

# American Views on Church Endorsements

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Survey of 1,200 Americans

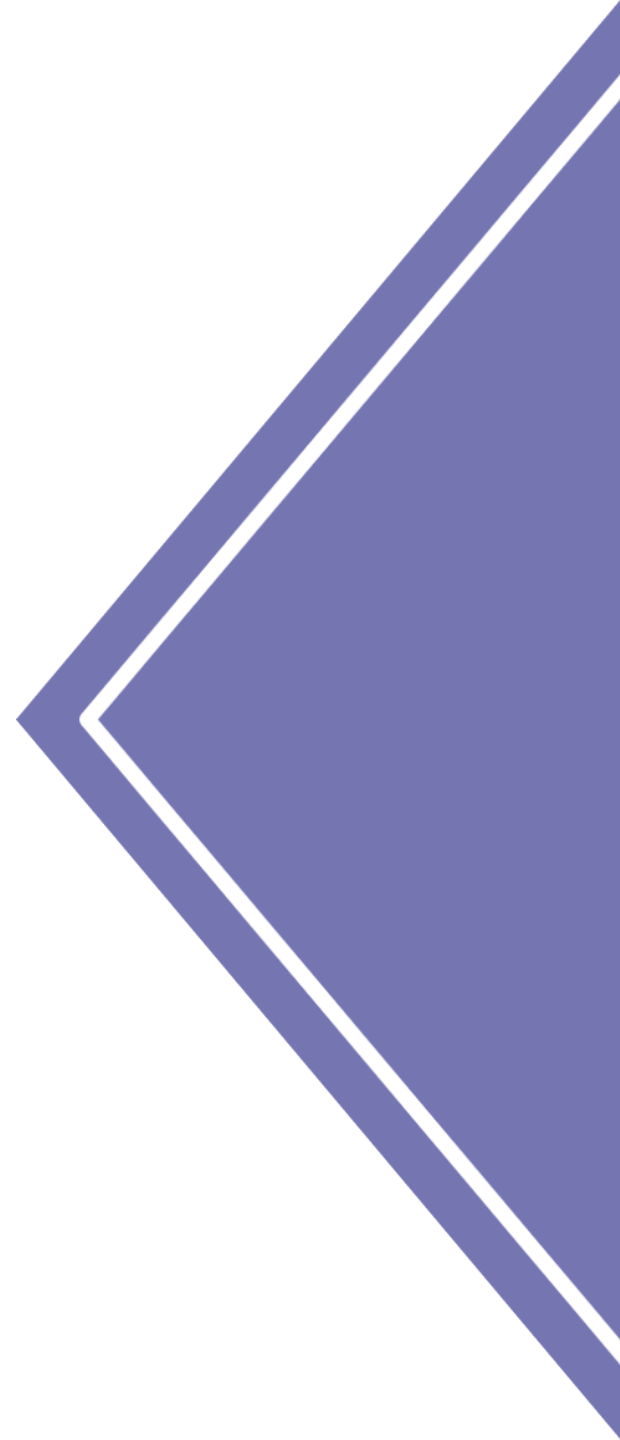
# Methodology

- The online survey of 1,200 Americans was conducted September 9-23, 2020 using a national pre-recruited panel
- Quotas and slight weights were used to balance gender, age, region, ethnicity, education, and religion to more accurately reflect the population
- The sample includes an over-sample of Americans with Evangelical Beliefs providing additional reliability for breakouts of this group. Totals for all Americans reduce these responses to their correct proportion through weighting
- The completed sample is 1,200 surveys
- The sample provides 95% confidence that the sampling error from the panel does not exceed  $\pm 3.2\%$  This margin of error accounts for the effect of weighting
- Margins of error are higher in sub-groups
- Data is also shown from phone surveys (random digit dial) conducted by LifeWay Research September 14-28, 2015 and June 12-14, 2008 of 1,000 Americans

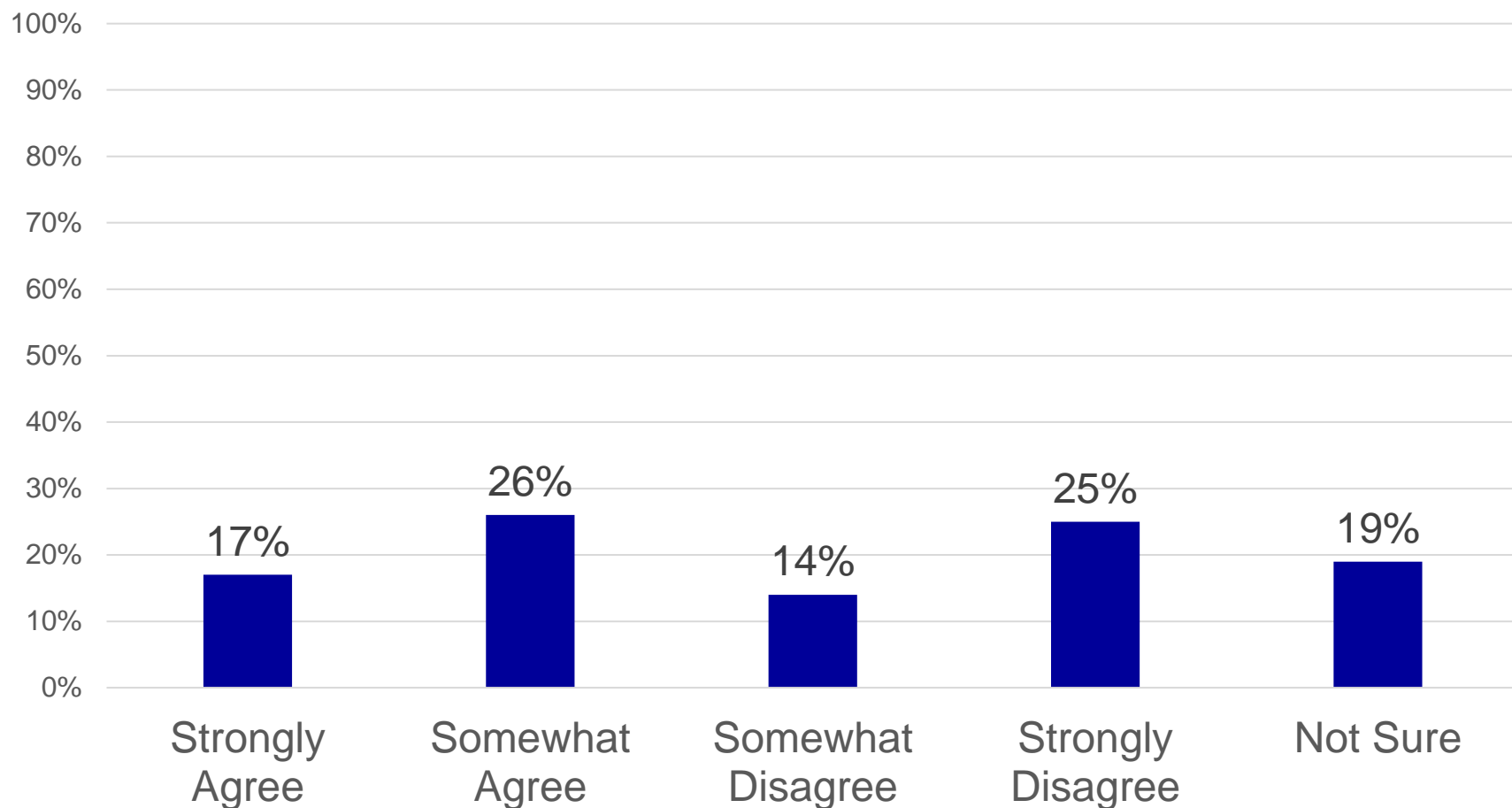
# Definitions

- **Evangelical Beliefs** are defined using the NAE LifeWay Research Evangelical Beliefs Research Definition based on respondent beliefs
- Respondents are asked their level of agreement with four separate statements using a four-point, forced choice scale (strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, strongly disagree). Those who strongly agree with all four statements are categorized as having Evangelical Beliefs
  - The Bible is the highest authority for what I believe
  - It is very important for me personally to encourage non-Christians to trust Jesus Christ as their Savior
  - Jesus Christ's death on the cross is the only sacrifice that could remove the penalty of my sin
  - Only those who trust in Jesus Christ alone as their Savior receive God's free gift of eternal salvation

