

Pastors' Descriptions of In-person Worship Attendance 2023

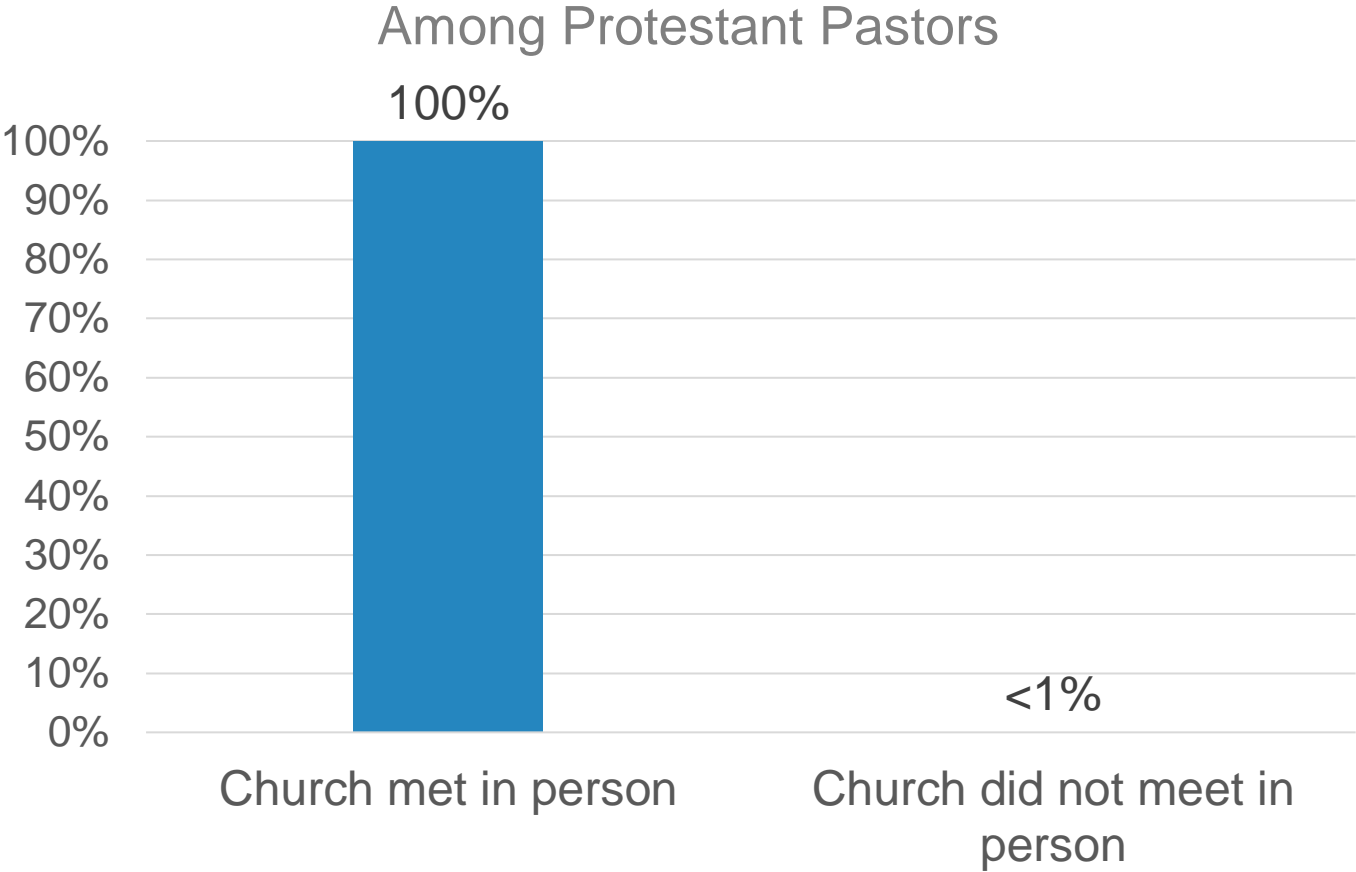
A SURVEY OF AMERICAN PROTESTANT PASTORS

Lifeway research

Methodology

- The phone survey of 1,004 Protestant pastors was conducted August 29, 2023 - September 20, 2023
- The calling list was a stratified random sample, drawn from a list of all Protestant churches. Quotas were used for church size
- Each interview was conducted with the senior pastor, minister or priest at the church
- Responses were weighted by region and church size to more accurately reflect the population
- The completed sample is 1,004 surveys
- The sample provides 95% confidence that the sampling error does not exceed $\pm 3.2\%$ This margin of error accounts for the effect of weighting
