

Pastors' Views on Economic Impact

Survey of American Protestant Pastors

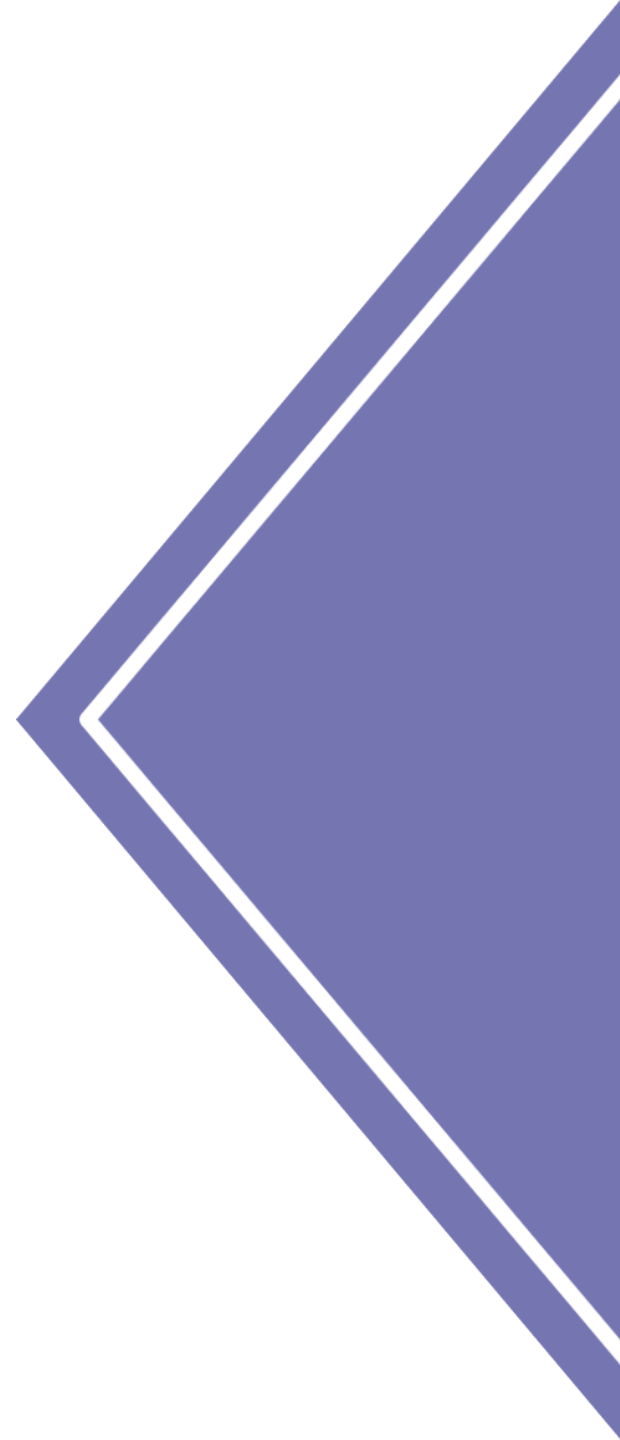
Methodology

- The mixed mode survey of 1,007 Protestant pastors was conducted September 2–October 1, 2020 using both phone and online interviews
- Phone: The calling list was a stratified random sample, drawn from a list of all Protestant churches. Quotas were used for church size
- Online: Invitations were emailed to the LifeWay Research Pastor Panel followed by three reminders. This probability sample of Protestant churches was created by phone recruiting by LifeWay Research using random samples selected from all Protestant churches. Pastors who agree to be contacted by email for future surveys make up this LifeWay Research Pastor Panel.
- Each survey was completed by the senior or sole pastor or a minister at the church
- Responses were weighted by region and church size to more accurately reflect the population
- The completed sample is 1,007 surveys (502 by phone, 505 online)
- The sample provides 95% confidence that the sampling error does not exceed $\pm 3.4\%$ This margin of error accounts for the effect of weighting
- Margins of error are higher in sub-groups

