

St Padarn's Institute Webinars/Gweminarau Athrofa Padarn Sant

iPresence: Digital Ministry and the Hybrid Church Gweinidogaeth ddigidol a'r Eglwys Hybrid



Webinar:

1. iPresence - real and embodied even online
2. What has God taught us re missio Dei in lockdown?
3. Some dangers and opportunities
4. Hybrid Church - what is it?
5. Digital Ministry in a Hybrid Church - what does it look like?

Presence is more than physically being there...

- We tend to prefer physical encounter - we are fleshy beings
- But remember God is Spirit, remember 2ndPT became flesh
- Remember physical presence is not possible for some
- The disabled, the vulnerable, the housebound, the fearful
- They are as much part of the body of Christ as others.
- Church post COVID is a place to welcome all -
 - wherever they feel safe to be.
- This is Hybrid Church

Presence is more than physically being there...

- "I am here" but are you seen?
- I am here but I don't know a soul
- I am here but so are another 3,000 people
- I am here but my disability makes you blind
- I am here on the screen, safe in my home
- I am here, watching over you, the Spirit of Christ
- I am

Presence and intentionality and focus

- I am here, I am waiting, I am praying
- I am here, on my phone, reading my bible
- I am here, on Zoom, praying for the preacher
- I am here, anonymous, listening to God
- I am here, at the pulpit, meeting eyes and the camera lens
- We are here, the Church Triumphant, joining your praise
- We are here, the body of Christ online and offline, one body

Jesus - the image of the invisible God...

- Incarnation is not the goal - participation in God is
- Irenaeus, Athanasius - theosis, divinisation
- "He became what we are that we might become what he is"
- We are partakers of the divine nature.
- Christ became flesh, we are always enfleshed (even online)
- Christ bore flesh to heaven, our flesh is renewed
- "it is sown a natural body, raise a spiritual body" (1 Cor 15:44)
- As Christ's body in Gospels/Revelation - more than flesh?

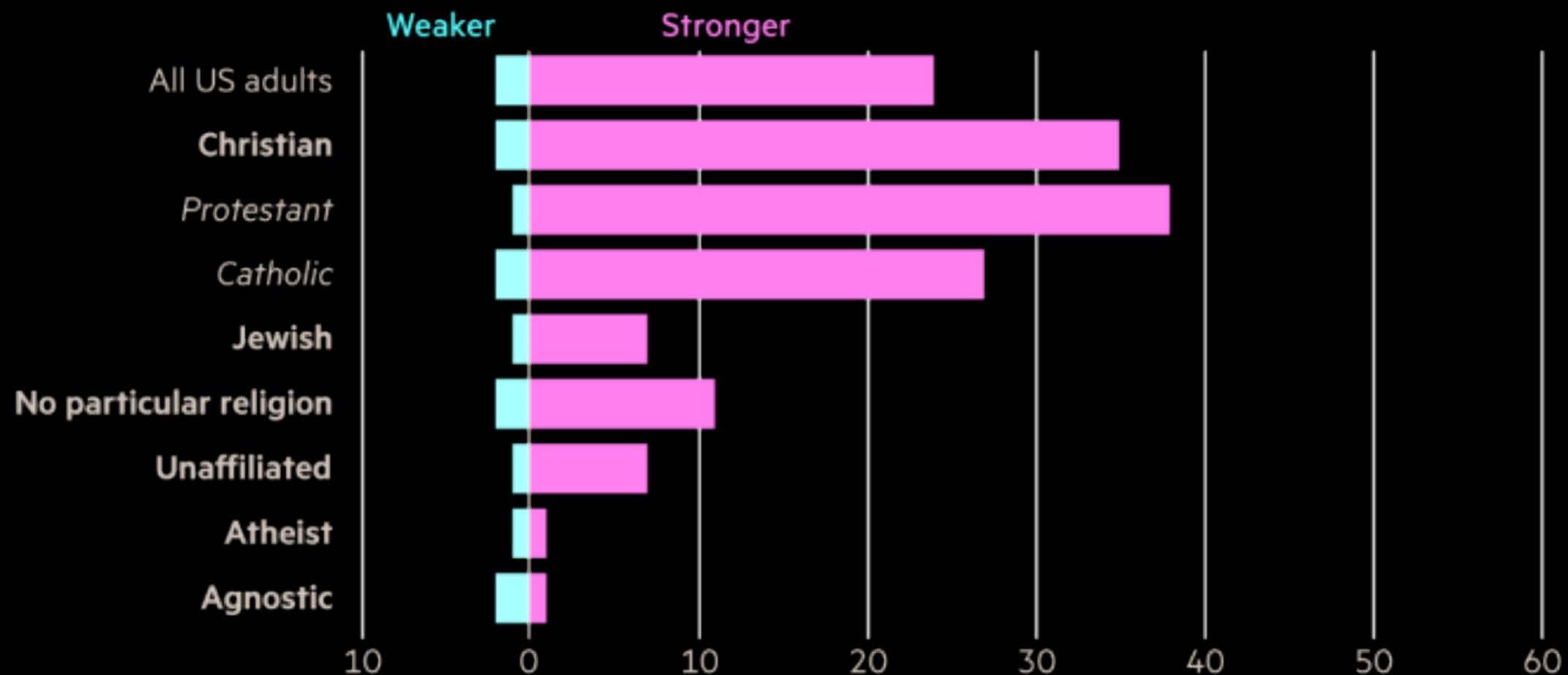
2. What has God taught us...

