

The Church and the coronavirus: needs and opportunities

1 The majority of churches have responded to the challenges of coronavirus and lockdown

- The vast majority of people who took our survey say their church is running something in place of its normal services (90%) – just 10% said their church isn't running anything.
- Just over a third of churches with digital provision pre-record and stream a whole service online – a brave 45% go live.
- 59% of churches continue to run smaller weekly home groups/Bible studies online.

Top 3 concerns

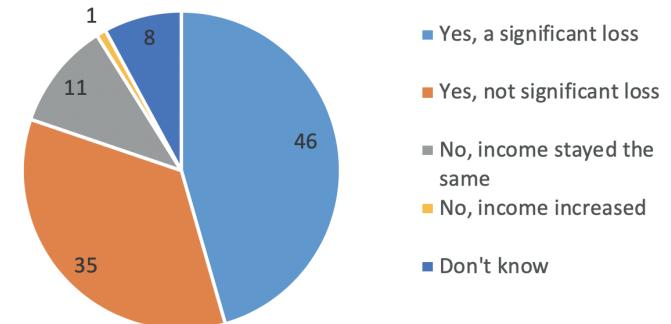
(Q: How concerned are you about each of the following A: very or fairly concerned sum):

- 1) People feeling left out/isolated (76%)
- 2) People's mental wellbeing (68%)
- 3) Lack of congregation confidence in using technology as a barrier to them engaging (49%)

2 While this time is bringing opportunities in some areas, many church leaders are facing pressure on multiple fronts and some are starting to feel the strain

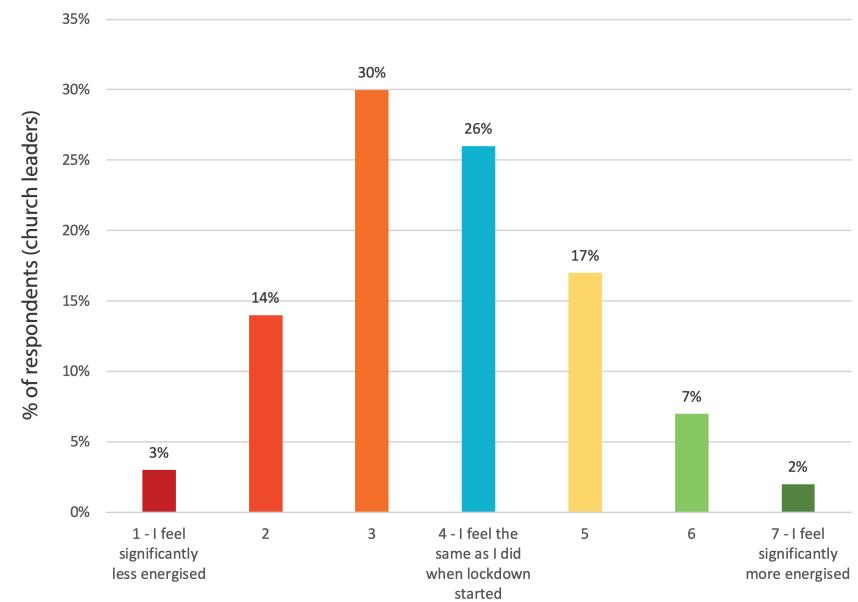
- 61% of church leaders surveyed say they've seen an increase in engagement with church during this time.
- However, church leaders are also significantly concerned about their communities. Three-quarters of the church leaders we surveyed are either fairly or very concerned about isolation in their community and 68% are concerned about mental wellbeing. Half are concerned that lack of technological confidence in their congregation is a barrier to them engaging with what is being offered.
- 81% say they've experienced some loss of income – for 46% this is a significant loss of income.
- 44% of church leaders say they're feeling more burnt out than they did at the start of lockdown, while 47% say they feel less energised.
- However, 88% say they feel supported by their congregation, the majority feeling very well supported (54%).

Have you noticed a loss of income?



Base: church leaders, n=436

To what extent are you feeling energised at this time, compared to the start of lockdown?