Methodology

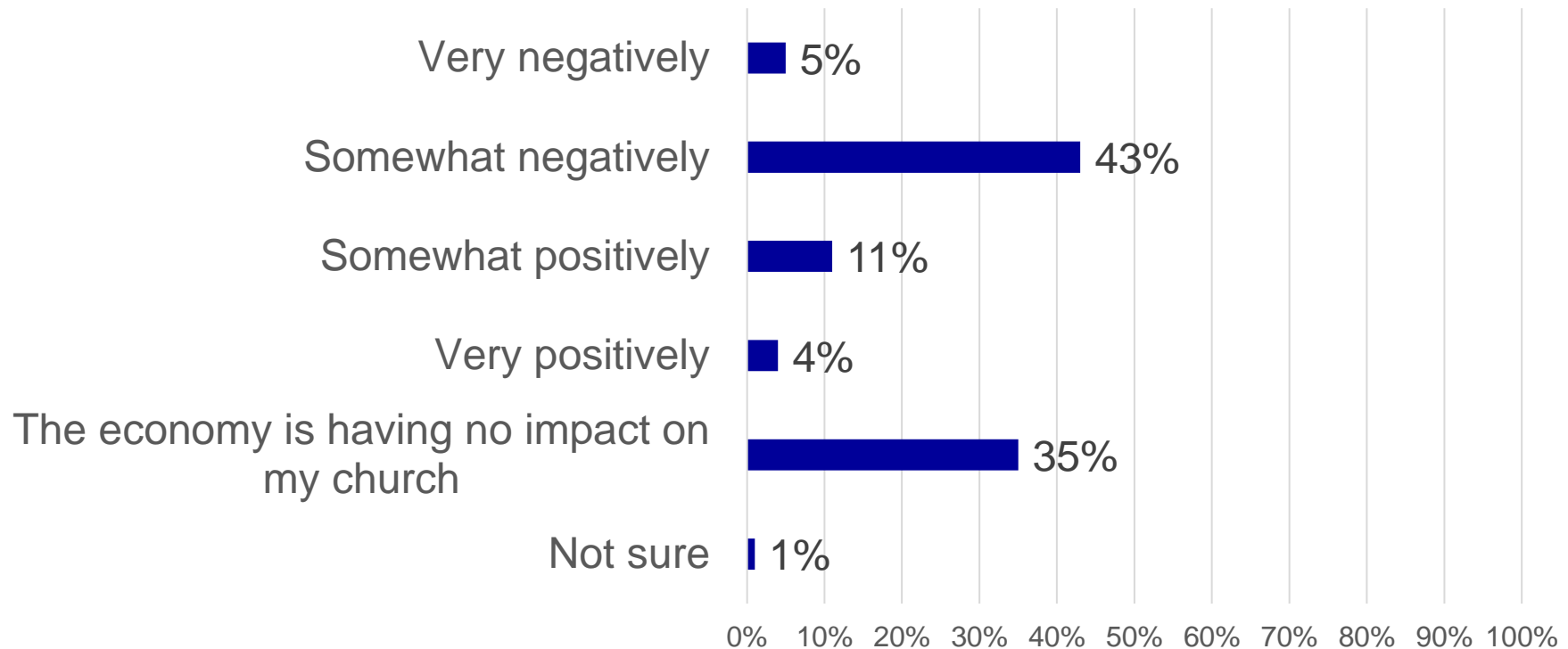
- Comparisons are also made to the following telephone surveys using random sampling:
 - 1,002 pastors conducted November 5-12, 2009
 - 1,000 pastors conducted March 1-9, 2010
 - 1,000 pastors conducted October 7-14, 2010
 - 1,002 pastors conducted January 17-27, 2011
 - 1,000 pastors conducted May 18-25, 2011
 - 1,000 pastors conducted May 23-31, 2012
 - 1,000 pastors conducted September 11-18, 2014
 - 1,000 pastors conducted January 8-22, 2016
 - 1,000 pastors conducted August 29 – September 11, 2018
 - 1,000 pastors conducted August 30 – September 24, 2019