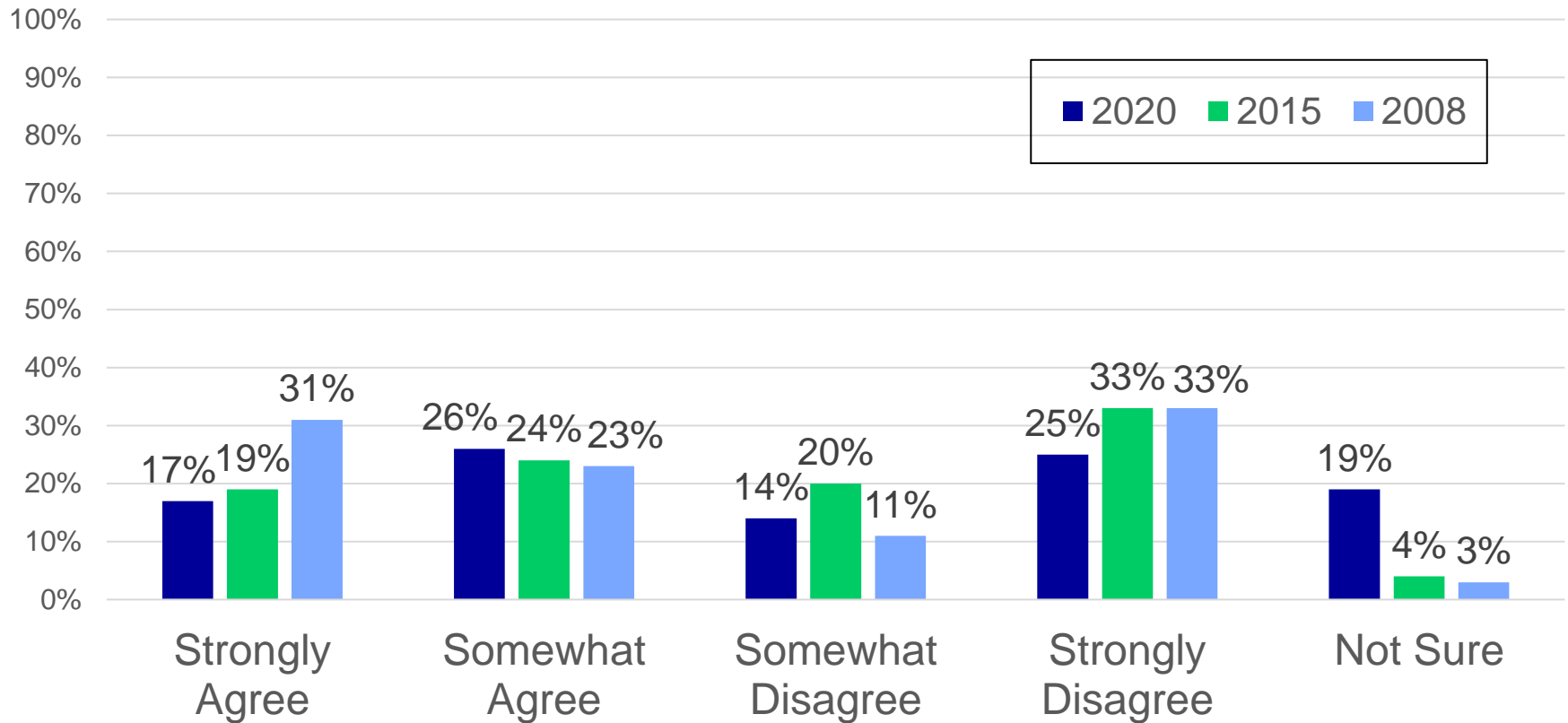
# Survey Responses



# 43% agree that it is appropriate for pastors to personally endorse candidates outside of their church role

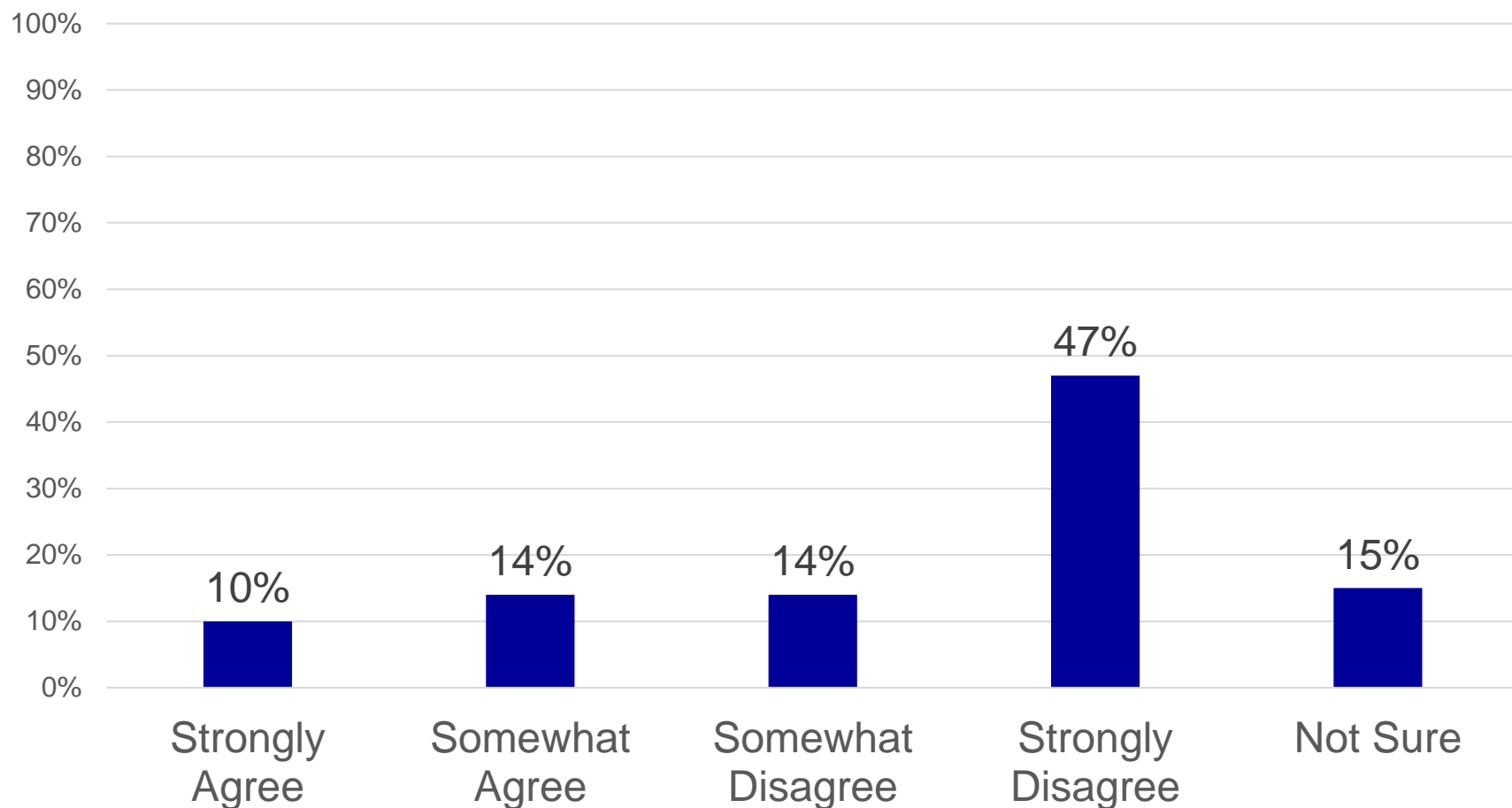


# The number agreeing that it is appropriate for pastors to endorse candidates outside of their church role is similar to 2015

