

Imagination toward a thriving society

Cardus is a non-partisan think tank dedicated to clarifying and strengthening, through research and dialogue, the ways in which society's institutions can work together for the common good.

<https://www.cardus.ca/>



Faith Communities program themes

- Freedom of religion and conscience
- Religion in the public square
- Faith congregations in the social architecture

TOWARD A HOPEFUL FUTURE

Facing Down Religious Hate

Andrew P.W. Bennett and Johanna Lewis

March 2023

A Cardus Research Brief

Introduction

A Muslim mother attacked and called a “terrorist” while picking up her children from school.¹ Graffiti near university campuses calling for Jews to be killed.² A Hindu family conducting a perilous ceremony at a Mississauga park, assaulted by two teenagers and having to flee in their car.³ A synagogue in Guelph, vandalized with images of Adolf Hitler.⁴ Donors of Christian churches vandalized or burned, including some on reserves and counting Indigenous families among their members.⁵

1. “‘Engbriding’ Attacks Leave Ontario Muslim Shaken,” *CBC*, November 17, 2015, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/india/engbriding-attacks-leave-ontario-muslim-shaken-1.3333102>.

2. M. Stein, “KQ1 the Jew? Graffiti, Swastika Found Near Queen’s University Campus,” *Amman Post*, October 27, 2022, <https://www.post-queens.ca/news/article/2022-10-27/m-stein-swastika-jew-in-the-head-graffiti-near-queens-university/>, *Amman Post*, June 11, 2022, <https://www.post-queens.ca/news/article/2022-06-11/m-stein-swastika-jew-in-the-head-graffiti-near-queens-university/>.

3. D. Futsone, “Man and His Family Victims of Hate Crime at Mississauga Park,” *Amman Post*, September 13, 2021, <https://www.post-queens.ca/news/article/2021-09-13/d-futsone-man-and-his-family-victims-of-hate-crime-at-mississauga-park/>.

4. A. Sanderson, “Images of Hitler Affixed to Guelph Ont. Synagogue Door, Police Say,” *CITY News*, October 11, 2022, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/ontario/guelph-synagogue-door-police-say-1.6706310>.

5. C. Bussell and J. Bolanos, “Indigenous Leaders Condemn Recent Vandalism of Churches in Canada,” *Global News Agency*, June 29, 2021, <https://www.globalnews.ca/news/2101835/indigenous-leaders-condemn-recent-vandalism-of-churches-in-canada/>; C. Davidson, “Update: A Map of the 71 Churches That Have Been Vandalized or Burned Since the Bunkered School Shootings,” *True North*, August 23, 2021, <https://www.truecanada.com/news/2021/08/23/a-map-of-the-71-churches-that-have-been-vandalized-or-burned-since-the-bunkered-school-shootings/>.



INDIGENOUS VOICES OF FAITH

Interviews by Andrew P.W. Bennett
March 2023

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PERSPECTIVES



REASONABLE LIMITS

How Far Does Religious Freedom Go in Canada?

Dwight Newman

February 2022

A Cardus Research Report

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WHY THE FAITH?

**CANADIANS' SHIFTING
ATTITUDES TO RELIGION**



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A Cardus Project in partnership with the Angus Reid Institute
Ray Pennings, Cardus Executive Vice President

KEY QUESTIONS

- **Where are Canadians today in terms of their engagement with religion? Is it shifting?**
- **Who is religious in Canada today? Who is not?**
- **Who is in your congregation? Do they believe and practice what your faith tradition holds to be true?**
- **How do we see ourselves and how do we see our society in embracing a public faith?**



THE GOOD...

- The 18-34 age group are still comparatively committed within the Christian tradition. They are attending services, reading scripture, and praying.
- Immigrants, especially in non-Christian faiths, are religiously committed.
- Those who are raised in a Christian tradition and participate in religious ceremonies are more likely to remain in the faith they were raised in.



...AND THE NOT SO GOOD

- While a stable number of Christians in the 18-34 age group are religiously committed, there is a growing number who are now non-religious.
- A growing number of Roman Catholics and Mainline Protestants do not believe in God.
- Those who self-identify as Roman Catholics and Mainline Protestants are exiting communal worship and are increasingly among the Spiritually Uncertain.