- Tablet - York St John Survey: 93% Catholics attend online worship, 66% regular use of livestreaming. May 2020
- Telegraph - Google reports searches for prayer surge by 50% worldwide esp in poorer nations - March 2020
- SavantaComRes, more people attend online worship than usually attend offline worship, prob twice as many! Often already linked to church, younger.

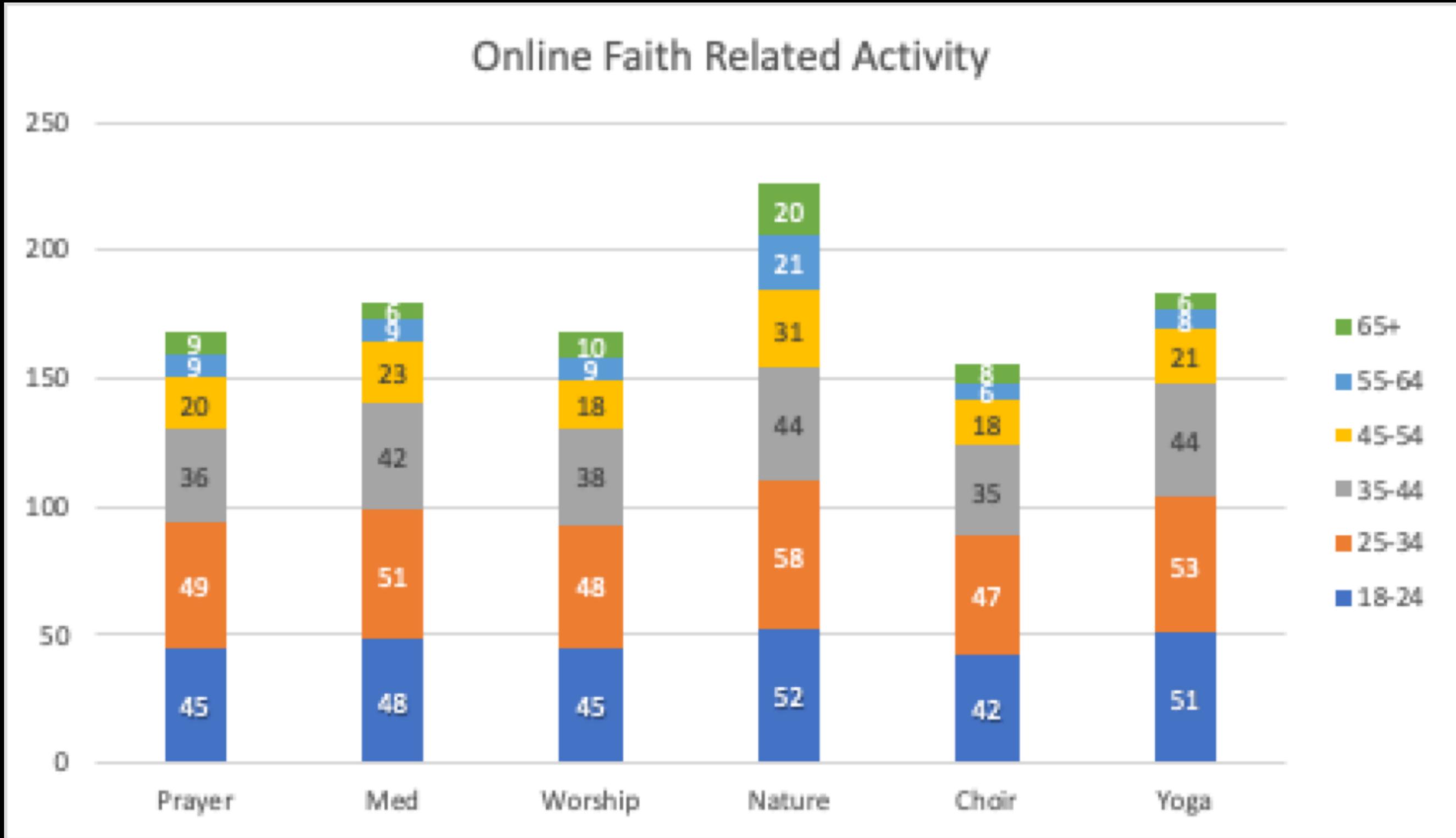
Turning to God during COVID - some headlines