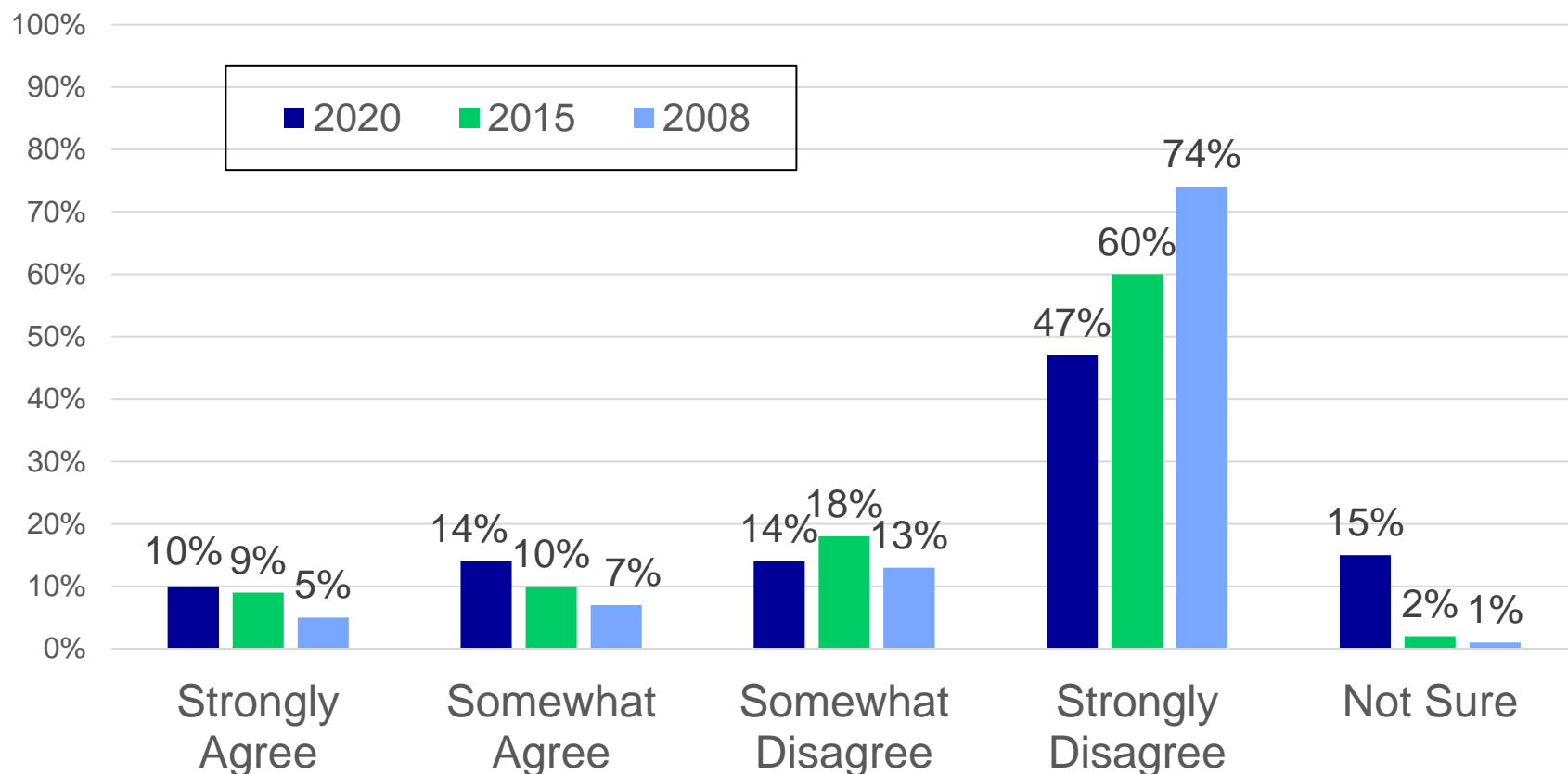


*Comparisons may not be appropriate because of differences in methodology. 2008 and 2015 were conducted by phone and 2020 online.*

# 24% say that it is appropriate for pastors to publicly endorse candidates during a church service; 61% disagree



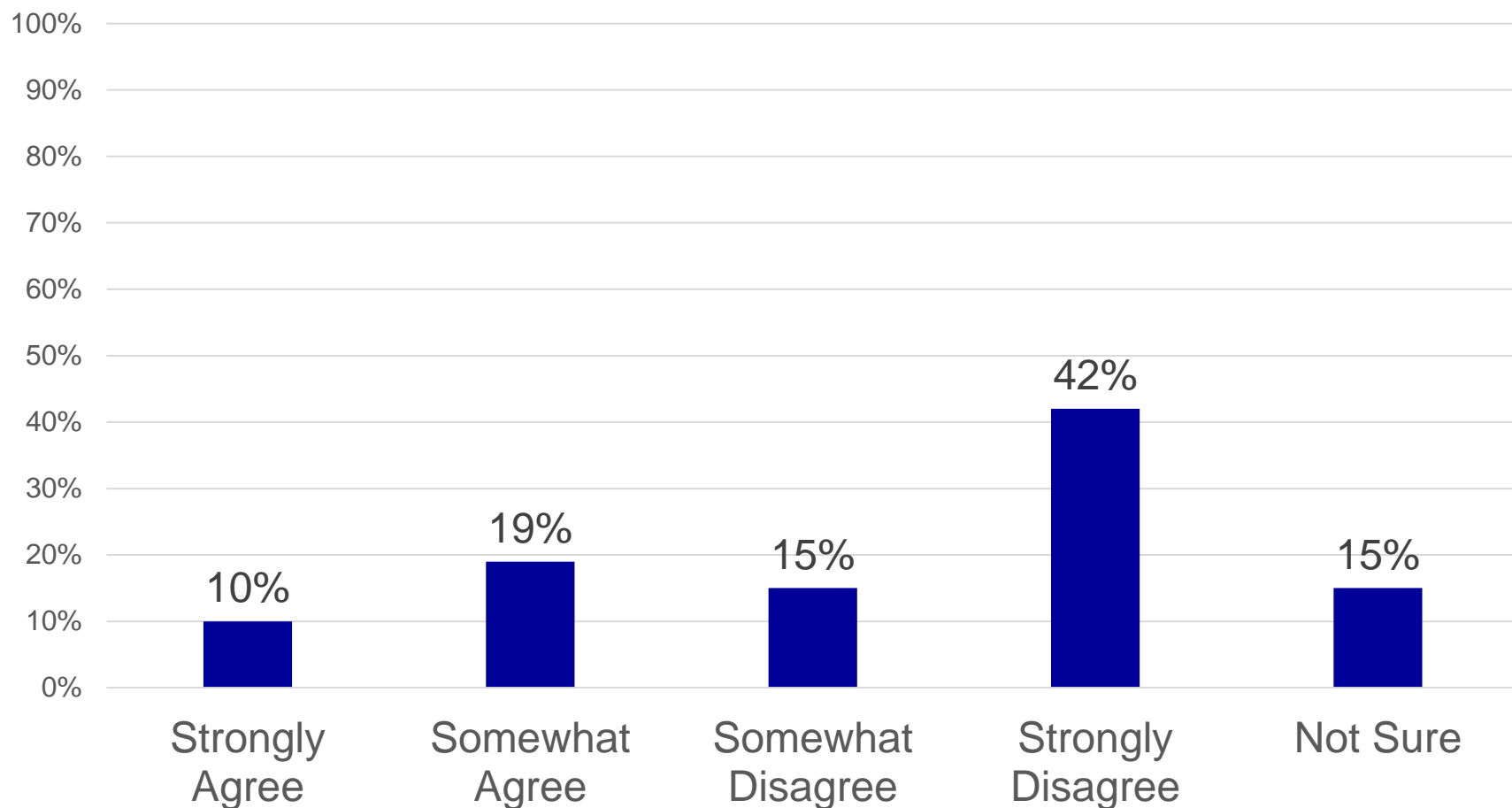
# There is less strong disagreement with endorsing candidates during a church service but that is still the most common opinion