THE SHIFTING LANDSCAPE OF FAITH IN CANADA

- Spectrum of Spirituality
- Faith Journey
- Faith in Public Life

SPECTRUM OF SPIRITUALITY INDEX

- **Belief in God or a higher power**
- **Belief in life after death**
- **How important it is for a parent to teach their children about religious beliefs**
- **How often, if at all, a person feels they experience God's presence**
- **How often, if at all, a person prays to God or a higher power**
- **How often, if at all, a person reads the Bible, Qur'an, or other sacred text**
- **How often, if at all, a person attends religious services (other than weddings or funerals)**

A PORTRAIT OF SPIRITUALITY IN 2022

Religiously Committed

16%



More likely to:

- Be older (aged 55+)
- Female
- Be an immigrant or visible minority
- Be public about their faith
- To identify as Evangelical or Muslim

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Privately Faithful

19%



More likely to:

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- Have a lower income (<50k/year)
- Identify as Sikh or Hindu

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Spiritually Uncertain

47%

- Relatively even cross-section
- Over half not raised in religious households



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Non-religious

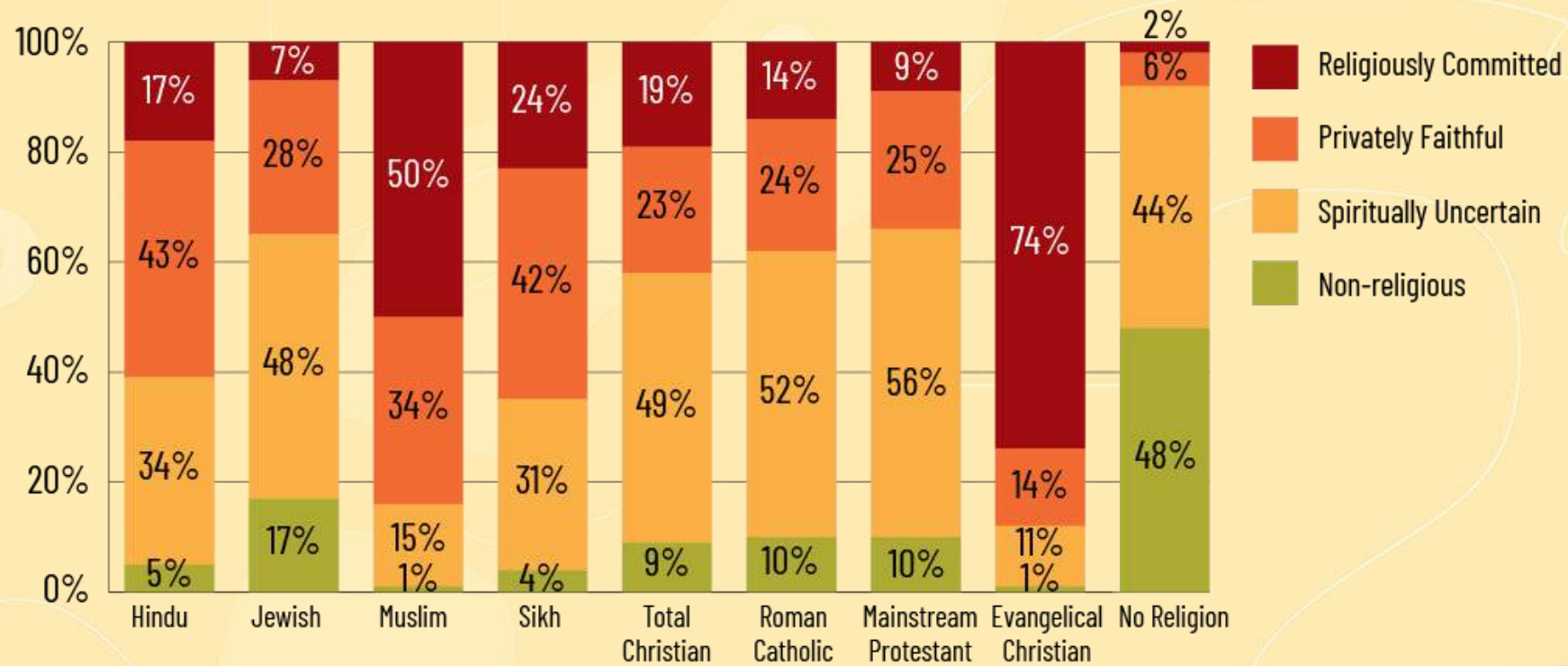
19%



More likely to:

- Be young (aged 18-40)
- Be male, but trending higher in females
- Have a higher income (>100k/year)

Figure 8: Spectrum of Spirituality Composite, by Religious Identity, 2022



Note: Unweighted sample sizes of each group range from 214 to 961. Results slightly differ (+/- 4%) from the original findings presented in the April 2022 report by the Angus Reid Institute as they are weighted results and evaluate respondents' answers to their religious identity, rather than their cultural background. Totals may not sum to 100% due to rounding. The non-Christian faiths are taken from an oversampling of each faith group and may not be fully representative of each faith group, especially given the lack of available data on their sociodemographic characteristics. For more details, see the appendix.