Survey Responses

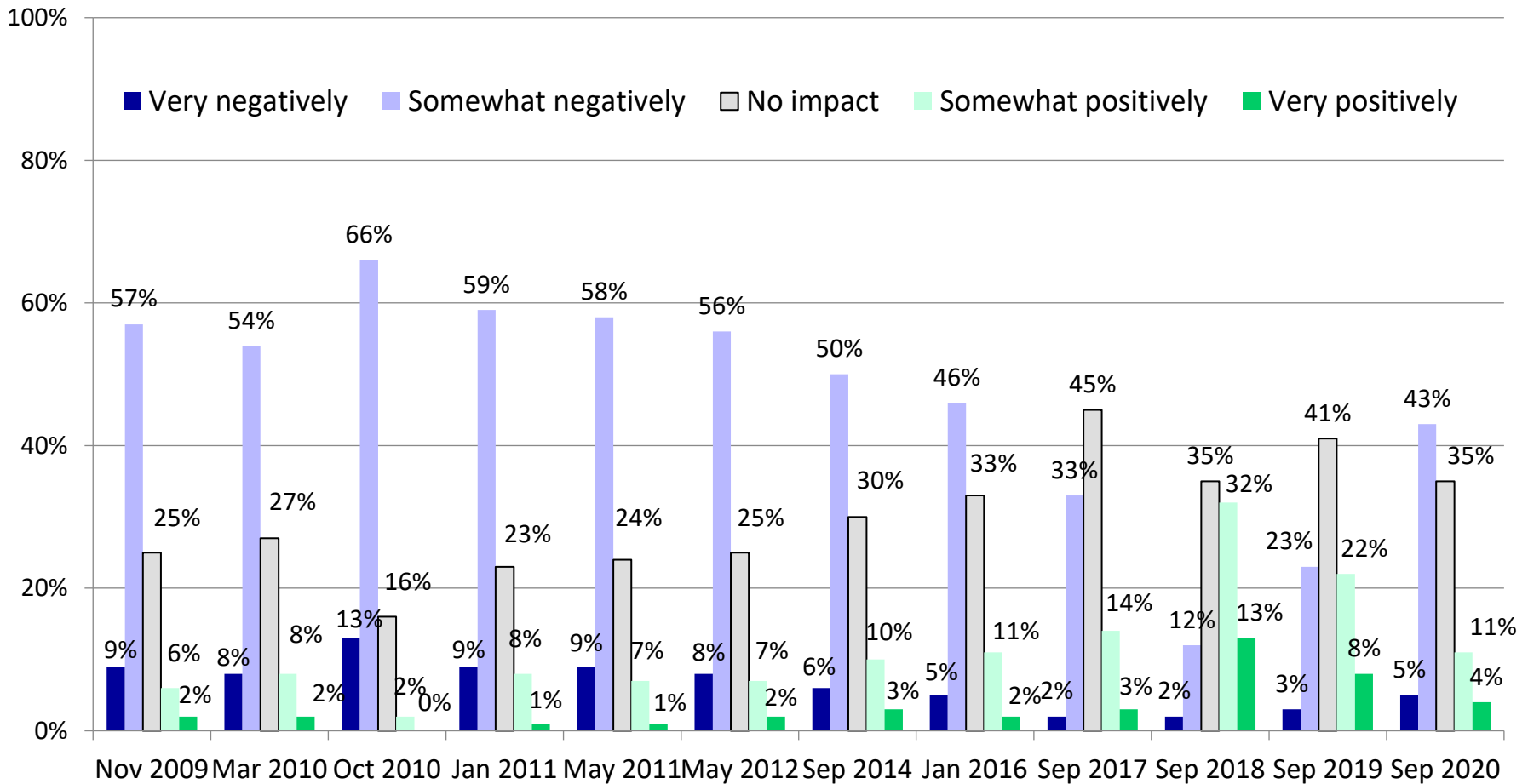


48% say that the current economy is having a negative impact on their church

Among Protestant Pastors

