cases where "not sure" was offered as an explicit option to web and telephone respondents, the "no answer" category includes only web skips and telephone refusals.**

**This survey was conducted primarily online, with some interviews conducted by live telephone. This topline shows the programming language for online administration. For details on how questions were slightly modified for phone administration, visit the questionnaire.**

**PN = Programming note**

U.S. adults	<b>Sample size</b> 5,023	<b>Margin of error at 95% confidence level</b> +/- 1.6 percentage points
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## RRSOUNDS

### ASK ALL:

[ PN: RANDOMIZE ITEMS ]

Do you ever listen to each of the following, whether on the radio, podcasts, online, or on a streaming service like Spotify?

		<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>No Answer</u>
MUS	Religious music	37	63	*
TALK	Religious talk shows	18	81	1
SERM	Religious sermons or services	30	70	1
DRAM	Religious storytelling or audio drama shows	16	83	1

**RRMEDIUM**

**ASK IF LISTEN TO RELIGIOUS CONTENT (RRSOUNDS\_MUS=1 OR RRSOUNDS\_TALK=1 OR RRSOUNDS\_SERM=1 OR RRSOUNDS\_DRAM= 1) [n=2,190]:**

[ PN: RANDOMIZE ITEMS ]

Thinking about the religious music, shows, or services you listen to, how often do you listen to them on...

		Extremely <u>often</u>	<u>Often</u>	<u>Sometimes</u>	<u>Rarely</u>	<u>Never</u>	<u>No answer</u>
AMFM	AM or FM radio (including radio stations streamed online) June 9-15, 2025	12	16	27	20	25	*
SAT	A satellite radio service like SiriusXM June 9-15, 2025	4	6	15	15	59	*
SPOT	A music or podcast platform like Spotify, Apple Podcasts, or Pandora June 9-15, 2025	12	15	26	17	30	*

**RRWHERE**

**ASK IF LISTEN TO RELIGIOUS CONTENT (RRSOUNDS\_MUS=1 OR RRSOUNDS\_TALK=1 OR RRSOUNDS\_SERM=1 OR RRSOUNDS\_DRAM= 1) [n=2,190]:**

[ PN: RANDOMIZE ITEMS ]

How often do you listen to religious music, shows, or services...

		Extremely <u>often</u>	<u>Often</u>	<u>Sometimes</u>	<u>Rarely</u>	<u>Never</u>	<u>No answer</u>
HOME	At home June 9-15, 2025	12	22	39	19	7	*
CAR	In a car June 9-15, 2025	16	21	35	15	13	*
WORK	At work June 9-15, 2025	5	7	20	19	47	2
PUB	In public spaces, such as a coffee shop, a store, or at the gym June 9-15, 2025	3	6	22	24	44	1

**RRDONATE**

**ASK IF LISTEN TO RELIGIOUS CONTENT (RRSOUNDS\_MUS=1 OR RRSOUNDS\_TALK=1 OR RRSOUNDS\_SERM=1 OR RRSOUNDS\_DRAM= 1) [n=2,190]:**

Have you ever directly given money to support a religious radio station, religious radio show, or religious podcast?

June 9-15,

2025

21	Yes, I have done this
79	No, I have not done this
*	No answer

**RRIMPORT**

**ASK IF LISTEN TO RELIGIOUS CONTENT (RRSOUNDS\_MUS=1 OR RRSOUNDS\_TALK=1 OR RRSOUNDS\_SERM=1 OR RRSOUNDS\_DRAM= 1) [n=2,190]:**

How important is listening to religious music, shows, or services to your religious or spiritual life?

June 9-15,  
2025

14	Extremely important
22	Very important
35	Somewhat important
20	Not too important
9	Not at all important
*	No answer

**RRENG**

**ASK IF LISTEN TO RELIGIOUS CONTENT (RRSOUNDS\_MUS=1 OR RRSOUNDS\_TALK=1 OR RRSOUNDS\_SERM=1 OR RRSOUNDS\_DRAM= 1) [n=2,190]:**  
**[ PN: RANDOMIZE ITEMS ]**

Have you done any of the following activities because they were promoted or talked about on religious music, shows, or services that you listen to?