Figure 15: Total Christians, Religious Indicators, 2017 to 2022

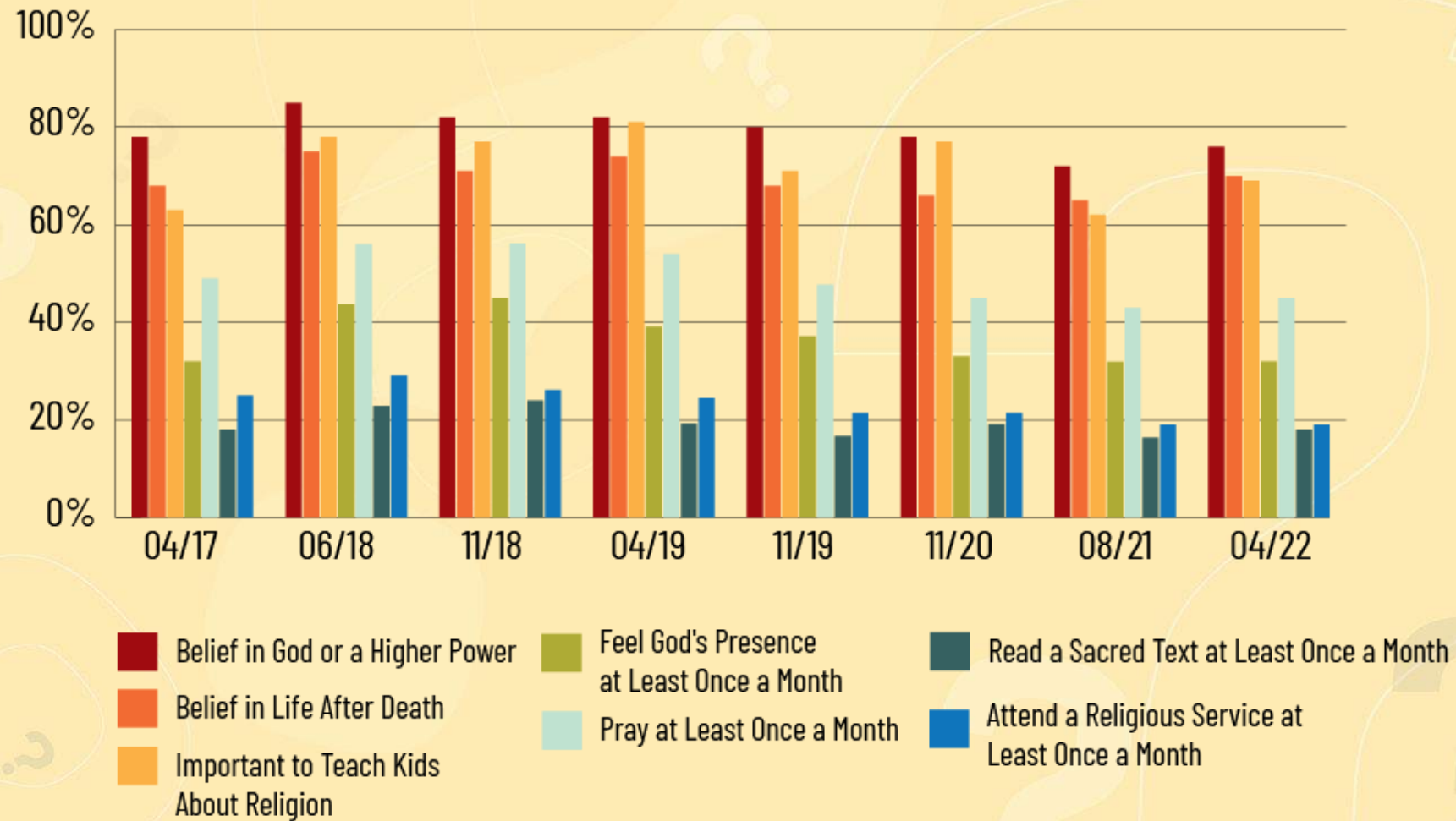
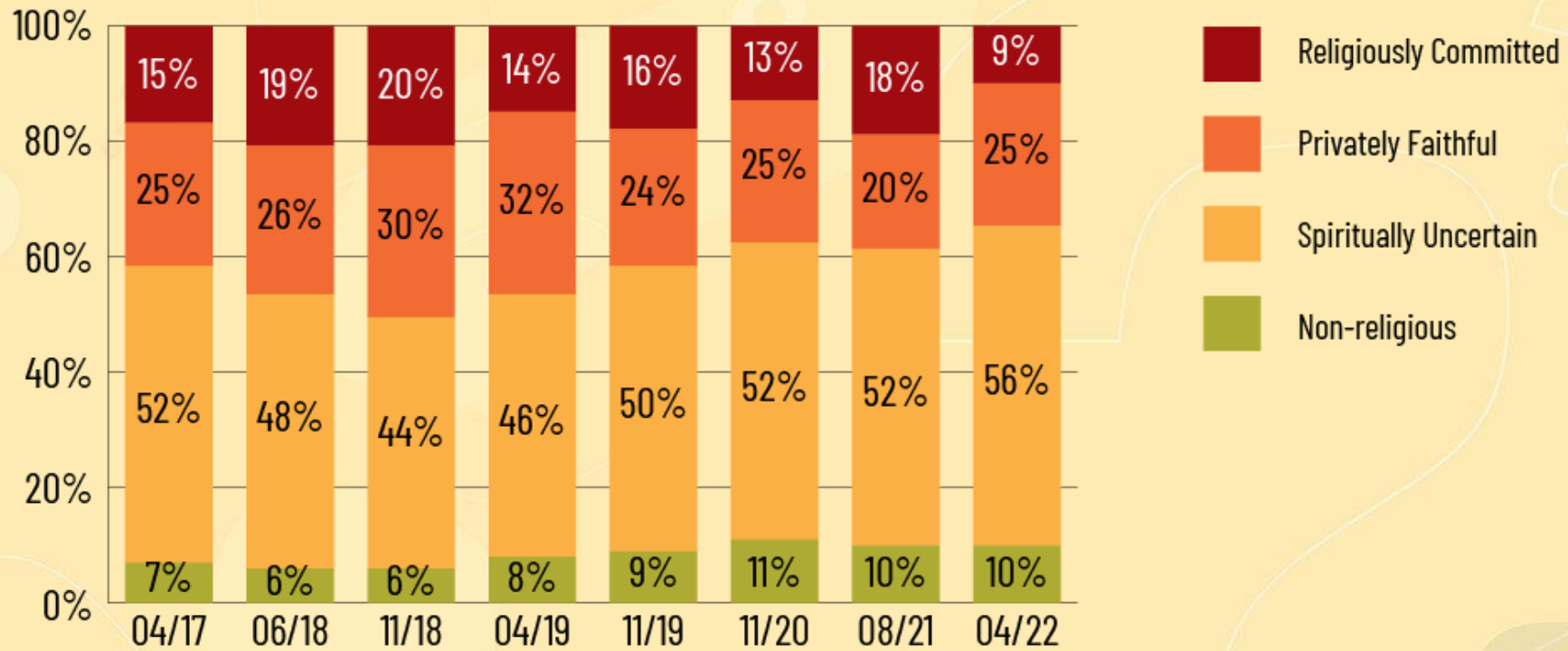


Figure 11: Spectrum of Spirituality, Mainline Protestants, 2017 to 2022



Note: Unweighted survey sample sizes of Mainline Protestants range from 258 to 625. Totals may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Figure 12: Mainline Protestants, Religious Indicators, 2017 to 2022