- Margins of error are higher in sub-groups
- Comparisons are made to the following Lifeway Research studies: a phone survey of 1,000 Protestant pastors September 6-30, 2022, a phone survey of 1,000 Protestant pastors September 1-29, 2021, a mixed mode survey of 1,007 Protestant pastors September 2-October 1, 2020, and an online survey of 430 Protestant pastors February 1-11, 2021.

Less than 1% of pastors say their church did not meet in person in August 2023

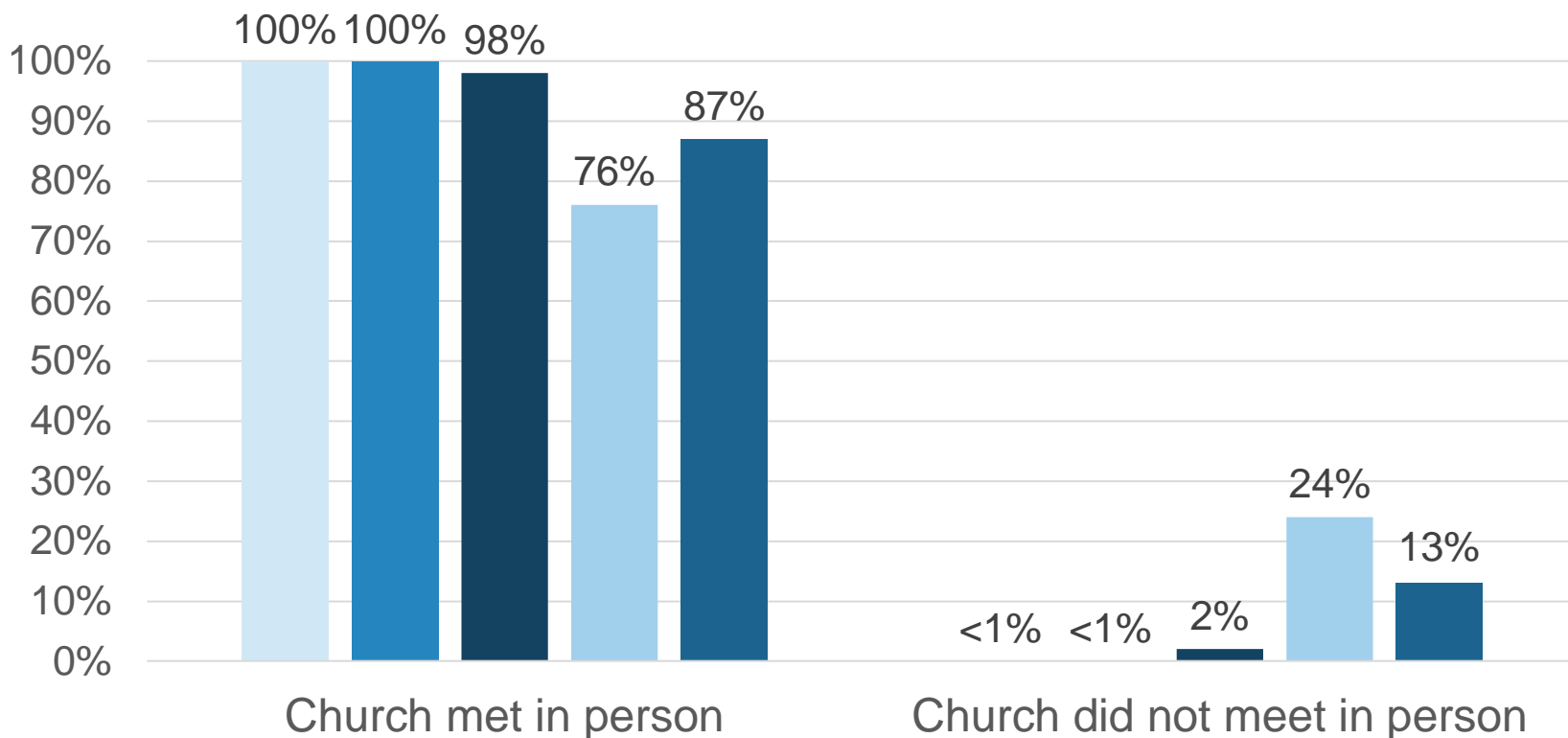


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Q: "For August 2023, what was your church's average worship attendance in-person on a typical weekend (including all ages from babies to adults but not counting anyone twice)?" n=993

