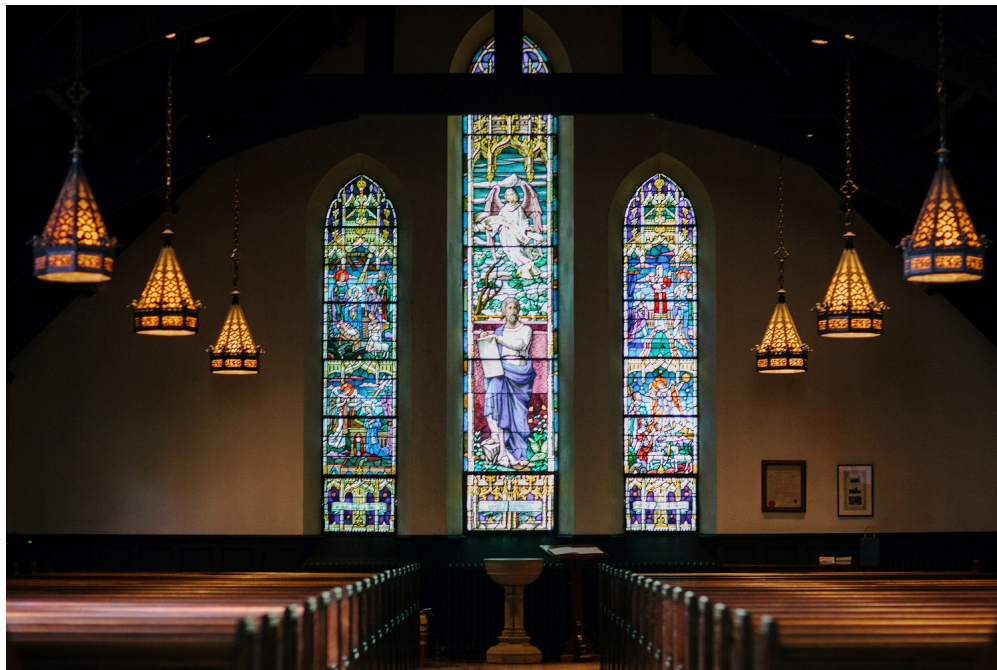


# How Churches in Arizona Are Responding to Reduced Attendance

Written by AZFoothills.com

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According to a survey on [church attendance](#), 48% of Americans claimed to attend church on a weekly basis in 2009. By comparison, that number has continued to plummet drastically over the years to the point that only 28% of Americans attended church weekly in 2020.

Arizona is feeling the pinch of attendance decline too. In fact, out of the 38% of Arizona residents who claim to have [religious affiliations](#), only 12% committed to continuous church attendance as of 2021. This disturbing drop in church-goers' attendance prompts a lot of questions from pastors and congregations alike. Here are a few insights into how church leaders in Arizona are responding to reduced attendance.

## Why Is Church Attendance in Decline?

The good news is, surveys show that the decrease of church attendance isn't necessarily due to a mass lack of faith. Instead, modern technology has shifted how church-goers receive their weekly dose of faith. To explain, congregants are increasingly choosing to attend online services rather than physically attend a chapel or temple. This is understandable when you factor in the convenience of online services, as well as saving money on fuel by not having to drive to services.

Another factor of Arizona's and the nationwide decline of church attendance is, as you can probably guess, pandemic-related. Since mandated shutdowns of restaurants, stores, and churches began in 2020, all brick-and-mortar gathering places felt the sting. Even the most successful churches, such as the [Impact Church of Scottsdale](#), which always enjoyed a packed house, have been negatively affected by the pandemic.

## What Are Arizona Churches Doing to Compensate?

In light of these declining numbers in attendance, church leaders in Arizona are required to get creative about keeping the faith in their congregations. Here are a few innovative ways churches in Arizona are staying relevant while still keeping afloat during uncertain times.

### More Virtual Outlets

We mentioned that a big factor to in-person church decline is because more flock members are choosing to attend online. This might beg the question, "Wouldn't offering more online services contribute to the decline in attendance?" In a way, yes. But church leaders are recognizing this is the growing trend for people craving the message of faith. Therefore, more pastors are rolling with this new norm.

Church leaders are now offering virtual Bible vacation sessions and Sunday school lessons in addition to regular services online. They are also providing faith-based counseling and chat groups online, which augers membership and strengthens faith within online attendees.

By diversifying online sessions, church leaders are beginning to see an increase in attendance. Although the hike in attendance isn't the seats-in-pews kind, online services are definitely proving an effective alternative.

### Utilizing Tech for Charity

One of the most frustrating challenges church leaders are faced with lack of attendance is lack of donations. As churches in Arizona are non-profit, they depend upon the generosity of their congregation to fund the church and keep it going.

Church leaders are getting smart about offering digital giving services. Donation buttons and requests for charitable contributions are embedded upon church websites to encourage members to offer their support. Furthermore, digital giving opportunities are often featured after

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online services to further the call for donations. If you are a church leader and want to know more about digital giving online, [use this link](#) for more information.

## Bringing Faith to the People

Lastly, church leaders are starting to step out of the pulpit and meet their congregants outside of the church. This is being done in Arizona in many different ways. Some pastors are taking advantage of the [“pop-up” trend](#) that became popularized in the restaurant industry. To explain, church leaders in Arizona are beginning to have impromptu, pop-up services via small gatherings in different neighborhoods. This is a way to spread the word while still enjoying fellowship.

Pastors with a passion for reaching their flock are also beginning to attend unorthodox venues as a means to share the good news of faith. For instance, some church leaders are starting to apply for booths at various Arizona festivals to share the message of their church. Some leaders are even enlisting their church choir or band at [Arizona music festivals](#) in order to lead their flock back to church.

## The Future of Faith

While it's difficult to predict the future of in-person church attendance, it is clear that religious leaders in Arizona are starting to take unique approaches to preserve the faith of their congregants. With the advent of new technology for churches and innovative approaches to spreading the word, churches are still a necessary and relevant service to Arizona residents.

Furthermore, the more open-minded and proactive church leaders are in this ever-changing “new norm” of church-going today, the odds become better at retaining and increasing church membership in the future.