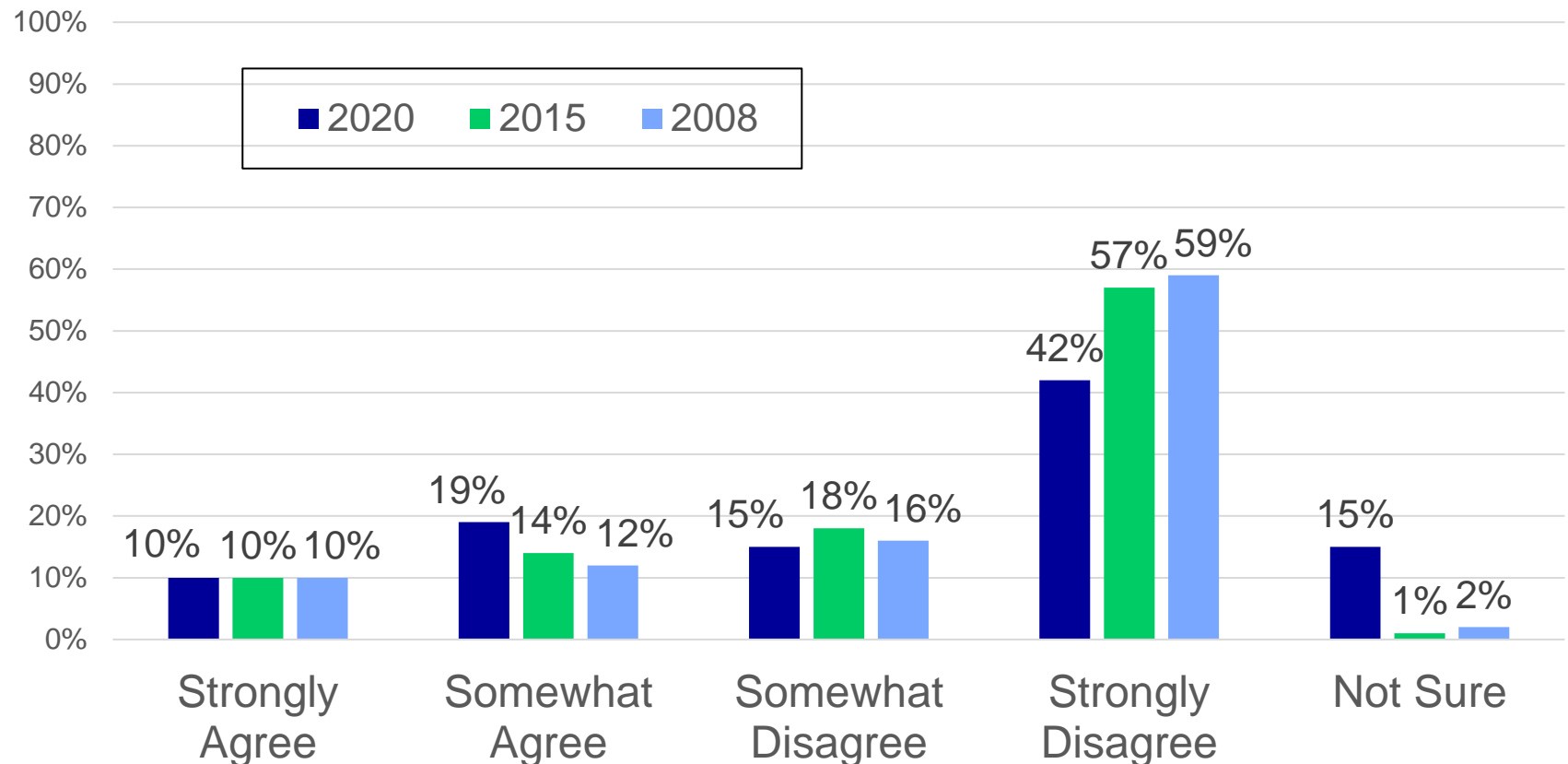
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# 29% believe it appropriate for churches to publicly endorse candidates; 57% disagree