There is no change in the number churches that met in person in August 2023 v. August 2022

Among Protestant Pastors



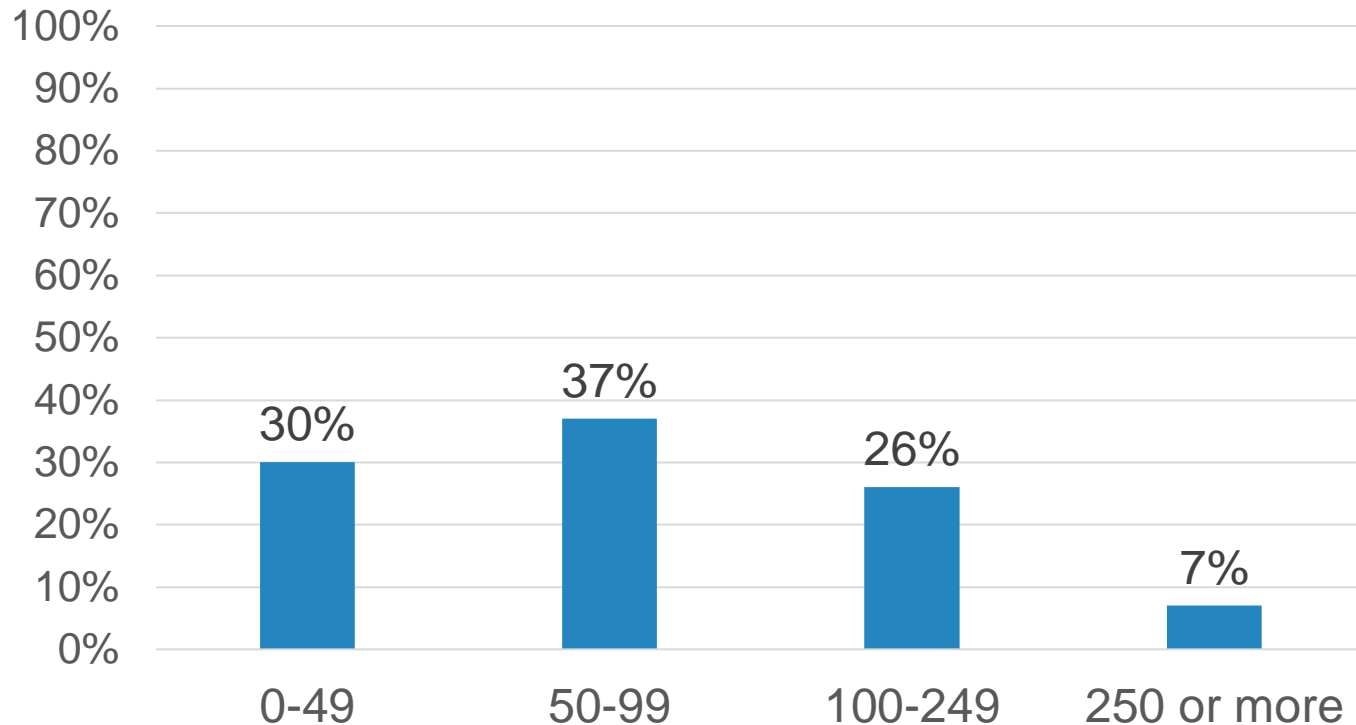
■ August 2023 ■ August 2022 ■ August 2021 ■ January 2021 ■ September 2020

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Q: "For [Month], what was your church's average worship attendance in-person on a typical weekend (including all ages from babies to adults but not counting anyone twice)?"

August 2023 average attendance for reporting churches

Among Protestant churches that met in person in August 2023

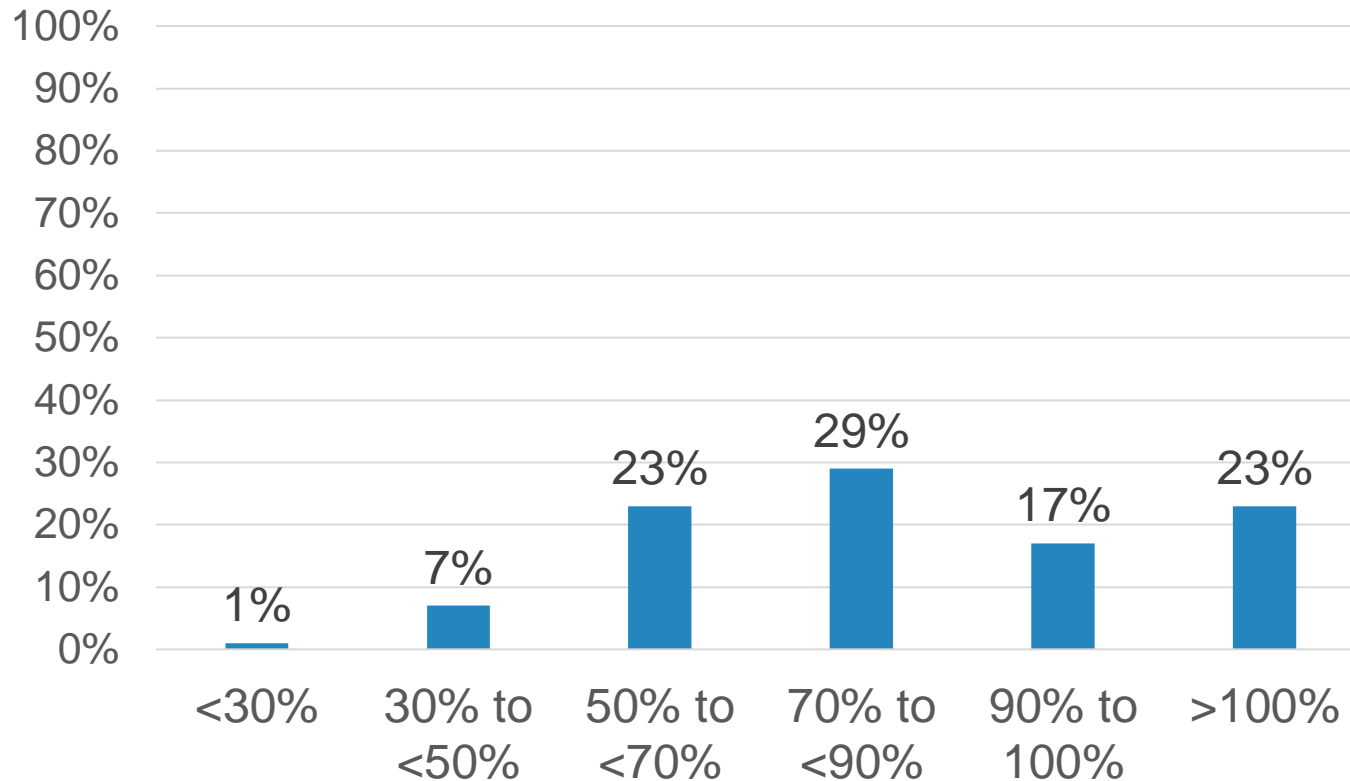


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Q: "For August 2023, what was your church's average worship attendance in-person on a typical weekend (including all ages from babies to adults but not counting anyone twice)?" *n*=991

August 2023 attendance as a percentage of January 2020 attendance

Among Protestant Pastors

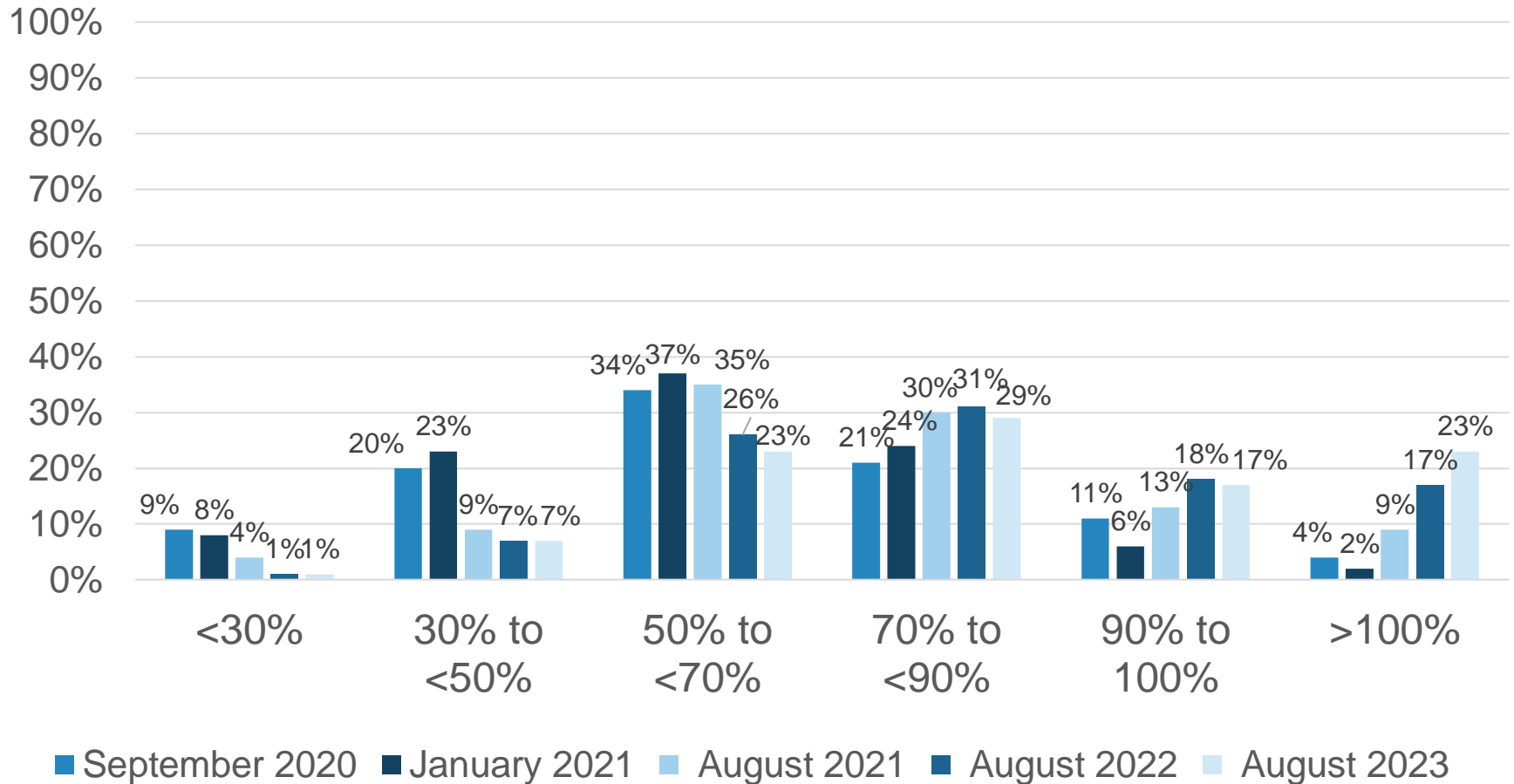


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Q: "For August 2023, what was your church's average worship attendance in-person on a typical weekend (including all ages from babies to adults but not counting anyone twice)?" *n*=895

Attendance compared to Jan./Feb. 2020: In the last year, the percentage of churches has increased that exceed their pre-COVID attendance (23% v. 17%)

Among Protestant Pastors



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Q: "For [Month], what was your church's average worship attendance in-person on a typical weekend (including all ages from babies to adults but not counting anyone twice)?"

Mean and median of attendance as a percentage of Jan./Feb. 2020

Among Protestant Pastors

Mean

- 63% - September 2020
- 60% - January 2021
- 73% - August 2021
- 85% - August 2022
- 89% - August 2023

Median

- 62% - September 2020
- 60% - January 2021
- 71% - August 2021
- 78% - August 2022
- 82% - August 2023

Significant Differences

Pastor

Ethnicity

Age

Gender

Education Level

Self-identified Evangelical/Mainline

Church

Region

Denomination

Average Attendance

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Significant 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.

