

# Religiousness

## Religious Practices

### Religious Service Attendance

Attendance at church religious services is a key marker of religiousness.<sup>21</sup> Using the PRLS, we found that 76% of

Latter-day Saint Millennial+ (combining Millennials and Gen Z) and those of earlier generations attend religious services at least monthly, more than all other religious groups surveyed (fig. 1).<sup>22</sup> The next closest are Evangelicals at 59% of Millennial+ and 61% of previous generations.

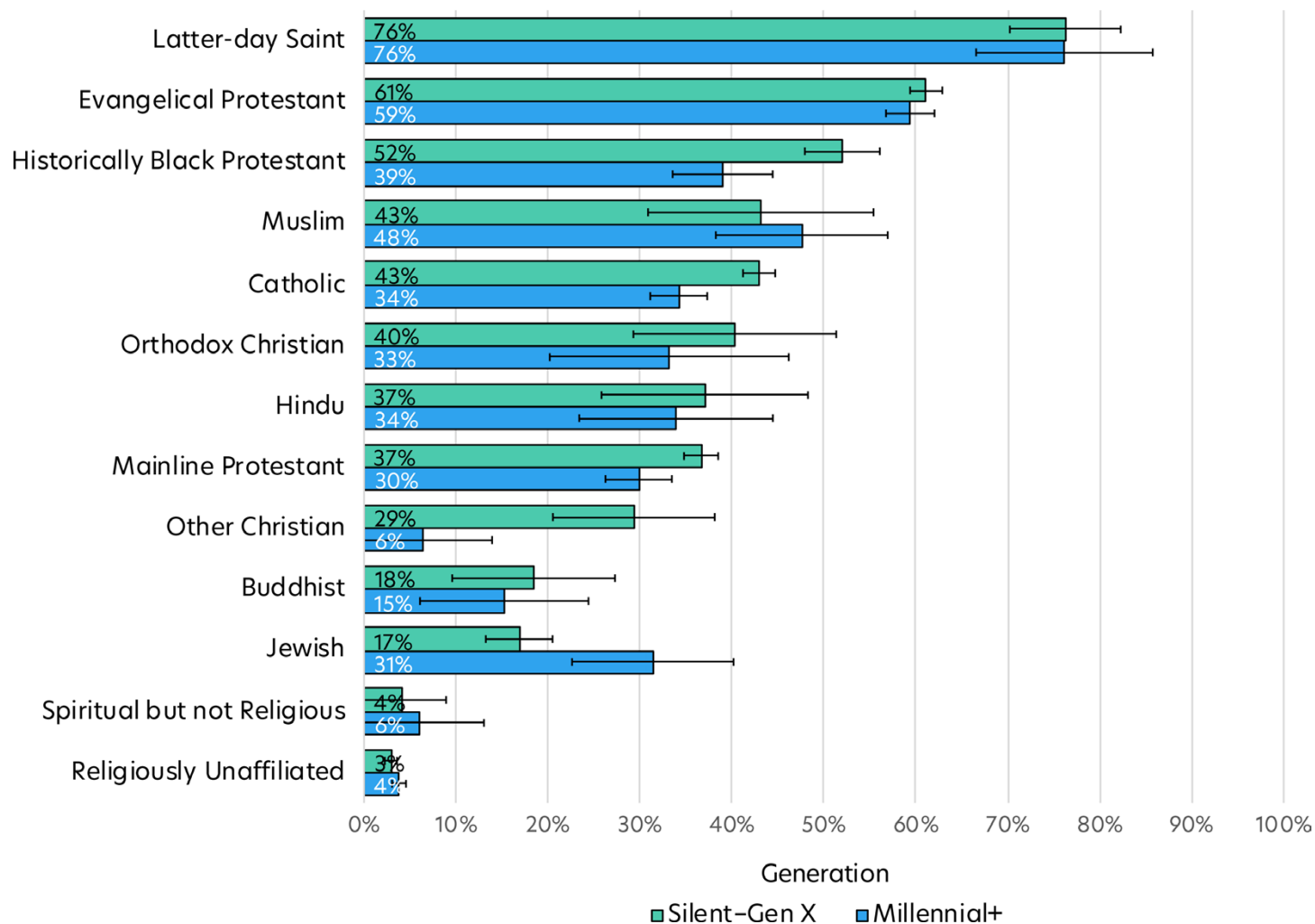


Figure 1. At Least Monthly Religious Service Attendance by Religious Tradition (Pew Religious Landscape Study, 2024; n=35,652)

21. At the same time, we do acknowledge the religious diversity in the degree to which attendance at religious services is encouraged. For some religions, this is a high priority whereas for other religions, other forms of worship are emphasized. Yet gathering for worship is a meaningful activity in and of itself, indicating religious group participation

which has been associated with positive outcomes. Harold G. Koenig, Tyler J. Vanderweele, and John R. Peteet, *Handbook of Religion and Health*, 3rd ed. (Oxford University Press, 2023), 78–79.

22. PRLS question: “Aside from weddings and funerals, how often do you attend religious services in person?”

The 95% confidence intervals for Latter-day Saints are far above other religions, indicating a statistically significant difference.<sup>23</sup> Interestingly, Millennial+ Muslims and Jews have higher rates of religious service attendance than previous generations.

**76% of Latter-day Saint Millennials and Gen Z attend religious services at least monthly—more than any other religion surveyed.**

When examining weekly attendance, there is an even greater gap between Latter-day Saints and those of other faiths: 69% of Latter-day Saints attend church at least weekly, while 51% of Evangelicals, the next closest, attend church at least weekly (18% lower than Latter-day Saint levels).

The CES data (again, this is the Cooperative Election Survey, not to be confused with the Church Educational System) find that Latter-day Saints have maintained the highest rates of church attendance throughout the period

of religious decline in the United States.<sup>24</sup> Figure 2<sup>25</sup> displays the percentage of those attending religious services at least monthly since 2008.<sup>26</sup> While Latter-day Saints have experienced a decrease in this percentage over time (from just above 80% in 2008 to just below 70% in 2024<sup>27</sup>), they remain the highest at each time point. Notably, these data also indicate a downward trend in religious attendance for most religions, though Latter-day Saints seem to be declining at a somewhat faster rate. Thus, even while Latter-day Saints remain at higher attendance rates, this downward trend may be leading to a narrower gap between Latter-day Saints and other religions.