- Pew Research - faith has become stronger

% of US adults who say that, as a result of the pandemic, their own religious faith has become ...



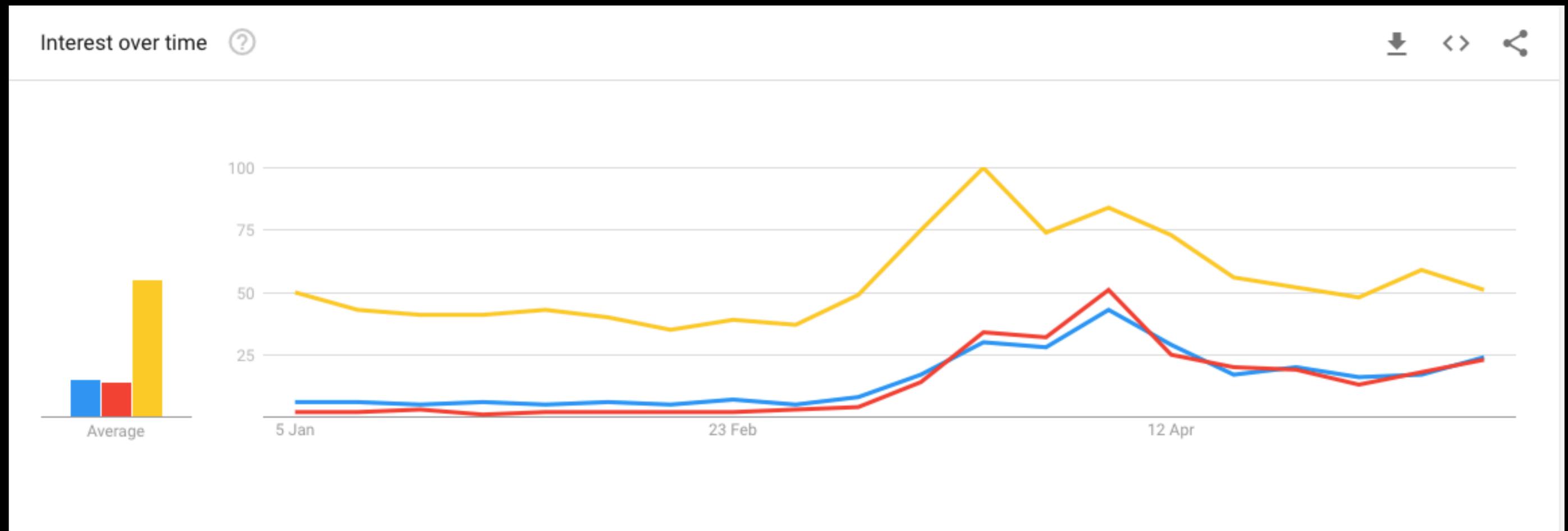
Source: Pew Research Center (survey conducted April 2020)
© FT



Offline Church Att prelockdown	Online Church Att lockdown
● London 53%	● London 43%
● West Midlands 40%	● West Midlands 34%
● Northern Ireland 37%	● Yorkshire 29%
● East Midlands 35%	● South East 25%
● Yorkshire 33%	● North East 24%
● South East 33%	● N Ireland/NW/East Mids 23%
By Nation Offline	By Nation Offline
● Northern Ireland 37%	● England 27%
● England 35%	● Northern Ireland 23%
● Wales 22%	● Scotland 21%
● Scotland 21%	● Wales 19%

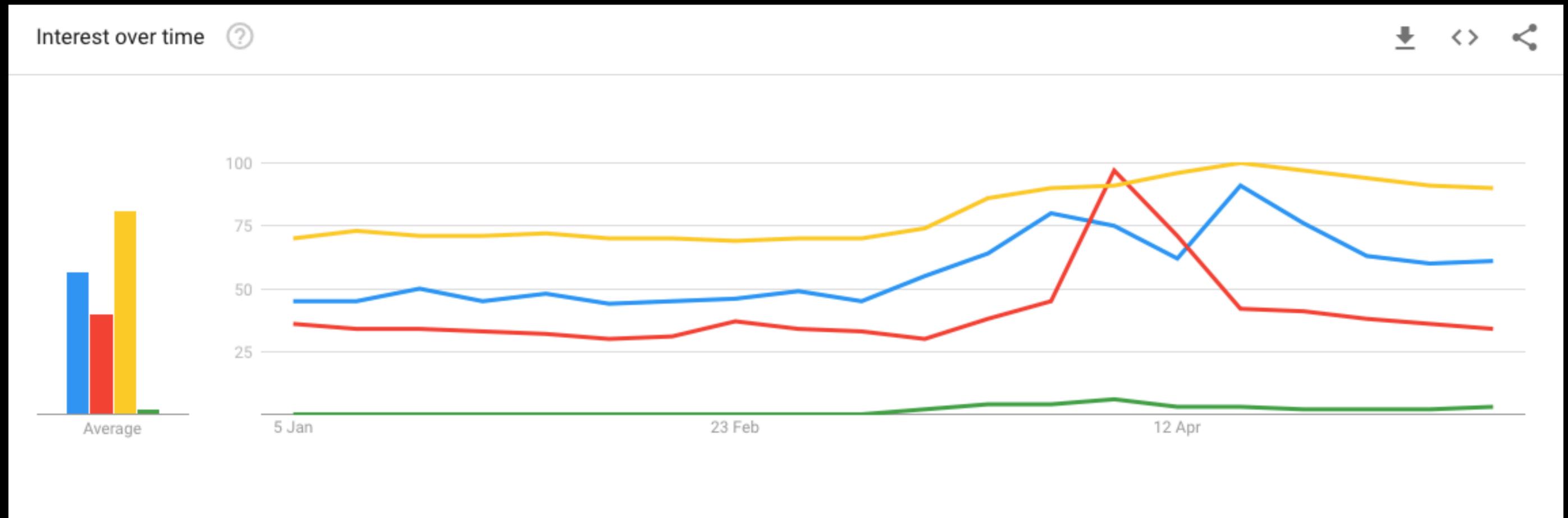
Google trends:

- online church/online mass/online service



Google trends:

- prayer/Jesus/God/online mass (control) (UK only)



2. What has God taught us...

- Inclusivity but digital divide
- Accessibility but digital fatigue
- Spiritual devotion - prayer routines
- Discipleship
- Anonymous viewers - a comfy chair behind the back pew
- 33% happy to return, 66% happy to stay online

Beacon Lough Baptist, Gateshead - normal congregation c.60

- Using EWO calculations, live and asynchronous = 250 attendees - so increase of 400+%

	Facebook	YouTube	Total	Facebook	YouTube	Average view duration	Total	Facebook	YouTube	Average view duration	Total	1km 24 hours after service	3km 24 hours after service
14/06/2020	52	38	90	984	58	37m 07s	1042						£5.00
07/06/2020	67	37	104	844	70	28m 35s	914	894	92	22m 47s	986		£5.00
31/05/2020	72	30	102	321	67	24m 21s	388	539	83	20m 59s	622	£4.57	
24/05/2020	69	53	122	630	65	22m 38s	695	762	99	22m 52s	861	£5.00	
17/05/2020	98	44	142	544	61	21m 15s	605	779	91	18m 39s	870	£5.00	
10/05/2020	68	33	101	734	48	21m 02s	782	982	74	15m 22s	1056	£5.00	
03/05/2020				779	53	17m 52s	832	958	88	15m 34s	1046	£5.00	
27/04/2020				702	18	5m 52s	720	1,100	54	10m 09s	1154	£4.30	
19/04/2020				982				1,400	149	11m 59s	1549	£5.00	
11/4/2020 Easter Sunday				726				964	106		1070	£5.00	
Good Friday								386	94		480		
5/4/2020 Palm Sunday				795				1,200	162		1362	£5.00	
29/03/2020								517	245		762		
22/03/2020								376	124		500		

Six-in-ten attenders go to religious services primarily to get closer to God

Among those who attend religious services at least once or twice a month, % who say _____ is the most important reason why



Note: Figures may not add to 100% due to rounding. Each category includes those who named only the corresponding item as a "very important" reason for regularly attending religious services, as well as those who named more than one reason as "very important" and then indicated, in a follow-up question, that the corresponding item is the most important reason they attend religious services.