AGE	GENDER	ETHNICITY	EDUCATION	Self-Identified
18-44	Male	White	No College Degree	Evangelical
45-54	Female	African American	Bachelor's Degree	Mainline
55-64		Hispanic	Graduate 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 pre-COVID attendance.

REGION	DENOMINATION GROUP	Pre-COVID ATTENDANCE
Northeast	Baptist	0-49
South	Lutheran	50-99
Midwest	Methodist	100-249
West	Pentecostal	250+
	Presbyterian/Reformed	
	Christian/Church of Christ	
	Non-Denominational	

Note: Region is defined by the US Census locations

“For August 2023, what was your church’s average worship attendance in-person on a typical weekend (including all ages from babies to adults but not counting anyone twice)?”

- Pastors age 65+ are the most likely to select “0-49” (47%)
- Male pastors are more likely to select “100-249” than females (27% v. 20%)
- White pastors (28%) are more likely to select “100-249” than African American pastors (12%)
- Pastors with a Master’s Degree (41%) are more likely to select “50-99” than those with no college degree (31%) or a Bachelor’s Degree (31%)
- Evangelical pastors are more likely to select “100-249” than Mainline pastors (30% v. 17%)
- Pastors in the Northeast (36%) are more likely to select “0-49” than those in the South (27%)
- Pastors in the Midwest (40%) are more likely to select “50-99” than those in the West (30%)
- Methodists (41%) and Presbyterian/Reformed (35%) are more likely to select “0-49” than Baptists (23%)

August 2023 Attendance as a percentage of January 2020 Attendance

- Pastors age 65+ (10%) are more likely to report August 2023 attendance between **30 to <50%** of January 2020 than pastors age 45-54 (3%)
- Pastors age 18-44 (28%) are more likely to report August 2023 attendance **>100%** of January 2020 than pastors age 65+ (18%)
- Female pastors are more likely to report August 2023 attendance between **50 to <70%** of January 2020 than males (33% v. 21%)
- Male pastors are more likely to report August 2023 attendance between **>100%** of January 2020 than females (25% v. 15%)
- White pastors (18%) are more likely to report August 2023 attendance between **90 to 100%** of January 2020 than African American pastors (7%)
- African American pastors (17%) are more likely to report August 2023 attendance between **30 to <50%** of January 2020 than White pastors (6%)

August 2023 Attendance as a percentage of January 2020 Attendance *continued*

- Pastors with a Doctoral degree (37%) are more likely to report August 2023 attendance between **70 to <90%** of January 2020 than pastors with no college degree (24%)
- Pastors with a Bachelor's degree (23%) are more likely to report August 2023 attendance between **90 to 100%** of January 2020 than pastors with no college degree (14%) or a Doctoral degree (12%)
- Mainline pastors are more likely to report August 2023 attendance between **50 to <70%** of January 2020 than Evangelical pastors (29% v. 20%)
- Evangelical pastors are more likely to report August 2023 attendance **>100%** of January 2020 than Mainline pastors (26% v. 18%)

August 2023 Attendance as a percentage of January 2020 Attendance *continued*

- Methodists (10%) are more likely to report August 2023 attendance between **30 to <50%** of January 2020 than Lutherans (2%)
- Methodists (34%) are more likely to report August 2022 attendance between **50 to <70%** of January 2020 than Baptists (21%), Pentecostals (16%), Presbyterian/Reformed (21%), Christian/Church of Christ (16%), and Non-denominational (18%)
- Baptists (18%), Lutherans (21%), and Non-denominational (27%) are more likely to report August 2023 attendance between **90% to 100%** of January 2020 than Methodists (11%)
- Baptists (23%), Pentecostals (27%), and Presbyterian/Reformed (27%) are more likely to report August 2023 attendance **>100%** of January 2020 than Methodists (14%)

August 2023 Attendance as a percentage of January 2020 Attendance *continued*

- Pastors of churches with pre-COVID attendance of 50-99 (25%) and 100-249 (25%) are more likely to report August 2023 attendance between **50 to <70%** of January 2020 than those with attendance of 0-49 (17%)
- Pastors of churches with pre-COVID attendance of 0-49 (23%) are more likely to report August 2023 attendance between **90 to 100%** than those with attendance of 50-99 (16%)
- Pastors of churches with pre-COVID attendance of 0-49 are the most likely to report August 2023 attendance **>100%** (35%)

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