We also examined religious attendance over time for younger generations of Latter-day Saints. As indicated by the CES data (fig. 3), approximately 70%–90% of Latter-day Saint Millennial+ have attended church at least monthly from 2008 to 2024, the years of greatest religious decline in the United States. Born Again Protestants have the second highest level of religious service attendance across that time.

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23. Confidence intervals express the level of uncertainty we have about the numbers we present. Given that not every Latter-day Saint, Evangelical, Muslim, etc. was surveyed, we do not know the exact percentage of those who feel religion is “very important” (this also goes for the other numbers in this report). A 95% confidence interval gives a plausible range for the true percentage. For example, 76% of Millennial+ Latter-day Saints in the survey said they attend at least monthly. The confidence interval is from roughly 65% to 85%, meaning we are 95% confident the true percentage is within that range. Because these confidence intervals are higher than the estimate for Evangelical Protestants, we say these two groups differ in a statistically significant way at the 95% confidence level (a technical term meaning differences between groups are unlikely due to chance). In this report, when differences are referred to as “significant,” this indicates the differences are statistically significant.

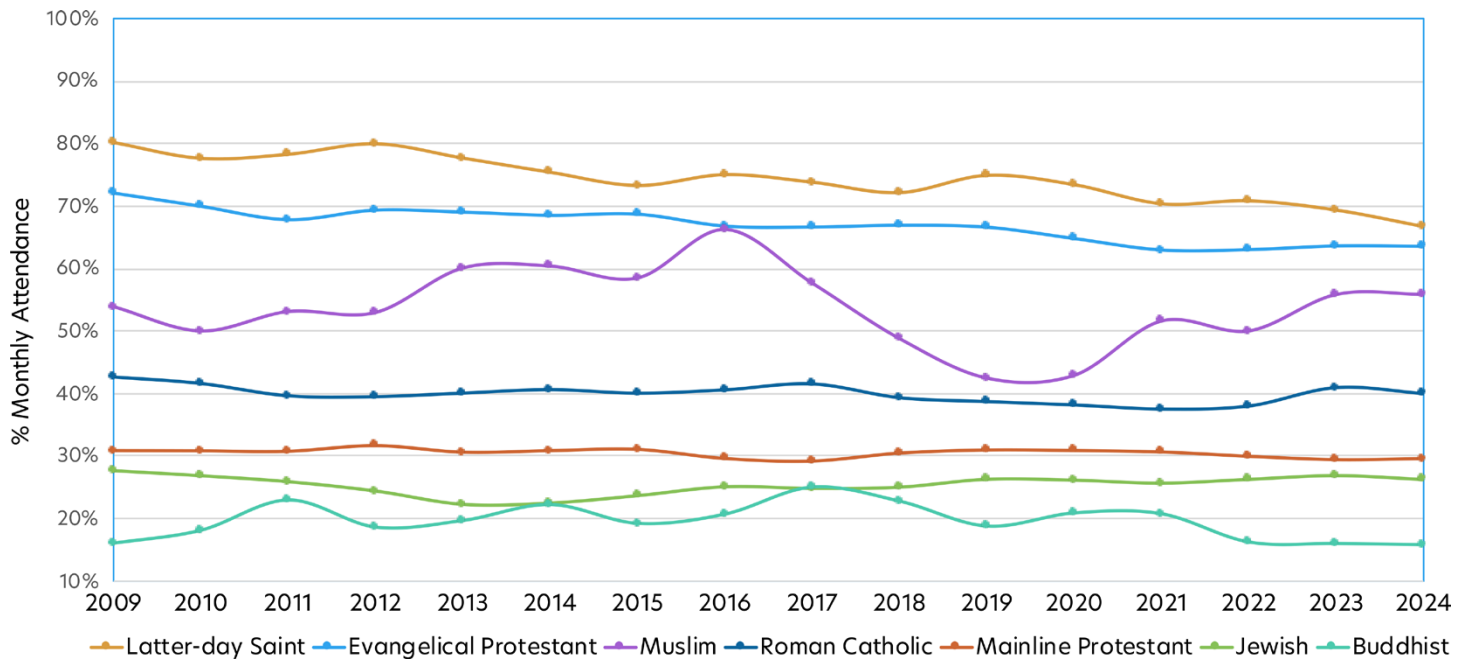
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24. The groups presented here may be somewhat different from what is presented in earlier figures. This is due to the different dataset being used and the slightly different religious categories. For instance, PRLS only specifies “Catholic” whereas CES specifies “Roman Catholic.” PRLS and CES datasets use different terminology to refer to similar groups. “Born again” and “Evangelical” are often used synonymously. Though it should be noted that certain differences exist. Rather than standardizing on a single label (Evangelical or Born Again), we use the language of each survey when referring to Evangelical Protestants or Born Again Protestants.