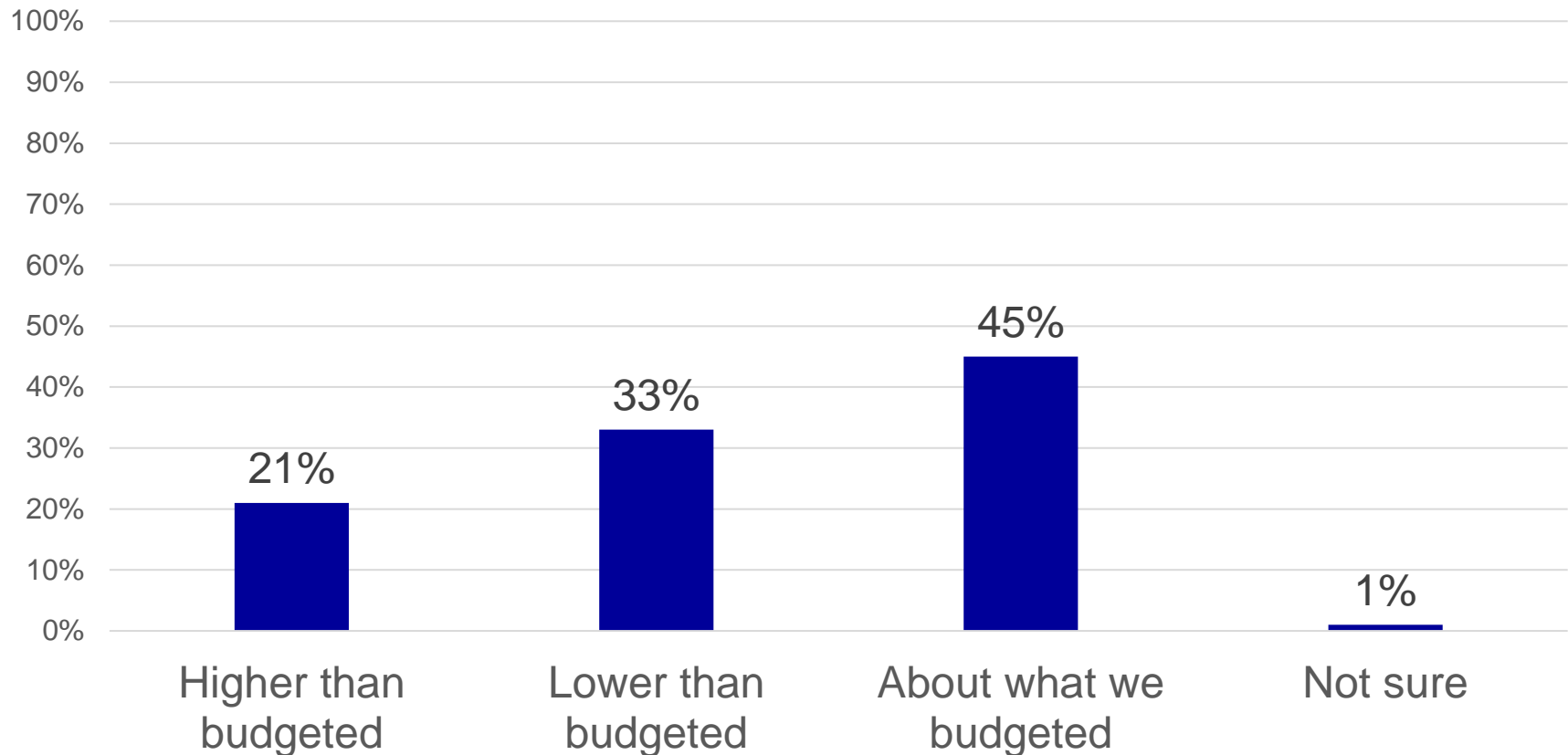


The number of churches feeling a negative impact from the current economy increased from 2018