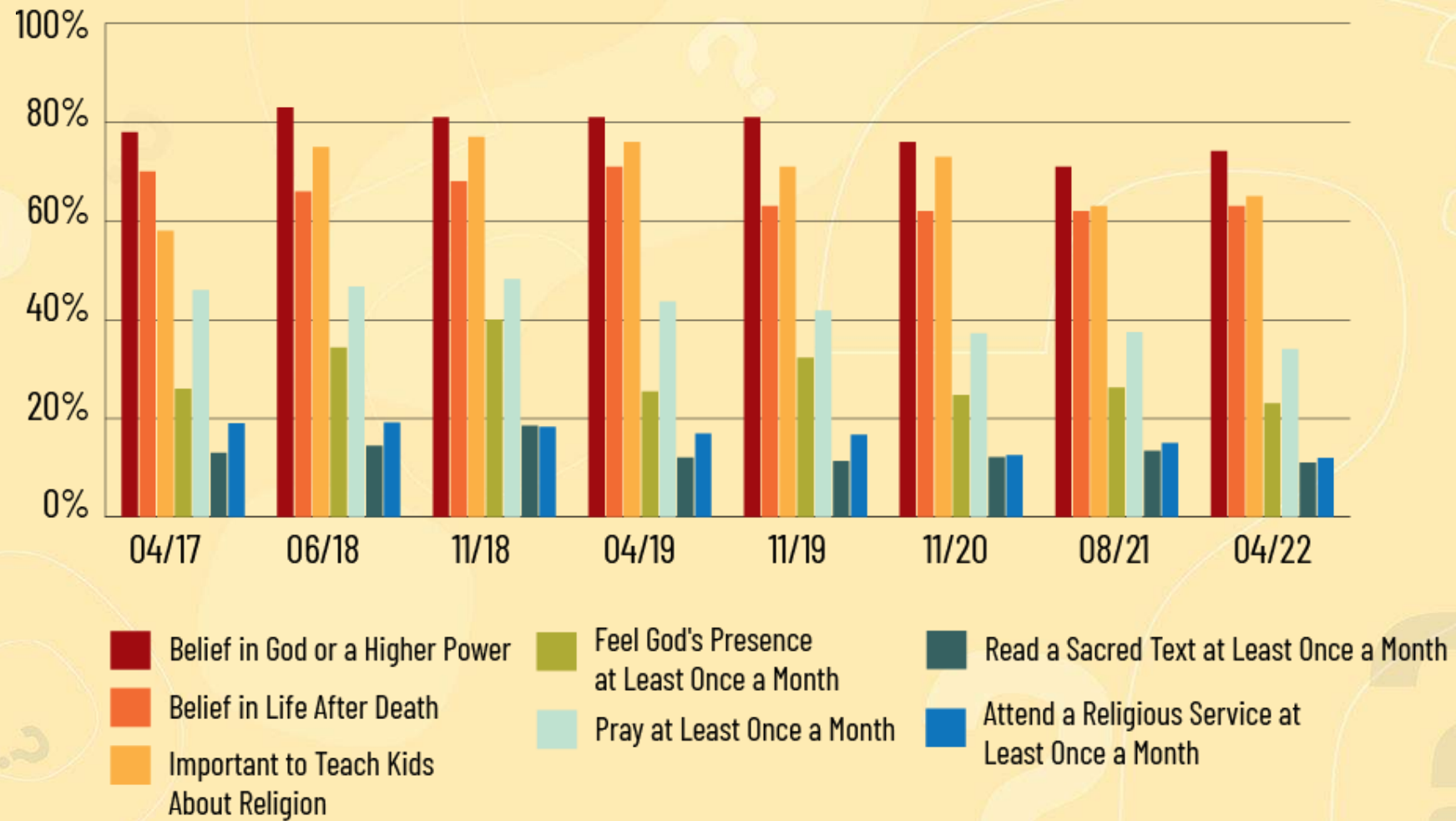


Figure 37: Religion in Public Life, 2022

