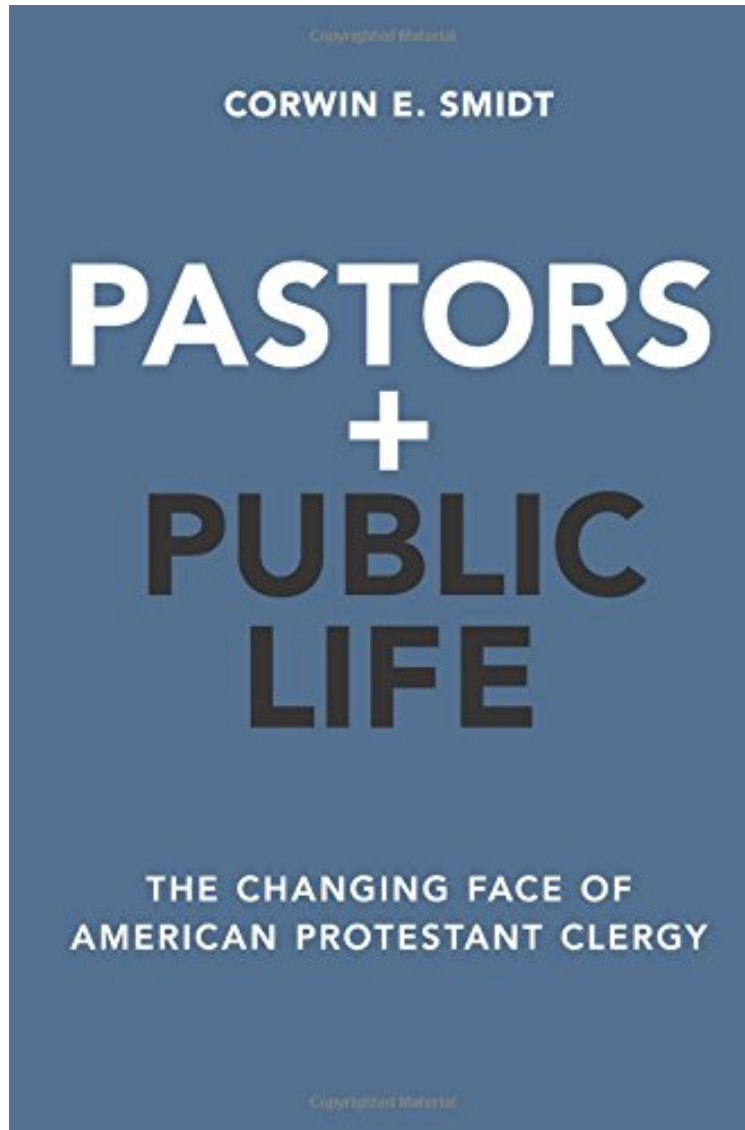


[Ebook free] Pastors and Public Life: The Changing Face of American Protestant Clergy

Pastors and Public Life: The Changing Face of American Protestant Clergy

Corwin E. Smidt

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America's clergy are not just religious leaders. Their influence extends far beyond church doors. Houses of worship stand at the center of American civic life—one of the few spheres in which relatively diverse individuals gather together regularly. And the moral authority granted to pastors means that they are uniquely positioned to play a role in public debates. Based on data gathered through national surveys of clergy across four mainline Protestant (the Disciples of Christ; the Presbyterian Church, USA; the Reformed Church in America; and the United Methodist Church) and three evangelical Protestant denominations (the Assemblies of God; the Christian Reformed Church; and, the Southern Baptist Convention), *Pastors and Public Life* examines the changing sociological, theological, and political characteristics of American Protestant clergy over the past twenty-plus years. Smidt focuses on the relationship between clergy and politics—clergy positions on issues of American public policy, norms on what is appropriate for clergy to do politically, as well as the clergy's political cue-giving, their pronouncements on public policy, and political activism—and the impact these changes have on congregations and on American society as a whole. *Pastors and Public Life* is the first book to systematically examine such changes and continuity over time. It will be invaluable to scholars, students, pastors, and churchgoers.

"This book presents a detailed examination of the role clergy of selected Protestant denominations played in American public life."--CHOICE"*Pastors and Public Life* authoritatively documents continuity and change in the political attitudes and behaviors of clergy in seven Protestant denominations. Written by a leading analyst of religion and politics in America, this informative and sometimes surprising book should be read by anyone wanting to know more about clergy political views, and their political activities both within congregations and beyond the church walls." -- Mark Chaves, Professor of Sociology, Religious Studies, and Divinity, Duke University "Few observers of American Protestantism have displayed the insight and breadth of Corwin E. Smidt. Smidt's most recent work, *Pastors and Public Life*, is the latest addition to an impressive corpus of scholarly work about the public face of American Protestantism. *Pastors and Public Life* is a valuable contribution."--Sociology of Religion

About the Author
Corwin E. Smidt is Professor Emeritus of Political Science at Calvin College, where he also served as the director of the Paul B. Henry Institute for the Study of Christianity and Politics for fifteen years. He is now a research fellow with the Henry Institute and currently serves as President of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion.