

## Faith & Works | Most Protestant pastors doubt global warming man-made



Written by

**Peter Smith**  
psmith@courier-journal.com

7:42 PM, Apr. 29, 2011

Sixty percent of Protestant pastors disagree that global warming is real and man-made, and 41 percent of them "strongly" disagree, a new survey says.

The skepticism is up from an already high 48 percent of pastors in 2008 who somewhat or strongly disagreed with the strong scientific consensus on man-made global warming.

The latest result was released by LifeWay Research, a Southern Baptist-affiliated polling agency. It was based on a survey of 1,000 Protestant pastors of various denominations in October 2010.

All the usual red-blue divides apply here.

Evangelicals, Republicans, pastors in the South and those with lower educations are

more likely to be skeptical of warming being man-made, the survey said. (Fifty percent of pastors with a bachelor's degree or less strongly disagree that global warming is man-made, but even 36 percent of those with a master's or higher strongly disagree.)

Pastors in mainline congregations, which tend to be more liberal, tend to believe in man-made warming, as do Democrats and those in the Northeast.

The results echo other polling. The Pew Research Center has found skepticism about man-made global warming to have risen to 32 percent from 17 percent since 2006 among American adults. Skepticism is particularly strong among political conservatives, who have a lot of overlap with evangelicals. (Only 16 percent of Republicans believe in man-made global warming and 8 percent of tea-party sympathizers.)

The LifeWay survey doesn't go into why pastors believe what they do. But

Advertisement

**Protect Your Home  
with ADT!**

**Click Here  
to Learn More!**

ADT AUTHORIZED DEALER

conservative groups' media outlets and policy statements have included steady denunciations of what most scientists say is a settled issue.

The Southern Baptist Convention's official position contends that the "scientific community is divided" on the extent of human involvement in warming

The United Nations-backed Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change reports that global warming is "very likely" man-made, due to carbon emissions, and "not due to known natural causes alone." Other scientific societies have reached similar conclusions.

## Easter record

The state's largest congregation drew its largest-ever crowds this past Easter — 38,296.

Southeast Christian Church recorded the figures after holding 16 services in total at its three locations — its main campus on Blankenbaker Parkway off Interstate 64 and its two satellite campuses in Jeffersonville, Ind., and Crestwood in Oldham County.

The Easter services began at the main campus on Good Friday evening and continued through the weekend. Normally there are 10 services at the three campuses.

Southeast reached the previous Easter attendance peak of 32,966 in 2009, just

after the Indiana campus was opened. The 2008 figure was 29,300.

The church began developing satellite locations in recent years partly because of a sense that it had reached a plateau at its main location, which has a 9,000-seat sanctuary, and could reach more people with multiple sites.

The breakdown for Easter weekend: Blankenbaker, 30,778; Indiana, 3,577; Oldham, 3,941.

"More important is the fact that those numbers represent many people who are spiritually hungry and longing for answers to their questions," said senior minister Dave Stone.

"While Easter tends to attract people who may just come once or twice a year, many will come back if they are spiritually fed while they are there. Easter crowds show the potential for a church in the years to come."

Advertisement



**Protect Your Home  
with ADT!**

**ADT AUTHORIZED DEALER**

**Click Here  
to Learn More!**