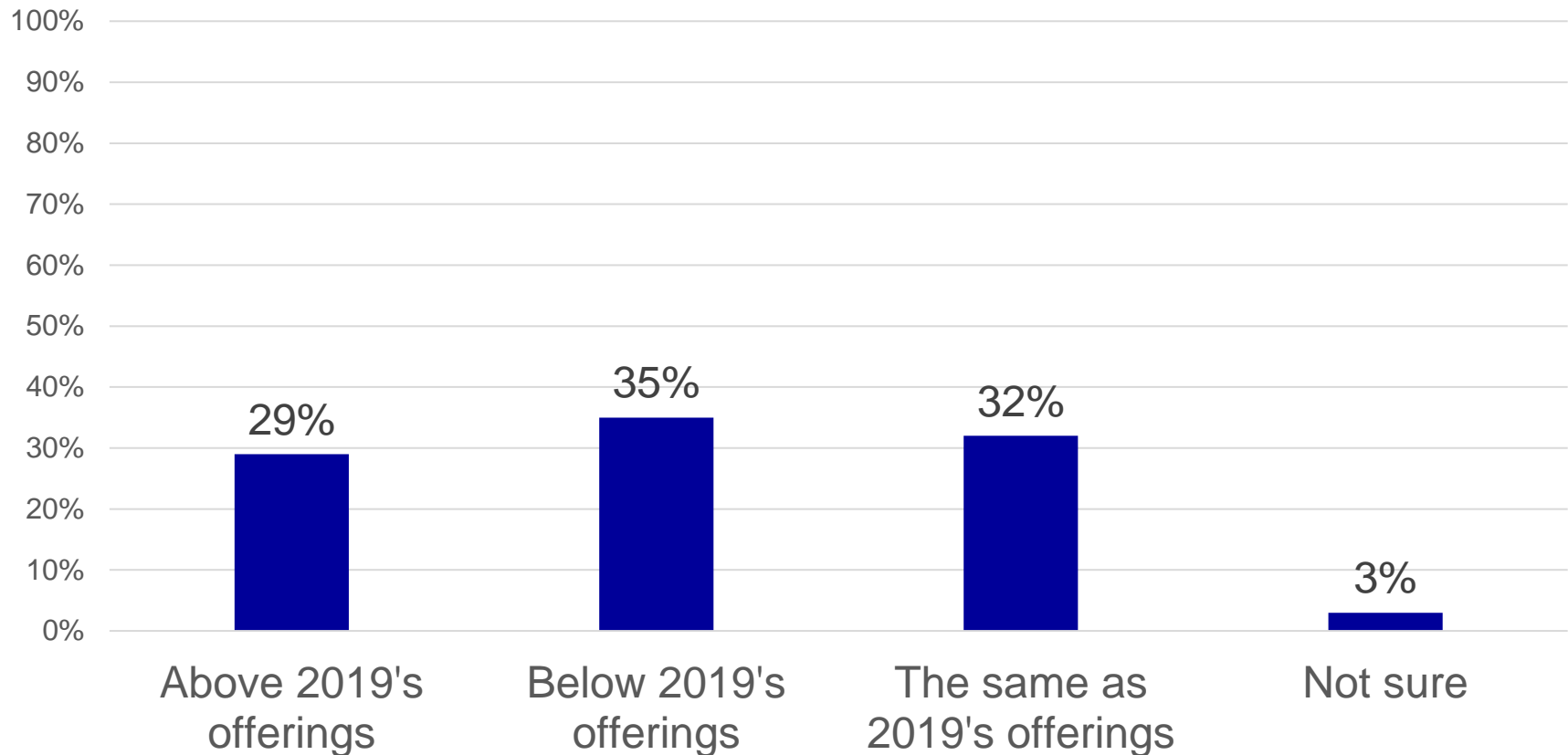
45% say that giving for 2020 is about what was budgeted; 33% say it is lower than budgeted