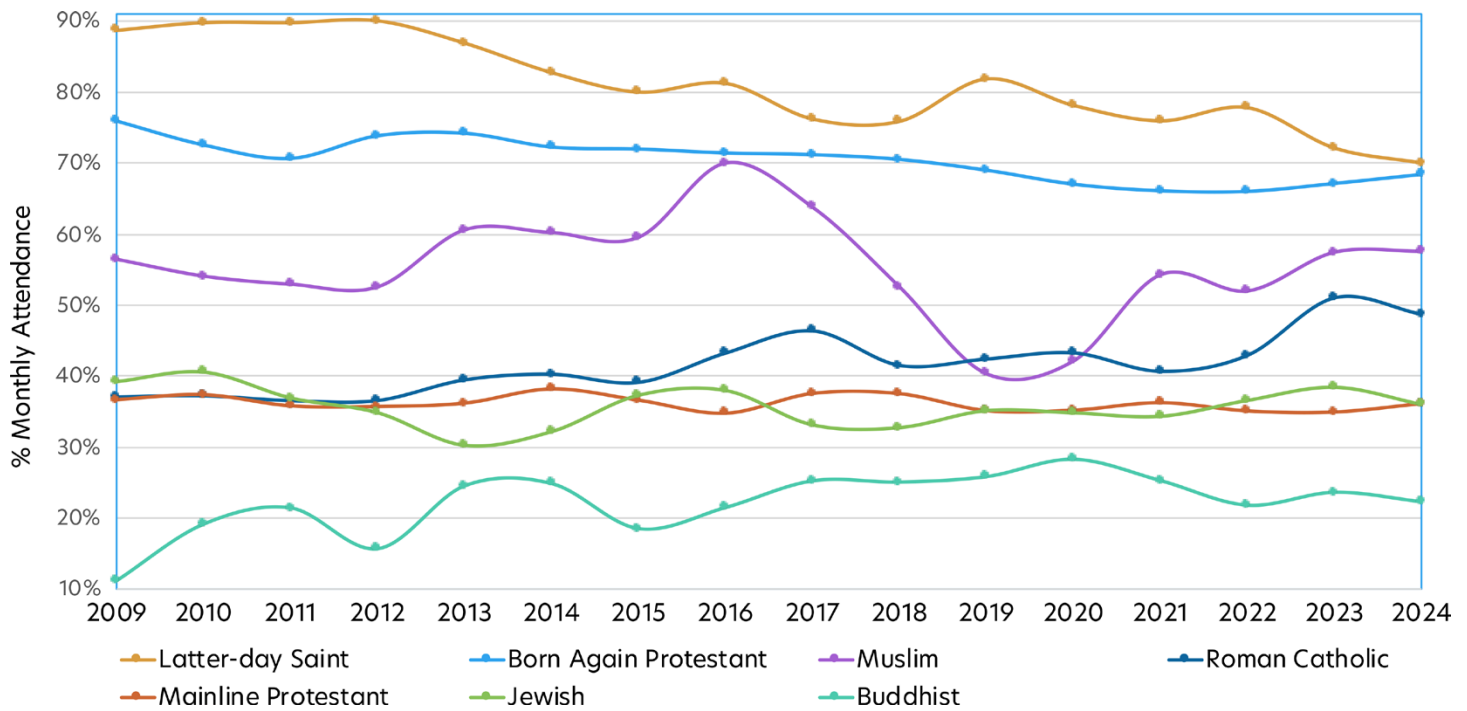
25. CES question: “Aside from weddings and funerals, how often do you attend religious services in person?”

26. To better observe overall trends, figures 2 and 3 are based on a two-year moving average. In addition, the relatively large change in Muslim attendance is likely due to the small sample size.

27. Note this CES number differs from the PRLS. This may be due to several factors. Because PRLS survey’s 95% confidence interval includes the number 70%, this means the CES result of 70% is still within the range of values that the PRLS would consider plausible. Therefore, statistically speaking, the two surveys are not in disagreement.



**Figure 2.** Changes in Adult Religious Attendance by Religion over Time (Cooperative Election Study, 2008–24; n=394,801; two-year moving average)



**Figure 3.** Changes in Millennial+ Religious Attendance by Religion over Time (Cooperative Election Study, 2008–24; n=91,231; two-year moving average)

## Prayer and Scripture Reading

Latter-day Saints also have high levels of private religious behaviors at a time when these are becoming less widely practiced. For example, the percentage of Americans who say they pray daily has dropped since 2007 but has hovered

around 44% since 2021.<sup>28</sup> In comparison, the most recent PRLS found that 70% of Latter-day Saint Millennial+ pray daily, while 78% of those of previous generations pray daily (fig. 4).<sup>29</sup> This is statistically tied with Historically Black Protestants and Evangelical Protestants.