Source: Survey conducted Dec. 4-18, 2017, among U.S. adults.

"Why Americans Go (and Don't Go) to Religious Services"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

3. Some dangers

- Digital seen to be frivolous/evil/for the young
- Digital Divide - economic but also re broadband
- Fear of the Unknown - for both clergy and attendees
- Lack of physicality has to be learned
- Ecclesiology - is your Church building a Temple for God?
- Do we encounter God only here - how does this fit biblically?

3. Some opportunities

- Technology is not just digital - phone, paper, mobile...
- Plurality of platforms - YouTube, Zoom, Facebook, Google, Teams
- Zoom Coffee Meetings, Prayer Groups, WhatsApp, Connection
- Invite housebound/vulnerable/disabled/anonymous to worship
- Ecclesiology - the Church is the body of Christ - the whole body
- What does it mean for the body to be multi-located. streamed
- God is spirit, Church triumphant, worshipping with angels
- Digital as an authentic thin place

4. What is Hybrid Church?

- A fresh expression of church within digital culture
- A merging of physical church and church online/digital church
- The Best of Both Worlds - giving people the choice to be where they can, to be where they feel safe, to be where they experience God, to be the body of Christ.
- Incorporating physically present and digitally present members of the congregation in a corporate act of worship
- Discipling, pastoring, serving congregation where they are

4. What is Hybrid Church?

- We have seen that this *church without walls* is a church of many faces: of choirs and music groups; of impromptu readers and people leading prayers; of those from BAME communities; of those doing all age crafts; of keyworkers and Covid19 volunteers. This is a church where the housebound are welcome, the disabled can play a full part and those in care homes are included. Church with a human face, even when that is a blackboard and table at the end of the garden path

4. What is Hybrid Church?

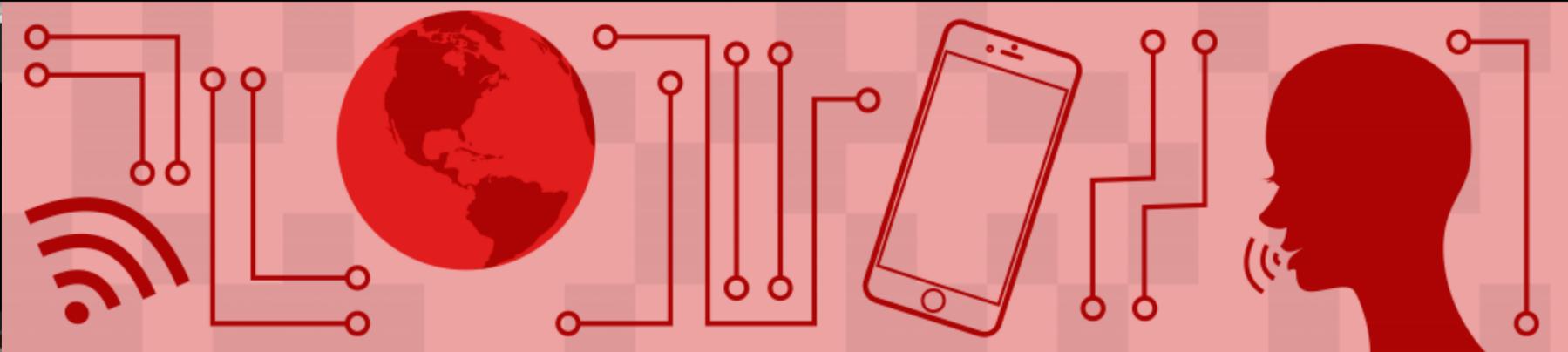
- Space for all to be.
- Space for all either proximally present or online
- Space for all to encounter the divine as embodied humans together
- Space for all to share at the table/altar/cross with an equal voice
- Space to grow into God's calling for our lives
- Space to share around the Lord's Table
- Space to strive for justice for all
- Church.

5. (Digital) Ministry in a Hybrid Church

- Not much changes about the basics of ministry - preaching, praying, pastoring, shepherding and feeding the flock
- Technological shift - using digital to bring different elements of the congregation together
- Cultural shift - changing digital from idol to icon
- Missional shift - centripetal shifts to omnipresent

5. (Digital) Ministry in a Hybrid Church

- Using the tools of the contemporary age to empower contemporary people to follow Christ, do good works, be holy
- Zoom for Bible Studies where all can come
- Facebook Live for Daily Offices
- Zoom (?) for housebound to join in physical church?
- Prayer spaces, fellowship, encounter across screens
- Sacramentality



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