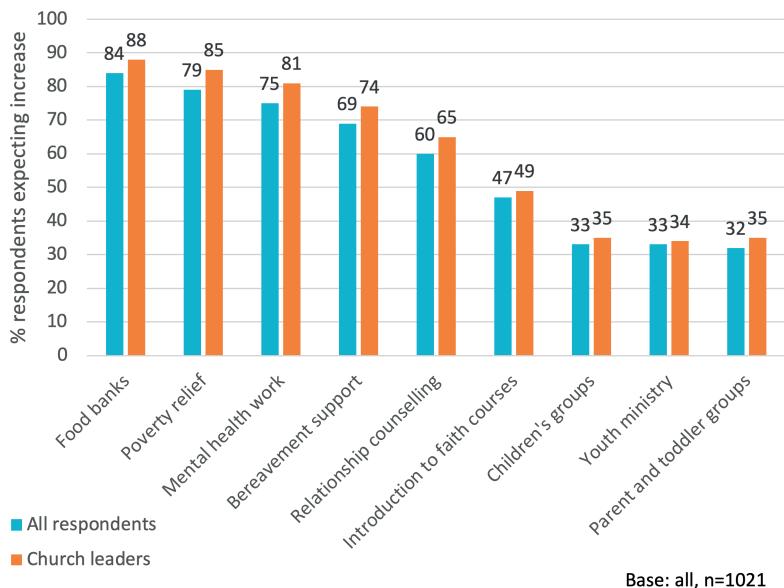
Base: church leaders, n=436

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3 Both church leaders and churchgoers think there will be a significant increase in demand across missional work streams in the future

- 88% of church leaders surveyed think there will be an increased demand for foodbanks, while 85% think there will be an increased demand for poverty relief. A significant majority also think there will be an increased need for mental health work (81%), bereavement support (74%) and relationship counselling (65%). Perhaps reflecting the experience of an increased engagement with faith, just under half of church leaders think there will be an increased demand for introduction to Christianity courses like Alpha (49%), while just over a third think there will be an increased demand for children's and youth work.

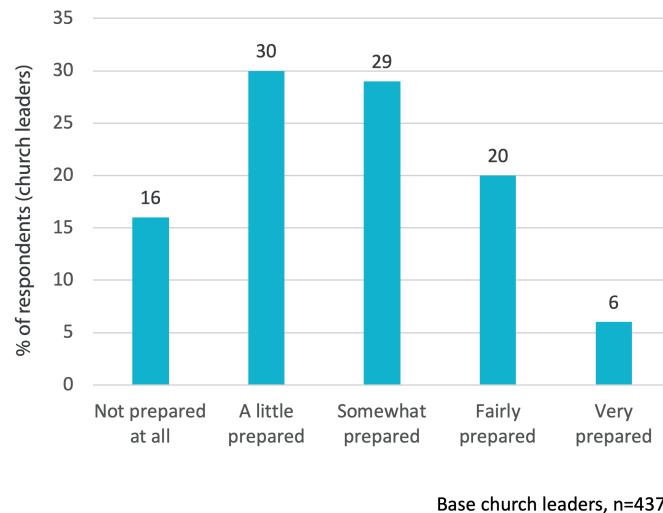
Do you think there will be a change in demand in your local area for the following missional work? Response: Increase (significant & slight sum)



4 Church leaders have hope for the future, but many have yet to start their planning for reopening

- A majority of church leaders are optimistic about the future of the Church (63%), and many think the pandemic will bring positive change. Notably, 47% think there will be an increased engagement with faith by their local community and 41% think there will be an increase in congregation numbers in the Church at large. More cautiously, 46% think there will be a decrease in income in their local church.
- However, while 70% of church leaders have started planning for the reopening of their church, 30% haven't.

How prepared do you think your church is to re-open with social distancing measures in place?



Methodology note:
The survey was run on the Christian Research Resonate panel from 10–15 June. 1021 people took the survey, 437 of whom were church leaders. The Resonate panel is a market research panel made up of 5,000 practising Christians. The sample isn't perfectly representative of the Church as a whole as it is low on Catholics and young people, but it does provide insight into the opinions and thoughts of a broad range of Christian activists and influencers.