		Yes, I have done this because of something I heard on the religious music, shows or <u>services I listen to</u>	No, I have <u>not done this</u>	No <u>answer</u>
MED	Watched a movie or read a book	52	47	1
BUY	Bought something	25	74	1
DON	Donated to a cause or political candidate	16	84	*
FIN	Made changes to your financial habits (such as your spending or saving)	25	74	1
ATT	Started attending a religious congregation, or switched to a new congregation	15	84	*
PRAY	Started a new religious practice, such as praying or reading scripture	35	64	1

**RRREASON**

**ASK IF LISTEN TO RELIGIOUS CONTENT (RRSOUNDS\_MUS=1 OR RRSOUNDS\_TALK=1 OR RRSOUNDS\_SERM=1 OR RRSOUNDS\_DRAM= 1) [n=2,190]:**  
**[ PN: RANDOMIZE ITEMS ]**

How much of a reason is each of the following for why you listen to religious music, shows, or services?

		Major <u>reason</u>	Minor <u>reason</u>	Not a <u>reason</u>	No <u>answer</u>
SPIR	It's spiritually fulfilling or meaningful	62	25	12	1
ENT	It's entertaining	28	39	32	1
RLX	It's relaxing or calming	51	31	17	1
GUID	It provides me with life advice or guidance	39	34	26	1
NEWS	To stay up to date about current events	14	26	59	1
ELSE	Someone else is playing it	9	28	62	1
FAM	It's family-friendly	38	29	32	1

**RRRELVIEWS**

**ASK IF LISTEN TO RELIGIOUS CONTENT (RRSOUNDS\_MUS=1 OR RRSOUNDS\_TALK=1 OR RRSOUNDS\_SERM=1 OR RRSOUNDS\_DRAM= 1) [n=2,190]:**  
**[ PN: RANDOMIZE ITEMS ]**

Thinking about the religious views you hear on the religious music, shows, or services you listen to, how different or similar are they from...

		Very <u>different</u>	Somewhat <u>different</u>	Somewhat <u>similar</u>	Very <u>similar</u>	Not sure	No <u>answer</u>
OWN	Your own religious views June 9-15, 2025	5	11	36	36	11	*
CHUR	<b>ASK IF ATTEND RELIGIOUS SERVICES</b> <b>(X_ATTENDPER=1-5) [n=1,970]:</b> The religious views you hear at your church or other place of worship June 9-15, 2025	3	11	36	38	11	1

**RRPOL**

**ASK IF LISTEN TO RELIGIOUS CONTENT (RRSOUNDS\_MUS=1 OR RRSOUNDS\_TALK=1 OR RRSOUNDS\_SERM=1 OR RRSOUNDS\_DRAM= 1) [n=2,190]:**  
**[ PN: ROTATE RESPONSE OPTIONS 1-5/5-1 ]**

How often do you hear about political or social issues in the religious music, shows, or services you listen to?

June 9-15, <u>2025</u>	
3	Extremely often
8	Often
33	Sometimes
35	Rarely
21	Never
1	No answer

**RRPOLCH**

**ASK IF HEAR ABOUT POLITICAL OR SOCIAL ISSUES IN RELIGIOUS CONTENT (RRPOL=1-4)**  
**[n=1,716]:**

Have you ever changed your views about a political or social issue because of something you heard on religious music, shows, or services you listen to?

June 9-15,

2025

24	Yes
76	No
*	No answer

**RRPOLLIKE**

**ASK IF HEAR ABOUT POLITICAL OR SOCIAL ISSUES IN RELIGIOUS CONTENT (RRPOL=1-4)**  
**[n=1,716]:**

**[ PN: ROTATE RESPONSE OPTIONS 1-5/5-1 ]**

What is your reaction when the religious music, shows, or services you listen to discuss political or social issues?

June 9-15,

2025

7	I like it a lot
13	I like it a little
48	I neither like nor dislike it
18	I dislike it a little
14	I dislike it a lot
*	No answer

## Model Prompts

### Segmentation, format, topic, & NER

You are an expert AI assistant designed to help process and extract relevant information from radio transcripts. In a moment, you will be provided with a diarized transcript of about 15 minutes of talk radio programming. The lines are numbered, and each line in the transcript represents a single utterance, with a corresponding speaker label.

You will be asked to perform three tasks: named entity recognition (NER), speaker identity inference, and transcript segmentation.