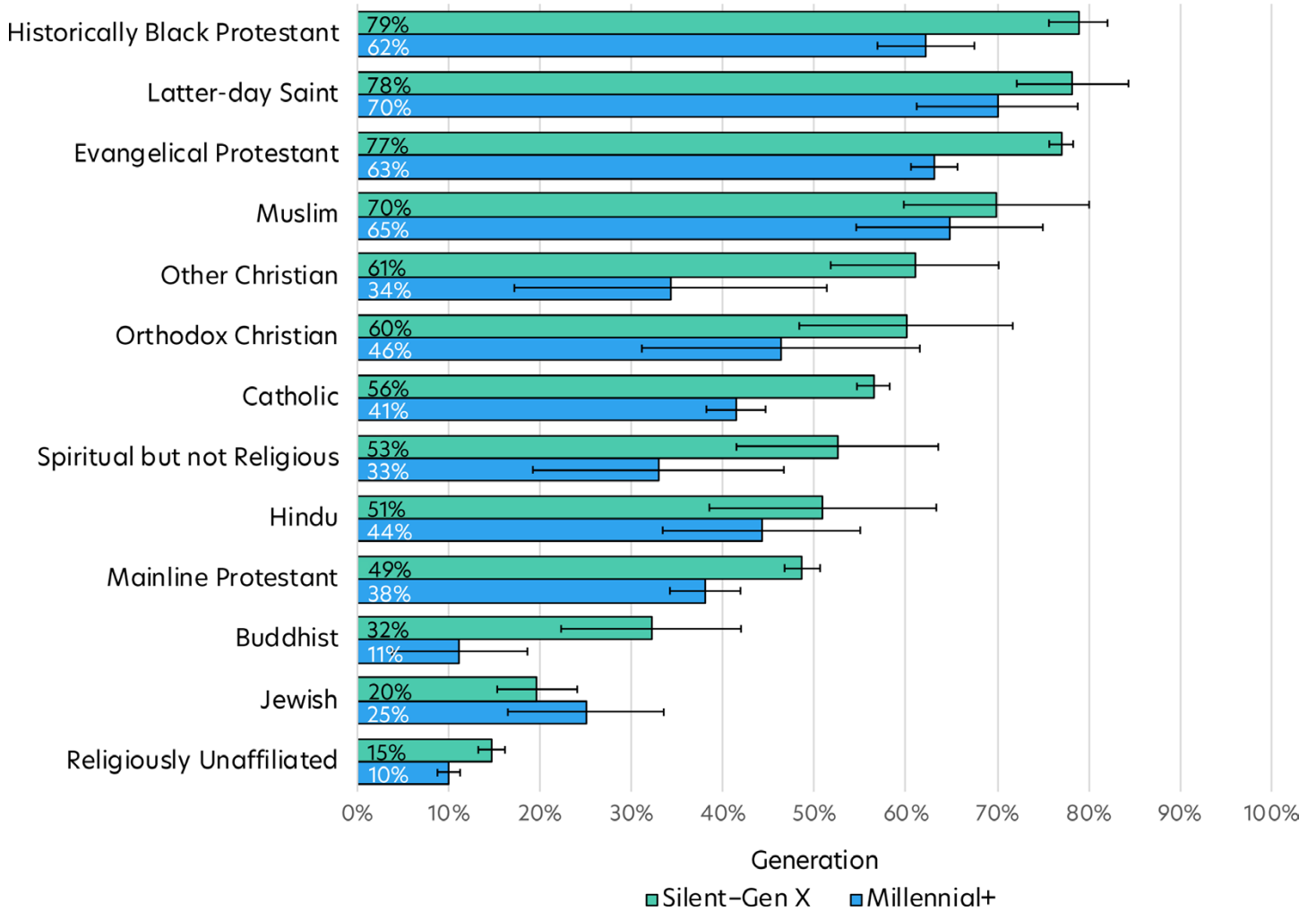


Figure 4. Daily Prayer by Religion and Generation (Pew Religious Landscape Study, 2024; n=35,569)

**Latter-day Saints lead the nation in weekly scripture reading: 56% of Millennial+ versus 44% for the next-highest group.**

28. Smith and others, *Decline of Christianity*, 180.

29. PRLS question: “Outside of attending religious services, how often do you pray?”

Latter-day Saints also have the highest rate of at least weekly scripture reading,<sup>30</sup> (56% Millennial+; 63% earlier generations) followed by Evangelicals (44% Millennial+; 55% earlier generations) and “Historically Black Protestants” (40% Millennial+; 51% earlier generations) (fig. 5).

**80% of Latter-day Saint parents pray or read scripture with their children—the highest of any faith surveyed.**

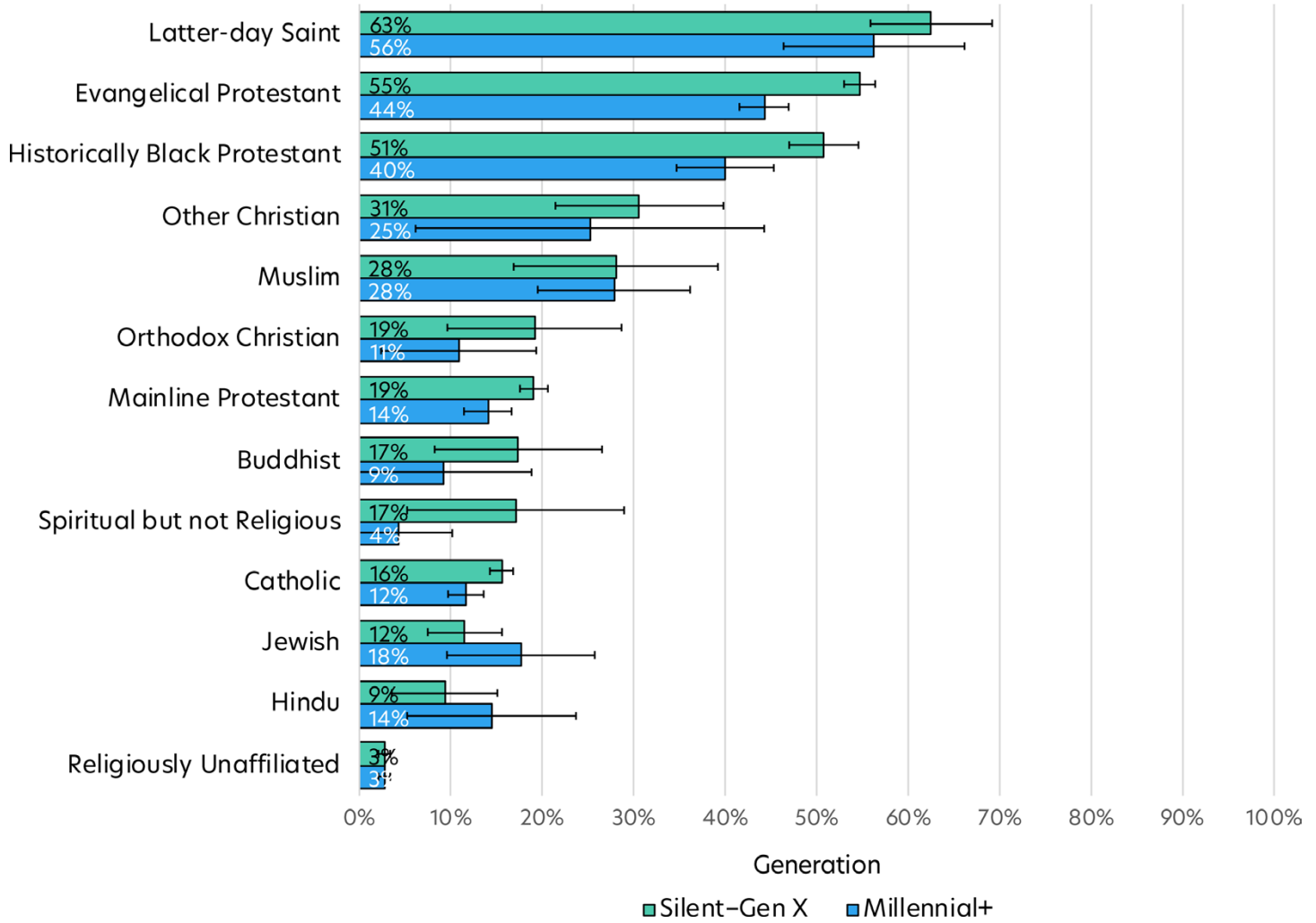


Figure 5. Weekly Scripture Reading by Religion (Pew Religious Landscape Study, 2024; n=35,535)

30. PRLS question: “How often do you read scripture outside of religious services?”

## Parents Praying or Reading Scriptures with Their Children

Eighty percent of Latter-day Saint parents pray and/or read scriptures with their children<sup>31</sup> (fig. 6) compared to 73% of Evangelicals and 70% of Muslims. The next closest are Historically Black Protestants at 66%.