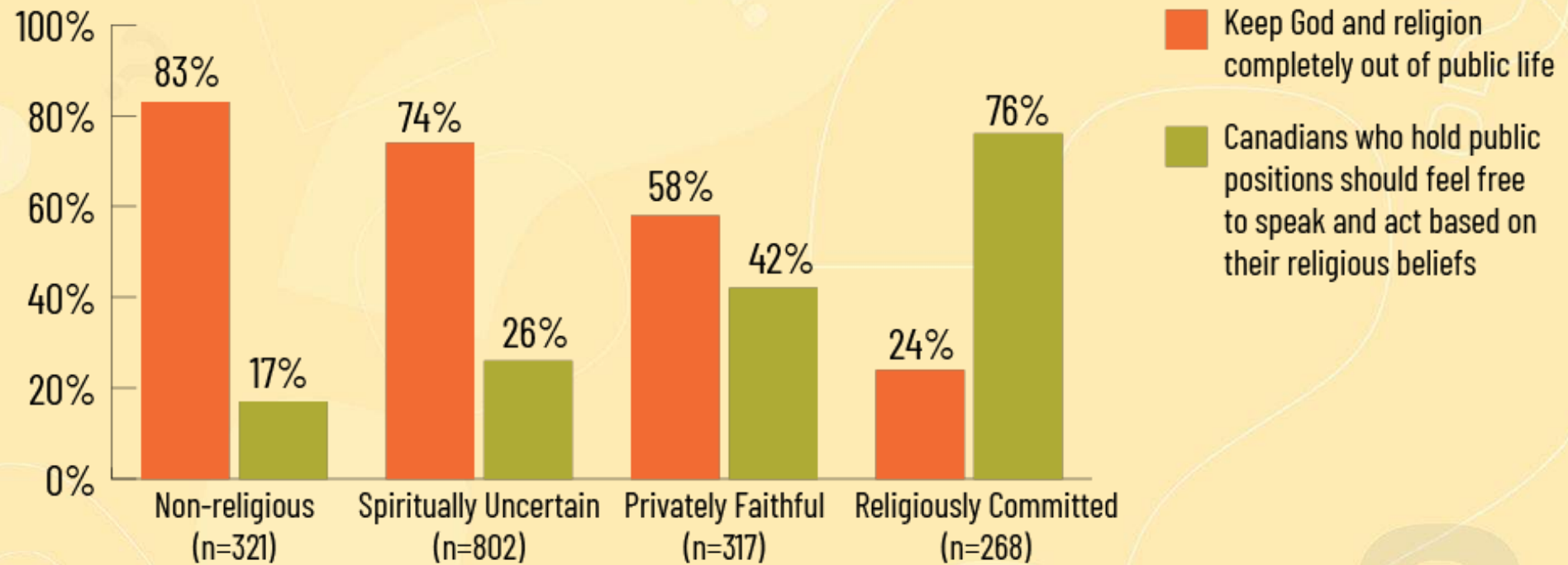
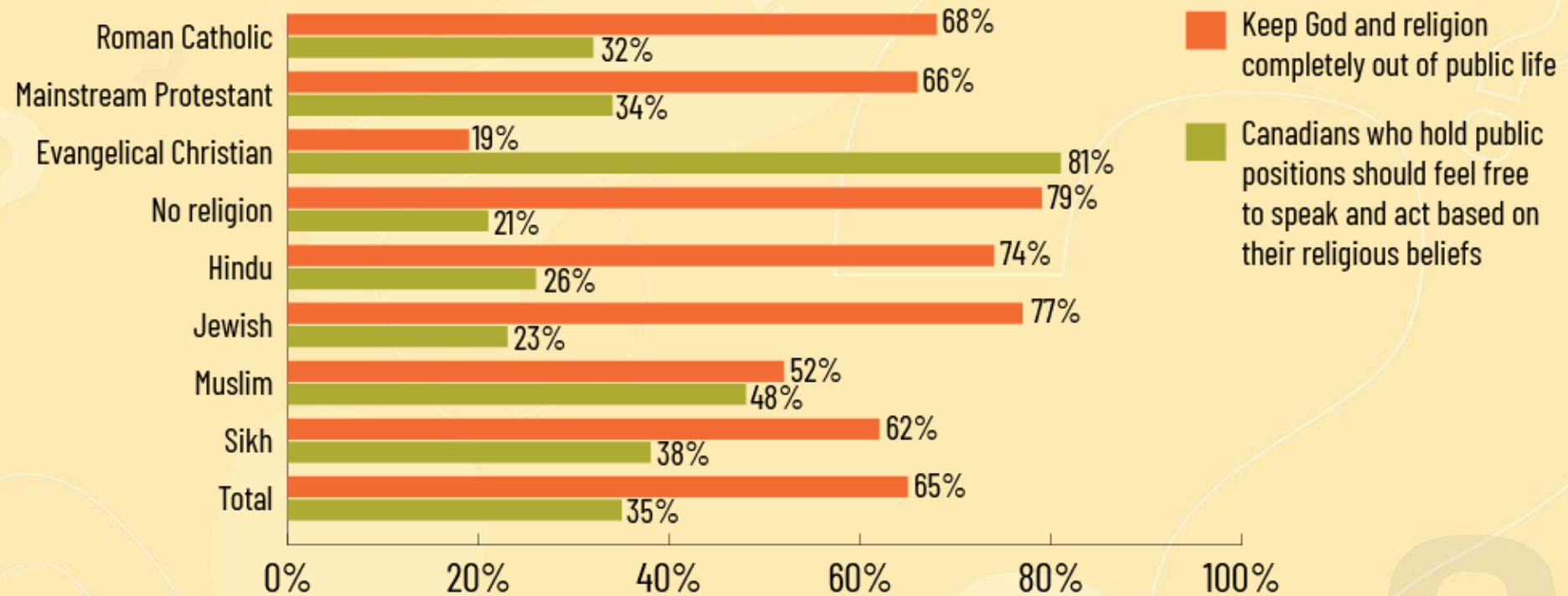