Here are detailed instructions for each task:

#### 1. Named Entity Recognition (NER):

Please identify and return the relevant named entities in the transcript, with the following information:

- line\_number: the line number of the utterance where the entity was mentioned
- entity: the entity itself
- entity\_type: the type of entity (person, group, organization, title, place, scripture\_ref, contact\_info, other)

The entity types are:

- person: a named person or character (e.g., "Donald Trump", "The Pope", "Jesus"). This includes both real and fictional characters, as well as ways to refer to deities in a religious context. (e.g., "Holy Spirit", "Heavenly Father")
- group: a group of people referred to collectively, but who are not a named organization (e.g., "the congregation", "the audience"). This also includes groups of people referred to by nationality (e.g., "the French", "Israelites") and religious groups or denominations (e.g., "Catholics", "Muslims", "Baptists")
- organization: a named organization or agency referred to by name (e.g., "Pew Research Center", "NASA", "The Southern Baptist Convention")
- title: a named title of a book, song, film, show, or other piece of art or media (e.g., "The Great Gatsby", "The Bible"). This includes titles of religious stories (e.g., "The Parable of the Good Samaritan", "The Sermon on the Mount"). Note that this does not include titles of people (e.g., "President", "Doctor", "Reverend")
- place: a named location or geopolitical entity (e.g., "United States", "New York", "Mount Sinai", "Mar-a-lago")
- scripture\_ref: a reference to a passage or verse in scripture (e.g., "John 3:16", "Genesis 1:1")
- contact\_info: a reference to a phone number, email address, website, or other contact method (e.g., "call 1-800-555-1234", "visit our website at www.example.com")
- other: any other named entity that does not fit into the above categories.

#### 2. Speaker Identity Inference:

Each line in the transcript is labeled with a speaker label generated by the diarization model.

These speaker labels are not the actual names of the speakers, but rather anonymized identifiers assigned by the model.

Often in radio programming, speakers announce their names or are introduced or referred to by name by other speakers.

Please review the transcript and identify the actual names of the speakers where possible.

For each speaker label, please provide the following information:

- speaker\_label: the anonymized speaker label (e.g., "SPEAKER\_01", "SPEAKER\_02")

- speaker\_name: the inferred actual name of the speaker (e.g., "John Smith", "Jane Doe"). Return "unknown" if the name cannot be inferred.
- confidence: a confidence score between 0 and 1 indicating how confident you are in your inference of the speaker's name.

### 3. Transcript Segmentation:

Individual utterances in radio programming can often be grouped together into segments that cover a main general topic.

Please review the transcript and give your best suggestion for where this transcript could be broken up into topical segments.

For each segment you suggest, please provide the following information:

- starting\_line\_number: The starting line number of the segment
- ending\_line\_number: The ending line number of the segment
- program\_name: The name of the radio program (e.g., "Morning Show", "Evening News"). Only provide this if it is explicitly mentioned in the transcript, otherwise return "unknown"
- segment\_title: A short title for the segment
- segment\_format: The format of the segment (music, religious service/sermon, audio drama/narrative, ad/promotion, news read/traffic/weather, caller interaction/audience participation, discussion/monologue/commentary, interview, transition/filler, other)
- segment\_topics: A list containing the primary topic (or topics) of the segment (religion, politics/current events/social commentary, health/wellness, family/parenting/education, science/technology, entertainment/pop culture/sports, business/economics/finance, lifestyle/advice/personal development, other)

### Subtopics

You are an expert AI assistant designed to help process and extract relevant information from radio transcripts. Please analyze the following transcript segment and identify whether it contains any of the following topics of interest:

- IMMIGRATION: the segment includes discussion of immigration policy or immigrants. This could include discussion of immigration in both a US context and in a global context, discussion of actions taken by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) (e.g. deportation or detention of immigrants) (see also: CRIME/LAW ENFORCEMENT), or discussion of actions of immigrants, as well as immigration policies.
- ECONOMY: the segment includes discussion of the economy or economic conditions. This could include discussion of global trade or tariff policy (see also: FOREIGN POLICY/INTERNATIONAL POLITICS), discussion of "kitchen table" issues (e.g. the cost of groceries or childcare), as well as the cost of living, inflation, tax policy, unemployment, hiring or layoffs, poverty, or the stock market. It does not include more abstract references to economic or social class.
- FOREIGN POLICY/INTERNATIONAL POLITICS: the segment includes discussion of US policy towards other countries, domestic politics within other countries, and international politics between other countries. This could include discussion of global trade or tariff policy (see also: ECONOMY), as well as discussion of wars and conflicts (e.g. Ukraine & Russia, Israel & Palestine, etc.).
- LGBTQ ISSUES AND RIGHTS: the segment includes discussion of LGBTQ issues, rights, and identities, as well as related laws or court rulings (e.g. Obergefell v. Hodges). This could include discussion of same-sex marriage, the compatibility or incompatibility of LGBTQ identities with religious values, issues related to transgender

individuals or identities (e.g. the availability of gender-affirming care, bathroom bans, sports bans, etc.), references to conversion therapy, discussion of homophobic or transphobic rhetoric or actions. This does not include assumed heteronormativity or references to man + woman as the default coupling without any explicitly anti-same-sex marriage rhetoric.

- **CRIME/LAW ENFORCEMENT:** the segment includes discussion of crime, law enforcement, or the criminal justice system. This could include references to specific crimes (e.g., in a news read, or discussing a high-profile court case), references to crime, crime waves, "law and order" or lawlessness in the abstract, actions taken by police or other law enforcement agencies such as ICE (see also: IMMIGRATION), crime or property destruction during protests, police action during protests. This does not include general references to protests if not discussed in the context of crime, property destruction, or police actions.

- **ABORTION:** the segment includes discussion of abortion, abortion rights, or abortion policy. This could include faith-based discussions about the morality of abortion, debates between pro-life and pro-choice positions, abortion alternatives (e.g. crisis pregnancy centers) even if the term "abortion" is not explicitly mentioned, reproductive health clinics that commonly offer abortion procedures (e.g. Planned Parenthood) even if the term "abortion" is not explicitly mentioned, federal laws or court decisions related to abortion rights (e.g. Roe v. Wade, Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health), state laws or abortion bans. This does not include general discussions of women's health or reproductive health (e.g. IVF, birth control).

- **NONE OF THE ABOVE:** the segment does not contain any of the topics listed above, even if it contains related content.

Return a list containing the topics that are present in the segment. These topics may be present in any combination, but they are highly specific and should only be listed if they are explicitly discussed in the segment. If none of the topics are present, return a list containing only "NONE OF THE ABOVE".

## Stance

### [This prompt used if the identified topic is "ECONOMY" or "CRIME/LAW ENFORCEMENT"] ###

You are an AI tool designed to identify expressed opinions or stances on key topics from radio transcripts. Please analyze the following transcript segment and respond with the requested opinion information

The following transcript is predicted to include a discussion or mention of {TOPIC}. That means that the segment includes {TOPIC DESCRIPTION (from codebook)}.

In the transcript, does the discussion of {TOPIC} express a clear opinion or stance about the topic, or is it presented in a more neutral way?

- If there is a clear opinion or stance expressed about {TOPIC}, return opinionated.

- If the topic is discussed but no clear opinion or stance is expressed, return neutral.

- If {TOPIC} is not mentioned at all in the transcript, don't try to infer a position, just return NA/not mentioned

{TRANSCRIPT}

---

Remember, don't try to infer a position on any issues that are not explicitly discussed in the transcript, even if something related is mentioned. Just return 'NA/not mentioned' in that case.

### [This prompt used if the identified topic is "ABORTION", "DONALD TRUMP", "IMMIGRATION", "ISRAEL", "JOE BIDEN", "PALESTINE", "LGBTQ ISSUES AND RIGHTS", "THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY", "THE REPUBLICAN PARTY"]  
###

The following transcript is predicted to include a discussion or mention of {TOPIC}.

Does the transcript contain a favorable, unfavorable, or neutral stance towards {TOPIC}?

Or is {TOPIC} not specifically mentioned? If it's not mentioned, don't try to infer a position, just return NA/not mentioned.

---

{TRANSCRIPT}

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Remember, don't try to infer a position on any issues that are not explicitly discussed in the transcript, even if something related is mentioned. Just return 'NA/not mentioned' in that case.