Among Protestant Pastors



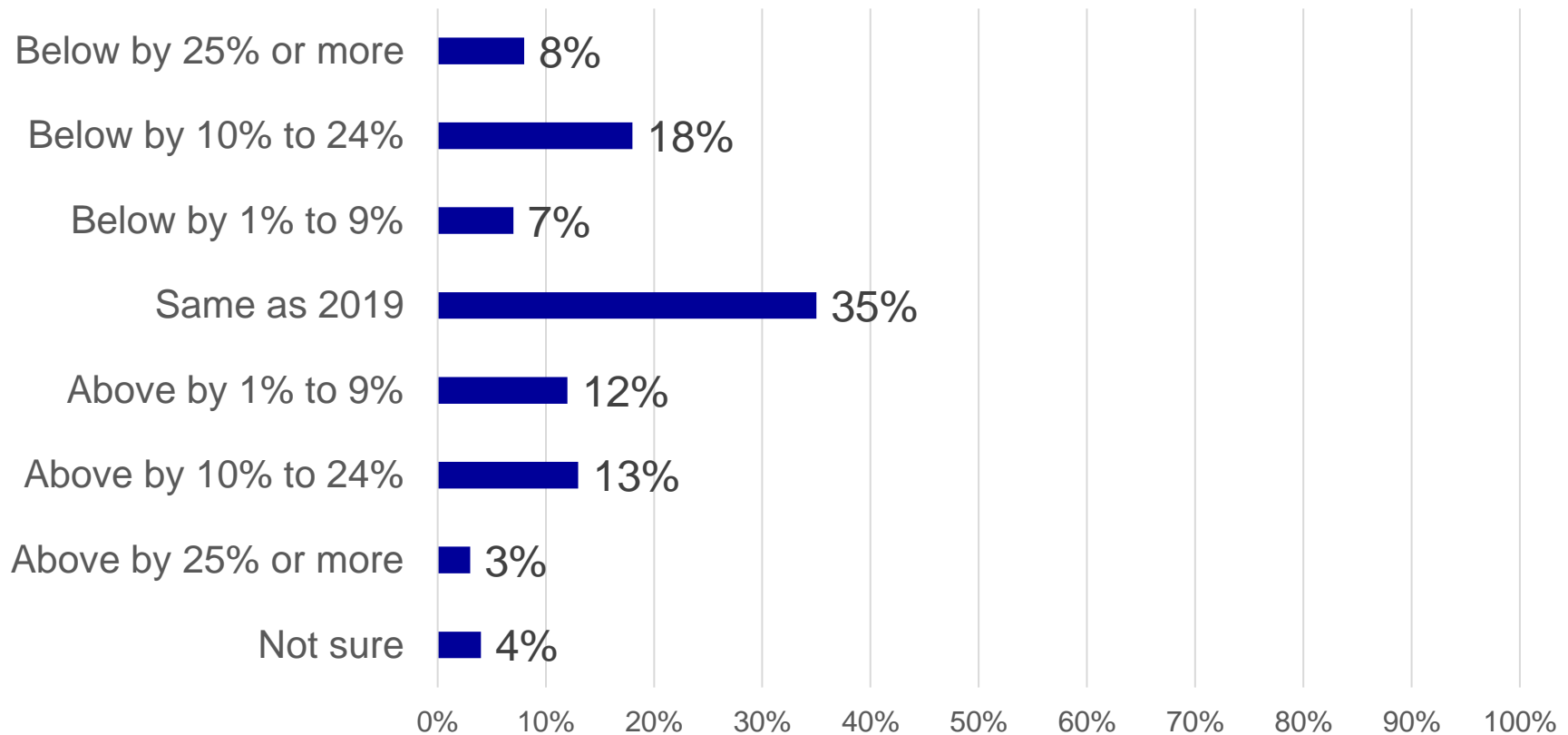
35% say that giving for 2020 is lower than 2019

Among Protestant Pastors



Percentage offerings are below or above 2019

Among Protestant Pastors



Q: "Approximately what percentage are your calendar year 2020 offerings above 2019's offerings?"

Q: "Approximately what percentage are your calendar year 2020 offerings below 2019's offerings?" n=935

Significant Differences

Pastor

Ethnicity

Age

Gender

Education Level

Self-identified Evangelical/Mainline

Church

Region

Denomination

Average Attendance

Significant Statistical Differences

Comparisons were made to determine if there are any significant statistical differences among the pastor's ethnicity, age, gender, education, self-identified Evangelical or Mainline.

Ethnicity	Age	Gender	Education	Self-Identified
White	18-44	Male	No College Degree	Evangelical
African American	45-54	Female	Bachelor's Degree	Mainline
Other Ethnicity	55-64		Master's Degree	
	65+		Doctoral Degree	

Significant Statistical Differences

Comparisons were made to determine if there are any significant statistical differences among the church's region, denomination, and attendance.