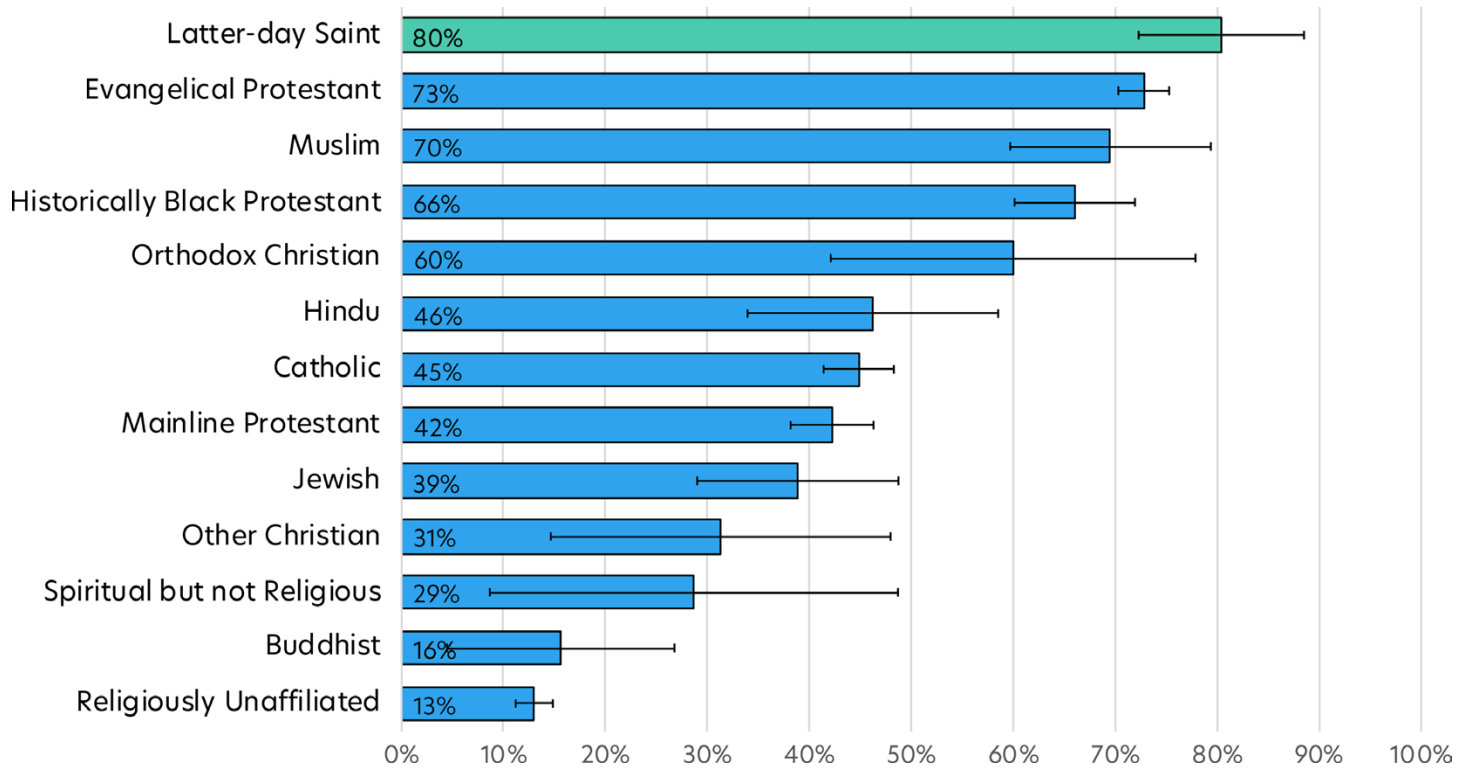


Figure 6. Parents Praying and/or Reading Scriptures with Their Children by Religion (Pew Religious Landscape Study, 2024; n=8,105)

31. PRLS question: “Do you pray or read scripture with any of your children?” (yes/no response).

### Youth Religious Practices

The above analyses include only adults. However, the FFYD data allowed us to examine these levels for youth (ages 12–18) across religions (see table 1; note that the sample sizes of Protestant, Catholic, and “Other Religion”

are much smaller than the sample size of Latter-day Saints). Similar to the findings for adults, compared to their peers, Latter-day Saint youth have higher rates of religious service attendance, daily prayer, and daily scripture reading than their peers of other faiths.

**Table 1. Youth Religious Practices Across Religions (Family Foundations of Youth Development Study, 2020)**

| Religious Behavior                                | Latter-day Saint | Protestant <sup>b</sup> | Catholic | Other Religion | Total |
|---|------------------|-------------------------|----------|----------------|-------|
| Monthly religious service attendance <sup>a</sup> | 90.3%            | 67.6%                   | 50.3%    | 29.5%          | 79.2% |
| Daily prayer                                      | 58.6%            | 35.8%                   | 18.4%    | 19.7%          | 48.5% |
| Daily scripture reading                           | 36.5%            | 14.2%                   | 5.5%     | 6.6%           | 28.0% |
| Number of youth                                   | 875              | 176                     | 163      | 61             | 1,275 |

<sup>a</sup> If COVID restrictions were in place for worship attendance, participants were asked to respond according to conditions before the restrictions.

<sup>b</sup> There were too few Protestants to separate Evangelical and Mainline.

## Importance of Religion

### Importance of Religion by Religion and Generation

Using the PRLS data, we examined the percentage of Millennial+ and earlier generations who feel religion is “very important” in their lives (fig. 7).<sup>32</sup> For Latter-day Saints, 69% of Millennial+ and 77% of earlier generations feel religion is “very important” to them. This is second to Historically Black Protestants. However, given the 95% confidence intervals, the percentage is not statistically different from them. Latter-day Saints, Historically Black Protestants, and Evangelicals are substantially higher than

every other religious group. Similar to religious service attendance, Millennial+ are lower than earlier generations for each religion except Muslims, Jews, and Other Christians.