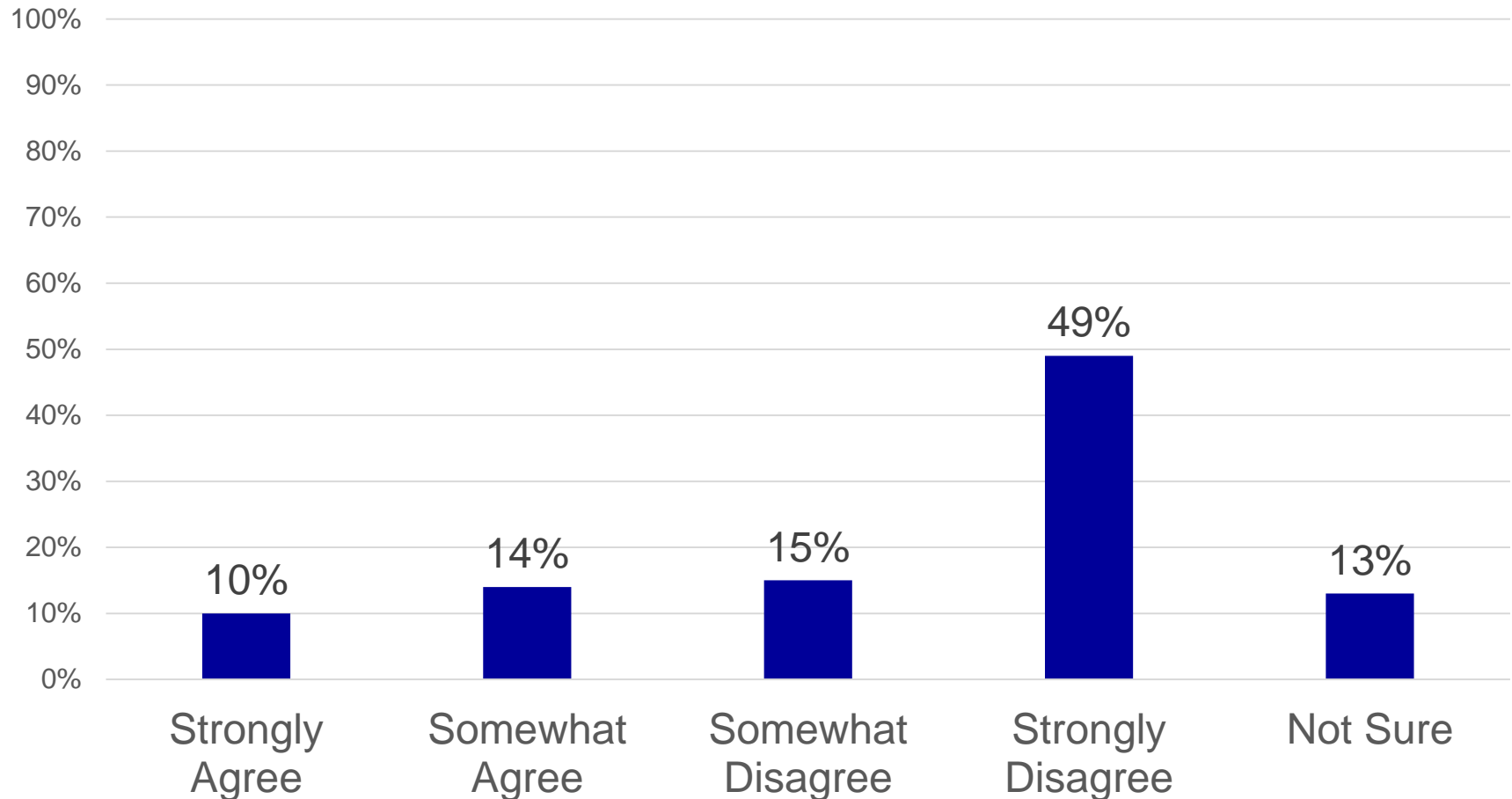


# There is less strong disagreement with churches endorsing candidates but that is still the most common opinion

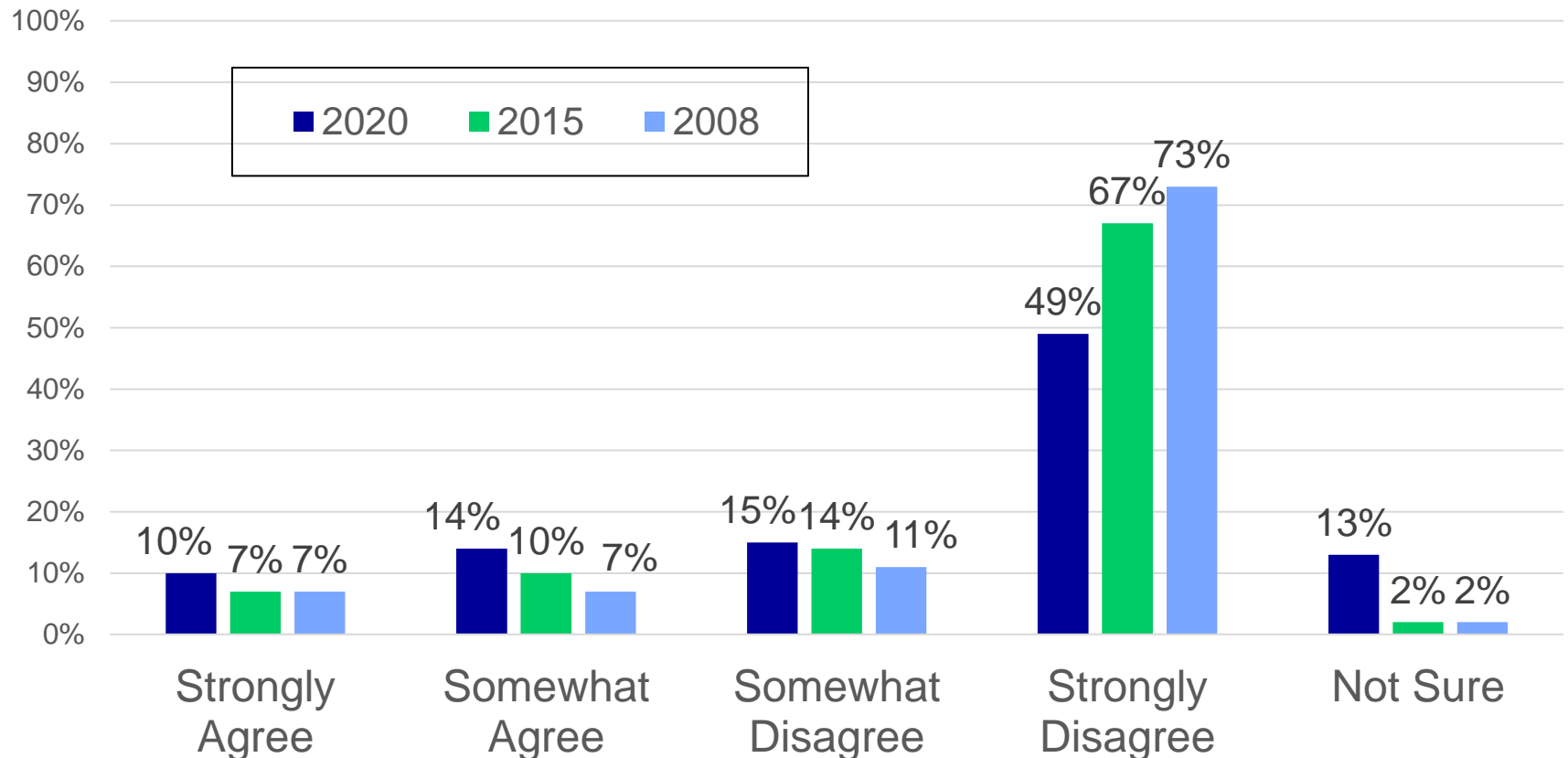


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# 24% agree that it is appropriate for churches to use their resources to campaign for candidates; 63% disagree