Region	Denominational Group	Attendance
Northeast	Baptist	0-49
South	Lutheran	50-99
Midwest	Methodist	100-249
West	Pentecostal	250+
	Presbyterian/Reformed	
	Christian/ Church of Christ	

“How is the current economy impacting your church?”

- African American pastors are the least likely to select “The economy is having no impact on my church” (18%) and most likely to select “Very negatively” (20%)
- Pastors age 45-54 (47%) and 55-64 (47%) are more likely to select “Somewhat negatively” than pastors age 65+ (37%)
- Pastors with a Master’s degree (48%) are more likely to select “Somewhat negatively” than those with no college degree (30%) or a Bachelor’s degree (37%)
- Pastors with no college degree (44%) are more likely to select “The economy is having no impact on my church” than those with a Master’s degree (32%)
- Evangelical pastors are more likely to select “Somewhat positively” than Mainline pastors (14% v. 3%)
- Lutherans (51%), Presbyterian/Reformed (54%), and Christian/Church of Christ (46%) are more likely to select “Somewhat negatively” than Pentecostals (31%)
- Pastors of churches with attendance of 0-49 (41%) are more likely to select “The economy is having no impact on my church” than those with attendance of 250+ (29%)

“Since the beginning of 2020, have your offerings been ...”

- White pastors (22%) are more likely to select “Higher than budgeted” than African American pastors (10%)
- African American pastors (48%) are more likely to select “Lower than budgeted” than White pastors (31%)
- Pastors with a Bachelor’s degree (32%) are more likely to select “Higher than budgeted” than those with a Master’s degree (18%) or a Doctoral degree (18%)
- Evangelical pastors are more likely to select “Higher than budgeted” than Mainline pastors (23% v. 14%)
- Pentecostals (31%) are more likely to select “Higher than budgeted” than Lutherans (12%), Methodists (12%), and Christian/Church of Christ (15%)
- Lutherans (58%) are more likely to select “About what we budgeted” than Baptists (43%)

“Since the beginning of 2020, have your offerings been ...” (continued)

- Pastors of churches with attendance of 50-99 (23%) are more likely to select “Higher than budgeted” than those with attendance of 0-49 (15%)
- Pastors of churches with attendance of 250+ (38%) are more likely to select “Lower than budgeted” than those with attendance of 100-249 (29%)

“Compared to your calendar year 2019 offerings, have your total offerings so far for 2020 been ...”

- White pastors (31%) are more likely to select “Above 2019’s offerings” than African American pastors (18%)
- African American pastors (50%) are more likely to select “Below 2019’s offerings” than White pastors (34%)
- Pastors age 18-44 (36%) are more likely to select “Above 2019’s offerings” than pastors age 65+ (25%)
- Pastors with a Bachelor’s degree (40%) or a Doctoral degree (32%) are more likely to select “Above 2019’s offerings” than those with a Master’s degree (24%)
- Pastors with a Master’s degree (36%) are more likely to select “The same as 2019’s offerings” than those with a Bachelor’s degree (24%)
- Evangelical pastors are more likely to select “Above 2019’s offerings” than Mainline pastors (32% v. 19%)

“Compared to your calendar year 2019 offerings, have your total offerings so far for 2020 been ...”

- Baptists (35%) and Pentecostals (37%) are more likely to select “Above 2019’s offerings” than Methodists (18%)
- Lutherans (38%), Pentecostals (38%), and Presbyterian/Reformed (38%) are more likely to select “The same as 2019’s offerings”
Christian/Church of Christ (23%)
- Pastors of churches with attendance of 250+ (32%) are more likely to select “Above 2019’s offerings” than those with attendance of 0-49 (23%)
- Pastors of churches with attendance of 50-99 (34%) and 100-249 (34%) are more likely to select “The same as 2019’s offerings” than those with attendance of 250+ (26%)

Pastors' Views on Economic Impact

Survey of American Protestant Pastors