Using the CES data, we made comparisons across religious groups and time in the percentage of those who feel “religion is very important in their lives”<sup>33</sup> (fig. 8a). Born Again Protestants have the highest percentage, followed by Latter-day Saints. Although the percentages are still high, it appears the number of Latter-day Saints who feel “religion is very important” may be decreasing more than Born Again Protestants. The percentages of several other religious groups, such as Roman Catholics and Mainline

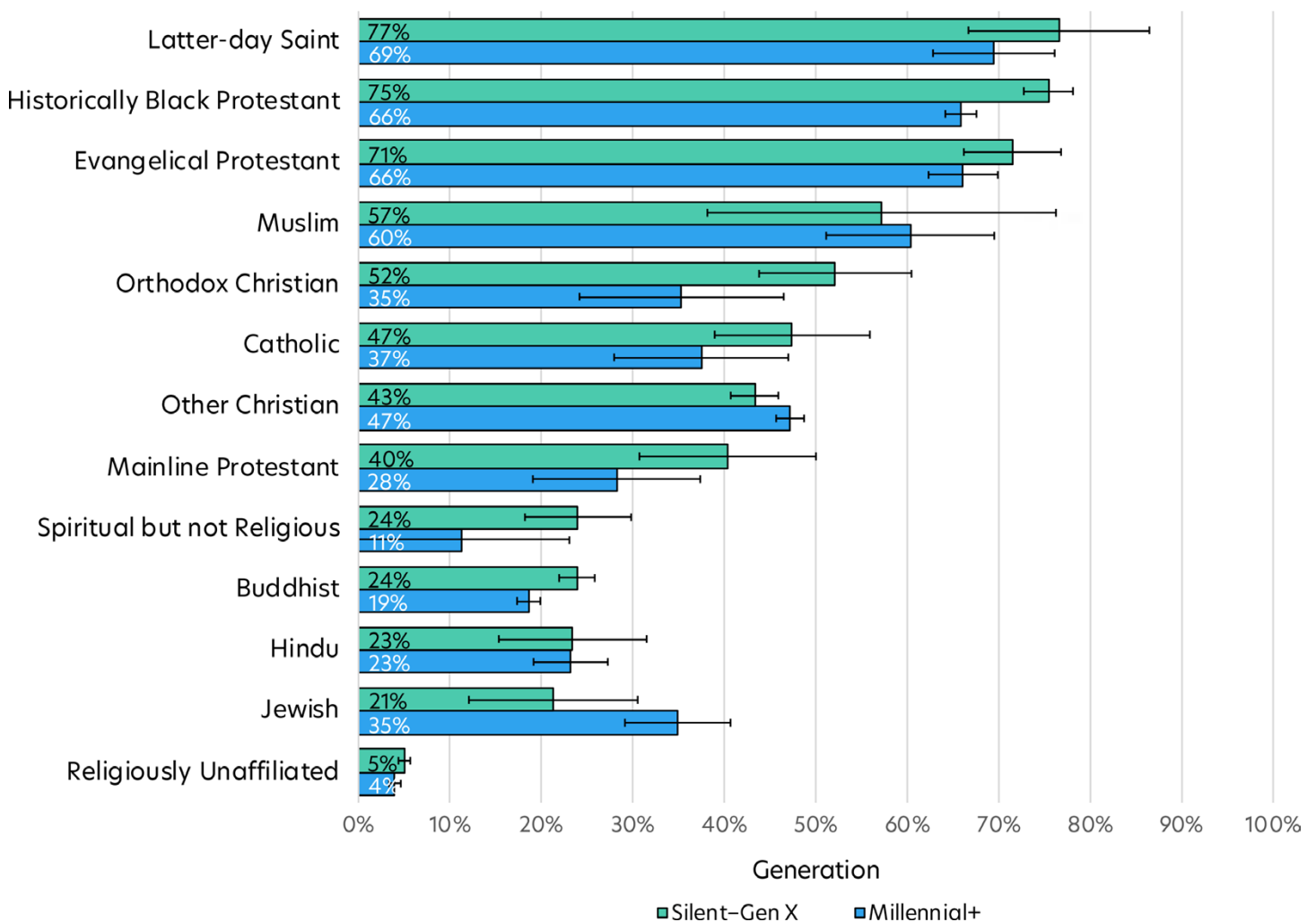


Figure 7. Percentage Who Feel Religion Is “Very Important” in Their Lives (Pew Religious Landscape Study, 2024; n=35,676)

32. PRLS question: “How important is religion in your life?”

33. CES question: “How important is religion in your life?”

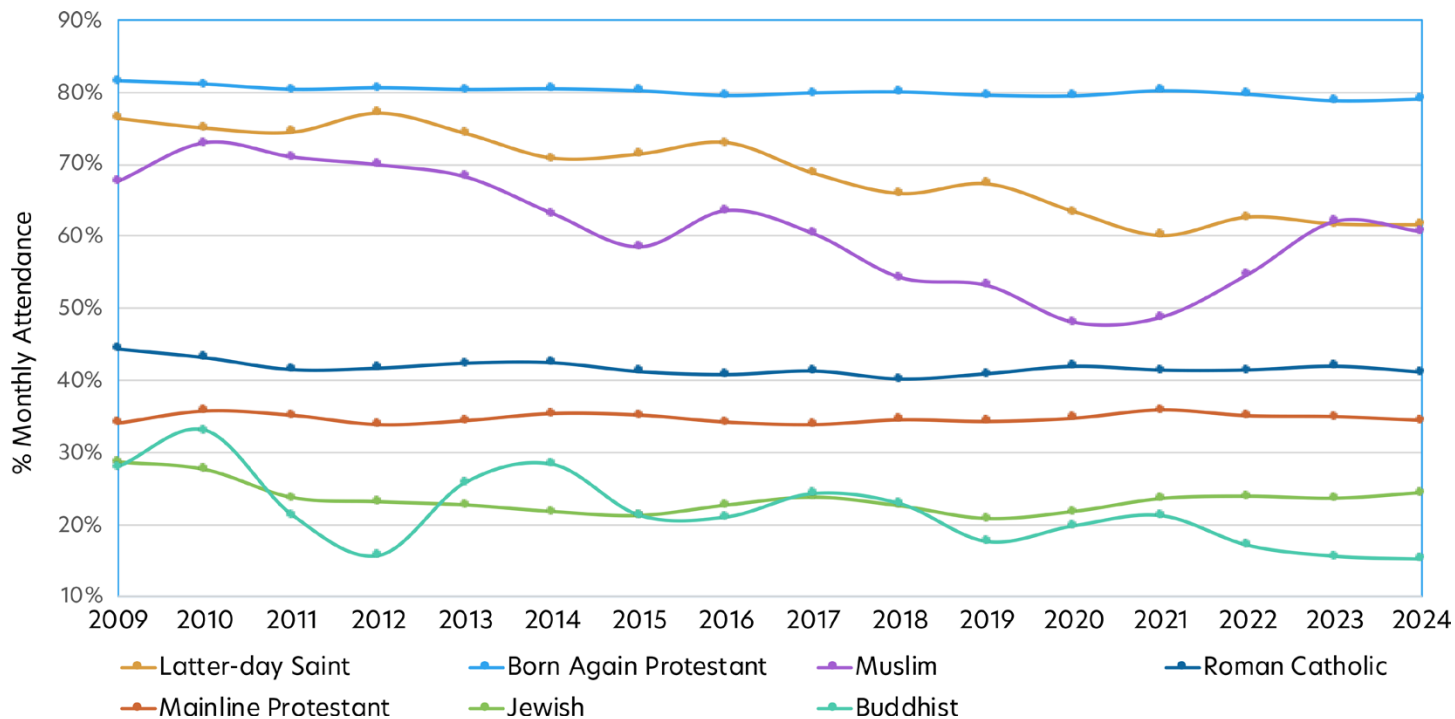


Figure 8a. Percentage Who Feel Religion Is “Very Important” in Their Lives (Cooperative Election Study, 2008–24; n=390,784), full sample

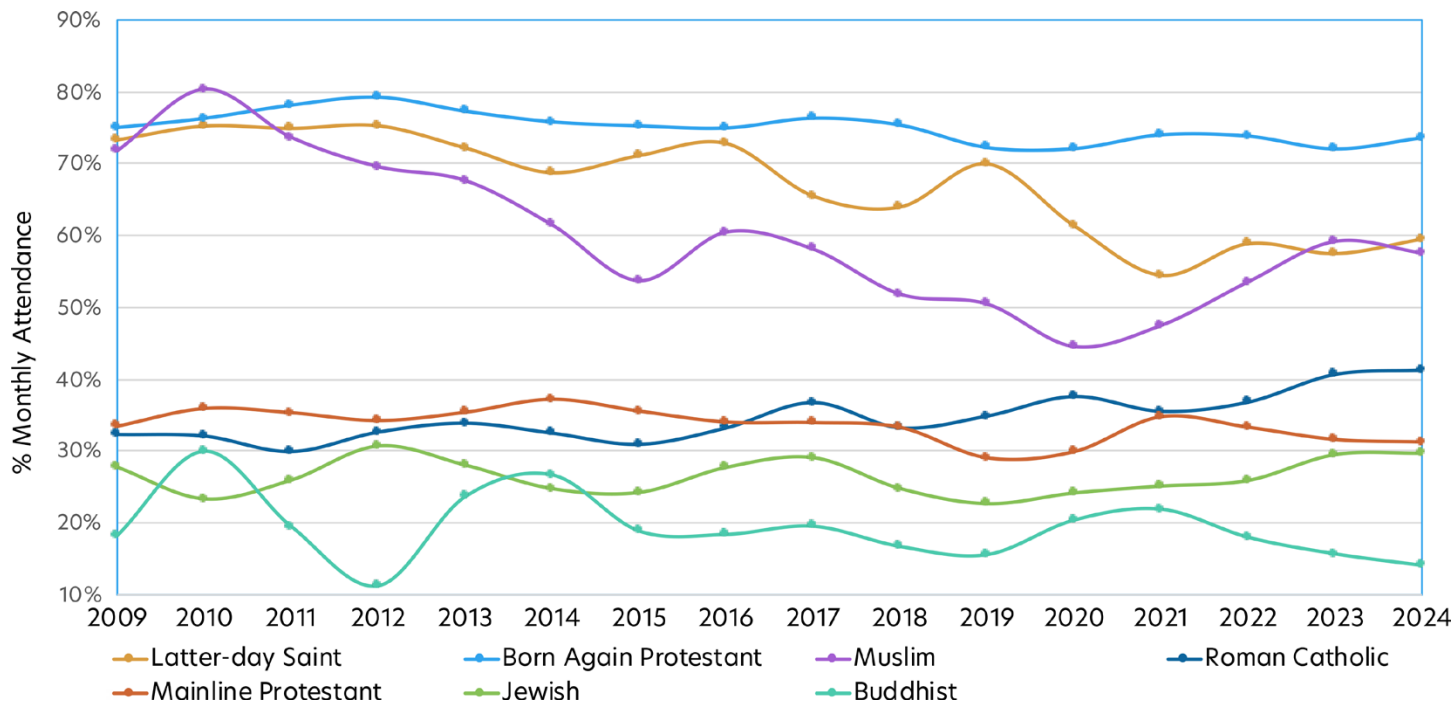


Figure 8b. Percentage Who Feel Religion Is “Very Important” in Their Lives (Cooperative Election Study, 2008–24; n=90,680), Millennial+ only

Protestants, are relatively steady across time, though substantially lower than Latter-day Saints. For example, Roman Catholics remain steady in the percentage who think “religion is very important” to them, yet their levels are more than 20% lower than Latter-day Saints.

When comparing Millennial+ across religions and years (fig. 8b), Evangelical Protestants are the highest in

feeling “religion is very important in their lives,” followed by Latter-day Saints and then Muslims (occasionally, Muslims are higher than Latter-day Saints). All others are 10% or more lower than these religious groups. It should be acknowledged that the greater variability in religious importance across time for Millennial+ is likely partially due to a smaller sample size.

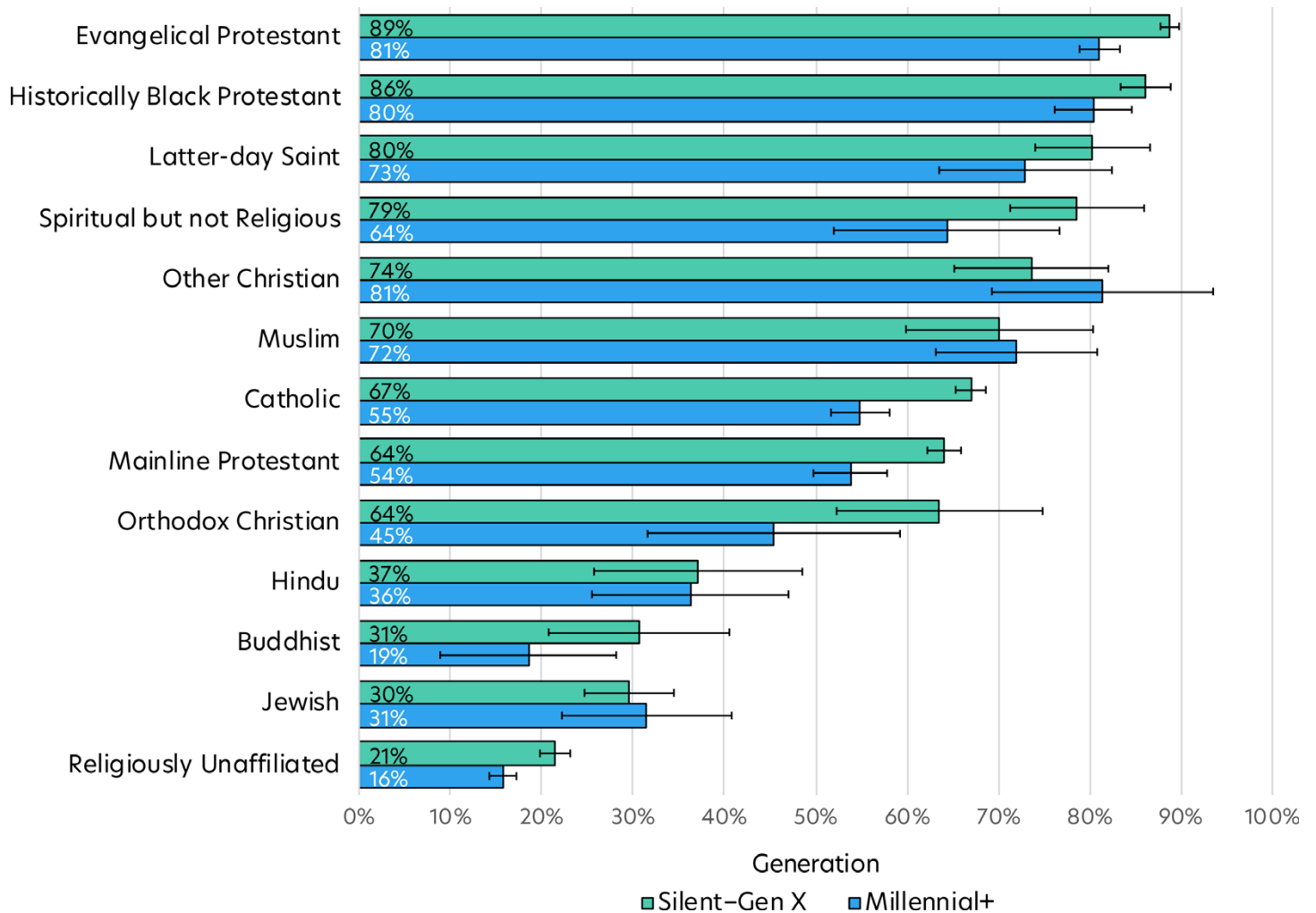


Figure 9. Percentage that Are “Absolutely Certain” There Is a God or Universal Spirit by Religion and Generation (Pew Religious Landscape Study, 2024; n=35,221)

## Religious Beliefs

We used the PRLS data to examine how various beliefs differ across religions and generations (fig. 9). For example, Evangelicals have the highest rate of being “absolutely certain” there is a God or universal spirit.<sup>34</sup> They are followed by Historically Black Protestants and then Latter-day Saints.

Using the PRLS, we also made comparisons in religious beliefs between Millennial+ Latter-day Saints and older generations of Latter-day Saints (see table 2). For the most part, previous generations of Latter-day Saints are higher in these beliefs than Millennial+ Latter-day Saints. The largest difference is that previous generations are 18% higher than Millennial+ in believing the Bible

to be “extremely” important in their lives. Interestingly, Millennial+ are slightly more likely to believe that people have a soul or spirit. This comports with some research finding that while Millennial+ may be less connected to religion and traditional religious beliefs, pure, nonspiritual secularism has not won them over. Indeed, while traditional religious beliefs have declined, Millennial+ may be more likely to subscribe to nontraditional ideas that deviate from Western mainstream beliefs.<sup>35</sup> Overall, the highest scores are beliefs in heaven, that God is good and loves them, and that Jesus died for their sins. All these are above 85% for both Millennial+ and previous generations of Latter-day Saints.

**Table 2. Latter-day Saint Religious Beliefs**  
(Pew Religious Landscape Study, 2024; Spiritual Seismology Survey, 2025)

| Religious Beliefs   | Latter-day Saints born pre-1980 | Millennial+ Latter-day Saints |
|---|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Have “Absolutely certain” belief in God   | 80.3%                           | 73.0%                         |
| Believe that religious teachings and beliefs are extremely important in determining right and wrong | 58.9%                           | 49.1%                         |
| Believe in heaven   | 95.7%                           | 88.8%                         |
| Believe in hell   | 59.8%                           | 51.5%                         |
| Believe people have a soul or spirit  | 96.8%                           | 98.2%                         |
| Believe the Bible is “extremely” important in their lives   | 57.1%                           | 39.3%                         |
| Believe that God is good and loves them (somewhat agree or strongly agree)                          | 91.1%                           | 85.0%                         |
| Believe that Jesus died for their sins (somewhat agree or strongly agree)                           | 90.2%                           | 85.8%                         |

*Note.* All categories are from the Pew Religious Landscape Study data except the beliefs that God is good and loves them and Jesus died for their sins, which are from the SSS data.

34. PRLS question: “Do you believe in God or a universal spirit?” followed by the question “How certain are you about this belief?” Reported is the percentage that indicated they are “absolutely certain.”

35. For example, compared to earlier generations, Millennials are more likely to believe in supernatural powers of deceased ancestors. Sarah Wilkins-Laflamme, *Religion, Spirituality and Secularity Among Millennials* (Routledge, 2023), 49.