

Title: COVID-19 and the Black Church

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"The study of social media from Black Churches in two regions of NYS at various points

in the pandemic is very interesting and important. My only brief comment about this extended abstract is whether the authors might wish to add a brief statement as to whether this was determined by the IRB to be exempt, or whether the authors reviewed IRB guidelines and determined themselves that this was non human participants research. Since it is using social media data, the information is already in the public domain. However, the use of specific names of sermons could lead one to figure out which Churches were included. In any case, perhaps it would be useful to state who determined this to be exempt or non human participants research just to guard against any Church feeling that they may have been unintentionally identified by use of specific sermon names. That is my only small suggestion for this very important abstract."

"The abstract addresses a very important issue associated with the COVID-19 pandemic and offers a compelling description of the important role of churches in supporting public health efforts. The comparison of churches in the Capital Region and New York City offers an interesting scope for comparison and contrast, as does the analysis of themes over the course of the pandemic. It is anticipated that the authors will provide greater detail regarding themes and lessons learned during the pandemic and will elaborate on the practical application of their work on public health efforts."