Figure 38: Religion in Public Life, by Religious Identity, 2022



Note: Unweighted sample sizes of each group range from 214 to 961.

Figure 39: Religion in Public Life, by Age, 2022

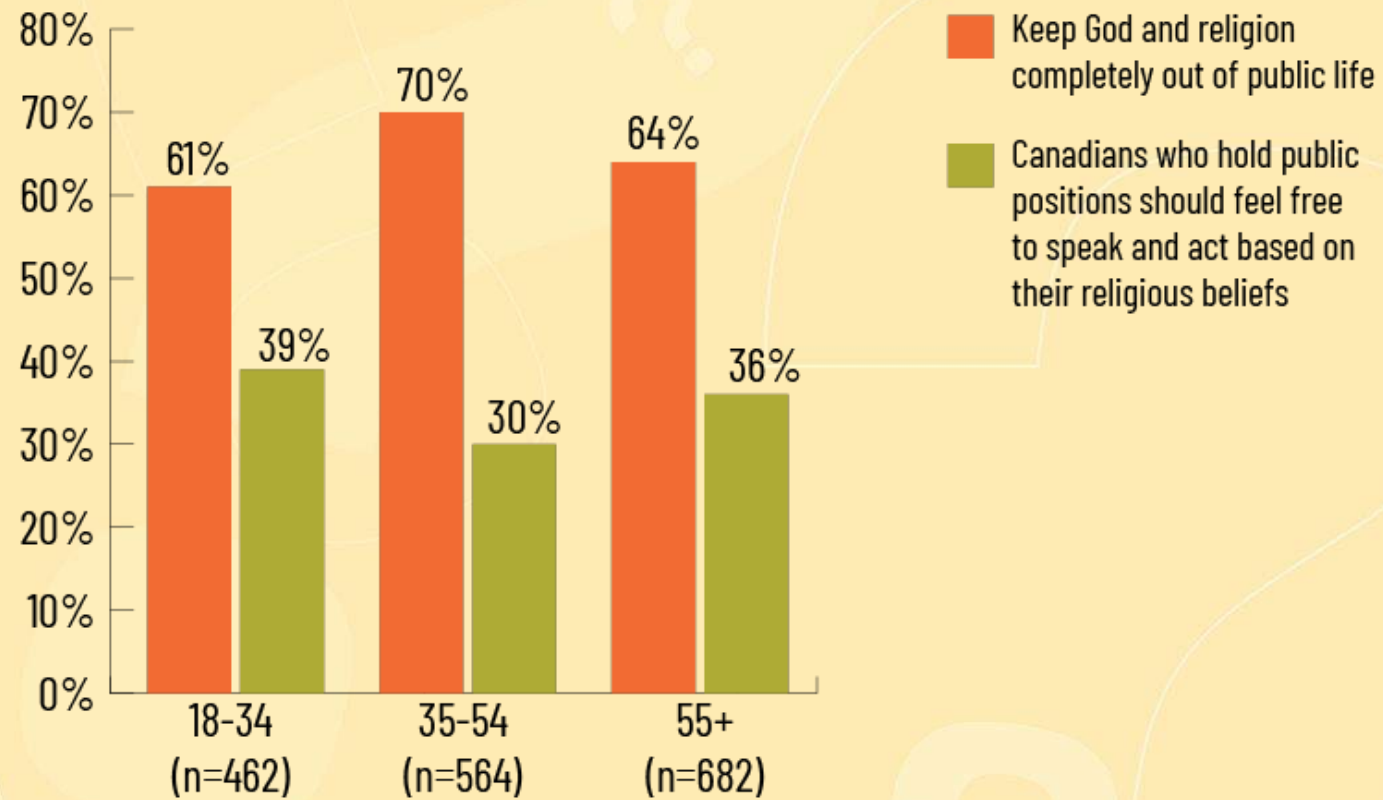
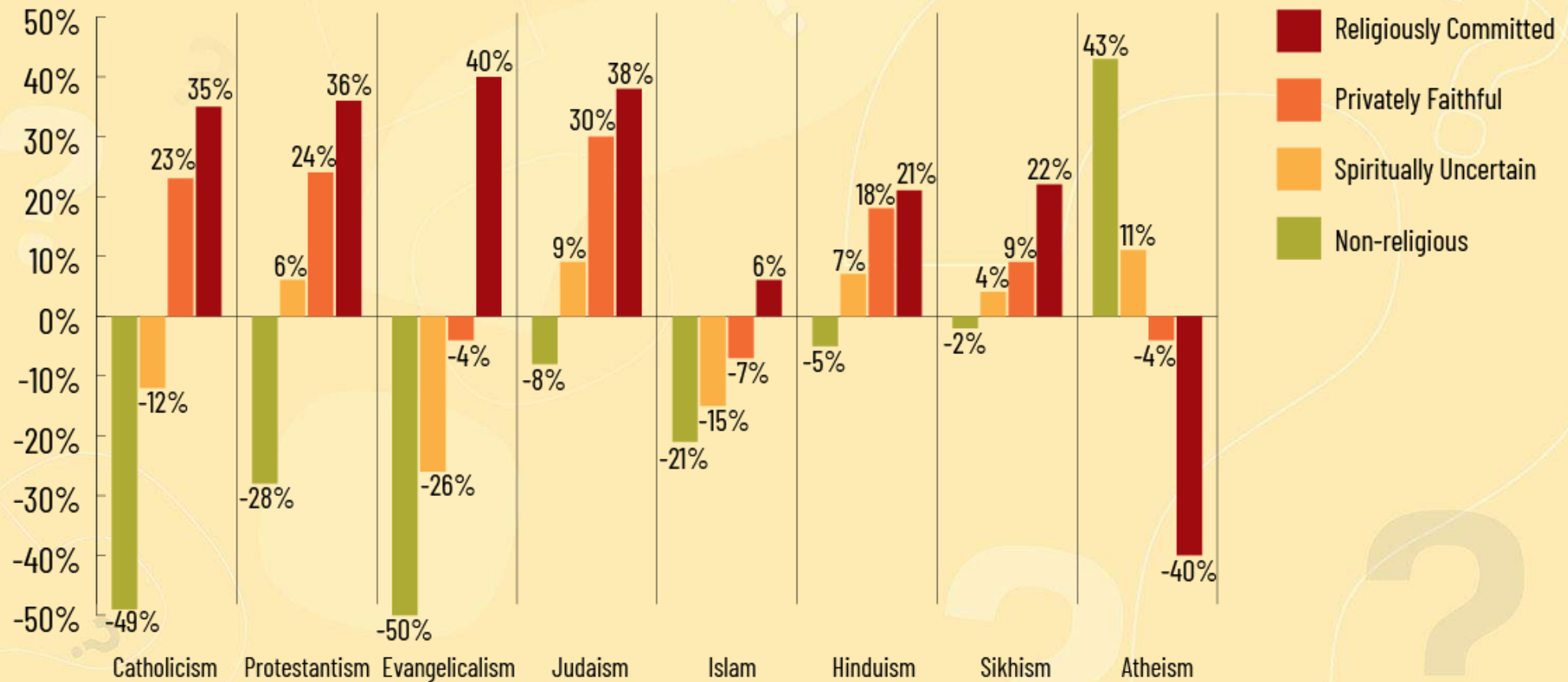


Figure 41: In your view, would you say the overall presence of each of these in Canadian public life is benefiting or damaging Canada and Canadian society?, by Spectrum of Spirituality (Net Benefiting Minus Net Damaging)



SUMMARY THEMES

- **Demographics and Immigration**
 - **The Shrinking Middle**
 - **Culture & Authenticity**
 - **Evangelical & Muslim**
 - **Public Narrative**

THANK YOU

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