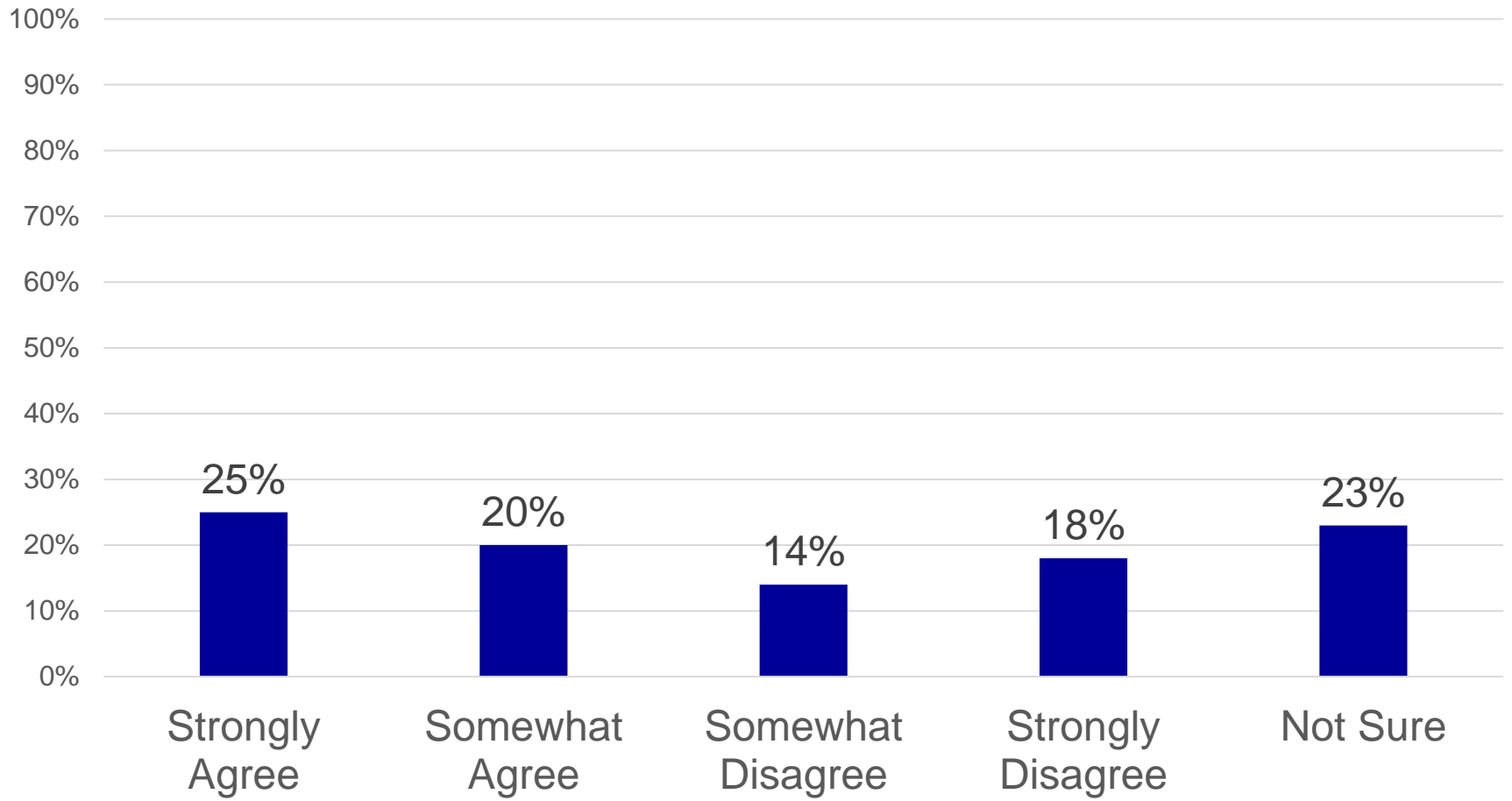


# Agreement has grown slightly since 2015 that it is appropriate for churches to use resources to campaign for candidates

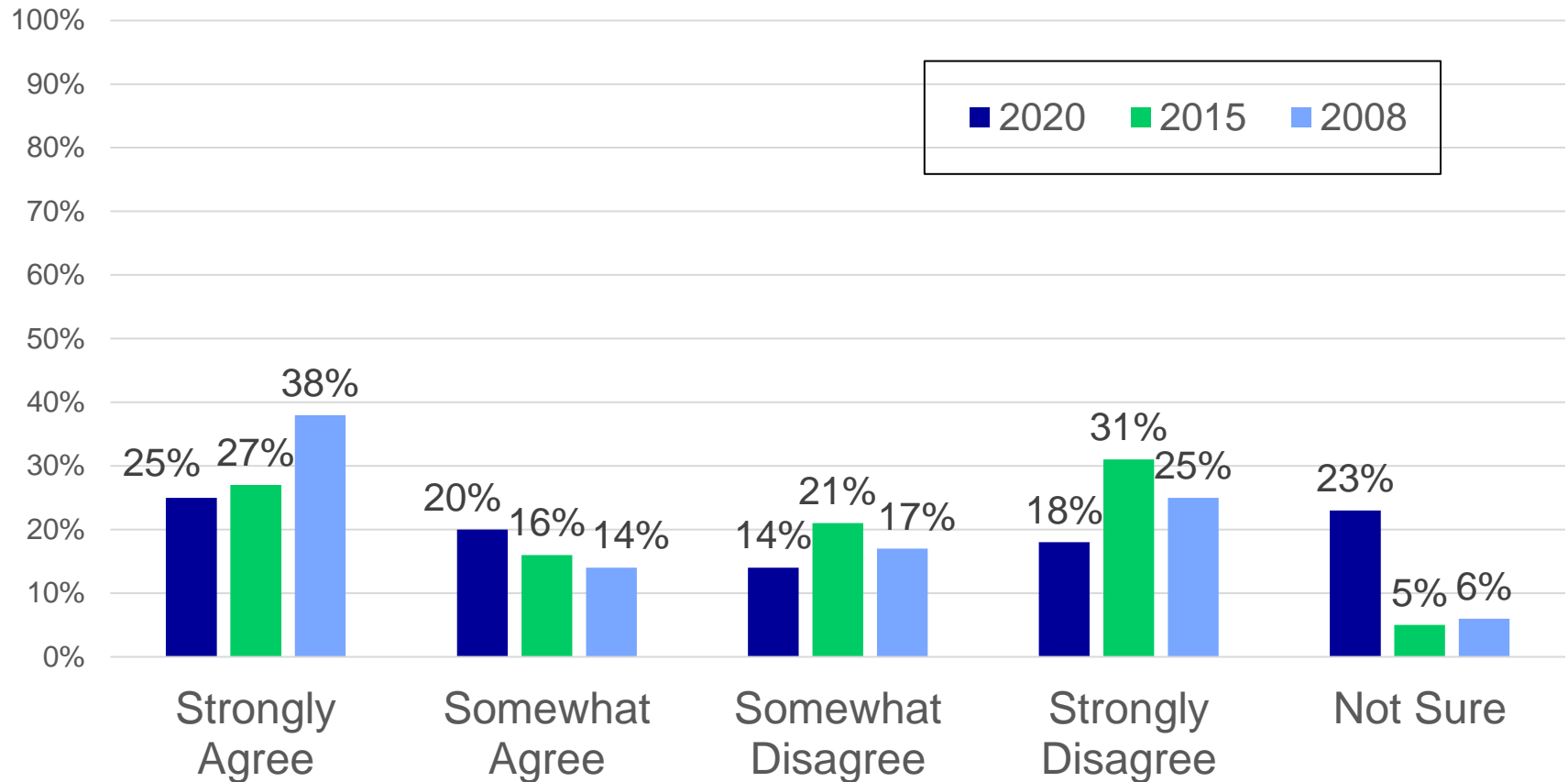


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# 45% believe that churches who publicly endorse candidates should lose their tax exemption; 32% disagree



# Agreement is similar to 2015 that churches who publicly endorse candidates should lose their tax exemption



*Comparisons may not be appropriate because of differences in methodology. 2008 and 2015 were conducted by phone and 2020 online.*

# Significant Differences

Gender

Age

Ethnicity

Region

Education Level

Religion

Evangelical Beliefs

Worship Service Attendance

Political Party

Candidate

# Significant Statistical Differences

Comparisons were made to determine if there are any significant statistical differences among gender, age, ethnicity, region, and education.

Gender	Age	Ethnicity	Region	Education
Male	18-34	White	Northeast	High School graduate or less
Female	35-49	African American	Midwest	Some college
	50-64	Hispanic	South	Bachelor's Degree
	65+	Other Ethnicities	West	Graduate Degree

Note: Region is defined by US Census locations



# Significant Statistical Differences

Comparisons were made to determine if there are any significant statistical differences among religion, evangelical beliefs, worship service attendance, political party, and presidential candidate.

Religion	Evangelical Beliefs	Worship Service Attendance	Political Party	Candidate
Catholic	Yes	Christians who attend once a month or more	Democrat	Joe Biden
Protestant	No	Other Americans	Republican	Donald Trump
Other Religions			Independent	Undecided
Unaffiliated				

# **“I believe it is appropriate for pastors to personally endorse candidates for public office, but only outside of their church role.”**

- Males are more likely to Agree than Females (49% v. 36%)
- Those age 18-34 are most likely to be Not Sure (27%)
- Those in the West (48%) are more likely to Agree than those in the Midwest (36%)
- Those with a Graduate Degree (51%) are more likely to Agree than those who are High School Graduates or less (39%)
- Those who are religiously Unaffiliated are the most likely to be Not Sure (28%) and the least likely to Agree (32%)
- Those with evangelical beliefs are more likely to Agree than those without evangelical beliefs (57% v. 39%)
- Christians who attend a worship service once a month or more are more likely to Agree than Other Americans (53% v. 37%)
- Republicans are the most likely to Agree (54%)
- Those voting for Donald Trump (52%) are more likely to Agree than those voting for Joe Biden (40%) or Undecided (36%)

# “I believe it is appropriate for pastors to publicly endorse candidates for public office during a church service.”

- Males are more likely to Agree than Females (28% v. 19%)
- Those age 18-34 (32%) and 35-49 (26%) are more likely to Agree than those 50-64 (18%) and 65+ (15%)
- Those with a Bachelor’s Degree (27%) or a Graduate Degree (28%) are more likely to Agree than those who are High School Graduates or less (20%)
- Those who are religiously Unaffiliated are the most likely to be Not Sure (24%) and the least likely to Agree (16%)
- Those with evangelical beliefs are more likely to Agree than those without evangelical beliefs (35% v. 21%)
- Christians who attend a worship service once a month or more are more likely to Agree than Other Americans (33% v. 19%)
- Republicans (30%) and Democrats (25%) are more likely to Agree than Independents (16%)
- Those voting for Donald Trump (31%) are more likely to Agree than those voting for Joe Biden (22%) or Undecided (14%)

# “I believe it is appropriate for churches to publicly endorse candidates for public office.”

- Males are more likely to Agree than Females (36% v. 23%)
- Those age 18-34 are the most likely to Agree (38%)
- African Americans (38%) are more likely to Agree than Whites (28%) and Other Ethnicities (24%)
- Those with evangelical beliefs are more likely to Agree than those without evangelical beliefs (41% v. 26%)
- Those who are religiously Unaffiliated are the most likely to be Not Sure (23%)
- Catholics (36%) and Other Religions (41%) are more likely to Agree than Protestants (29%) and those who are religiously Unaffiliated (19%)
- Christians who attend a worship service once a month or more are more likely to Agree than Other Americans (38% v. 24%)
- Republicans are the most likely to Agree (38%)
- Those voting for Donald Trump (39%) are more likely to Agree than those voting for Joe Biden (27%) or Undecided (18%)

# “I believe it is appropriate for churches to use their resources to campaign for candidates for public office.”

- Males are more likely to Agree than Females (28% v. 20%)
- Those age 18-34 (34%) and 35-49 (29%) are more likely to Agree than those 50-64 (16%) and 65+ (14%)
- Those in the Northeast (26%) and South (25%) are more likely to Agree than those in the Midwest (19%)
- Those with some college (26%) or with a Bachelor's Degree (28%) are more likely to Agree than those who are High School Graduates or less (20%)
- Those who are religiously Unaffiliated (67%) are more likely to Disagree than Other Religions (55%)
- Those with evangelical beliefs are more likely to Agree than those without evangelical beliefs (33% v. 22%)
- Christians who attend a worship service once a month or more are more likely to Agree than Other Americans (33% v. 20%)

# **“I believe it is appropriate for churches to use their resources to campaign for candidates for public office.” (Continued)**

- Republicans (31%) are more likely to Agree than Democrats (25%) and Independents (17%)
- Those voting for Donald Trump (32%) are more likely to Agree than those voting for Joe Biden (23%) or Undecided (13%)

# “I believe that churches who publicly endorse candidates for public office should lose their tax exemption.”

- Males are more likely to Agree than Females (52% v. 38%)
- Those age 65+ are the most likely to Agree (54%)
- Those who are High School Graduates or less (35%) or with some college (34%) are more likely to Disagree than those with a Graduate Degree (25%)
- Those with evangelical beliefs are more likely to Disagree than those without evangelical beliefs (42% v. 30%)
- Catholics (50%) and those who are religiously Unaffiliated (50%) are more likely to Agree than Protestants (41%)
- Christians who attend a worship service once a month or more are more likely to Disagree than Other Americans (37% v. 30%)
- Democrats are the most likely to Agree (53%)
- Those voting for Joe Biden (58%) are more likely to Agree than those voting for Donald Trump (39%) or Undecided (32%)

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