

# Pastors' Views on Fiscal Year and Church Budget

A SURVEY OF AMERICAN PROTESTANT PASTORS

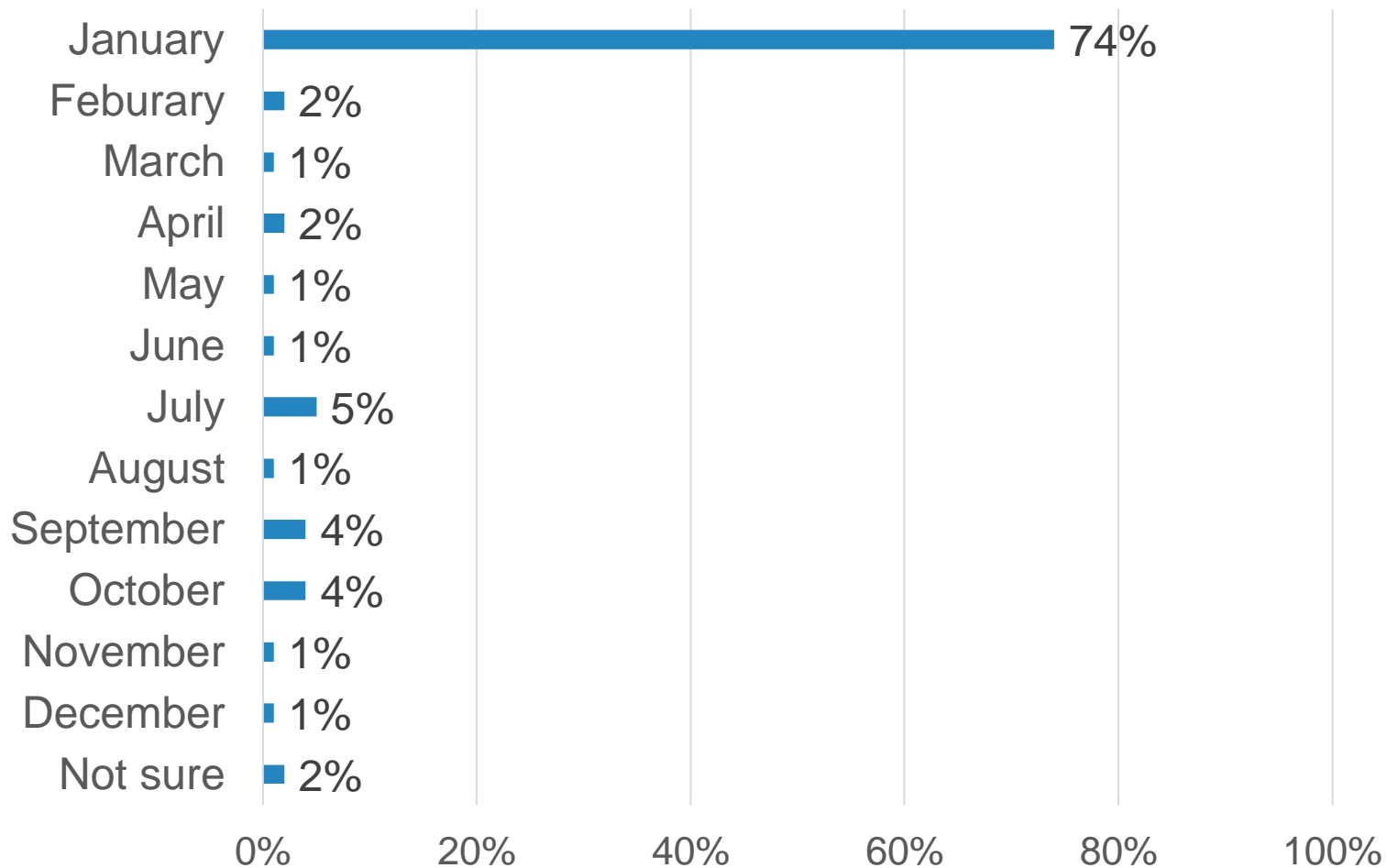
Lifeway research

# 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

# 74% say that their church's fiscal year starts in January

Among Protestant Pastors

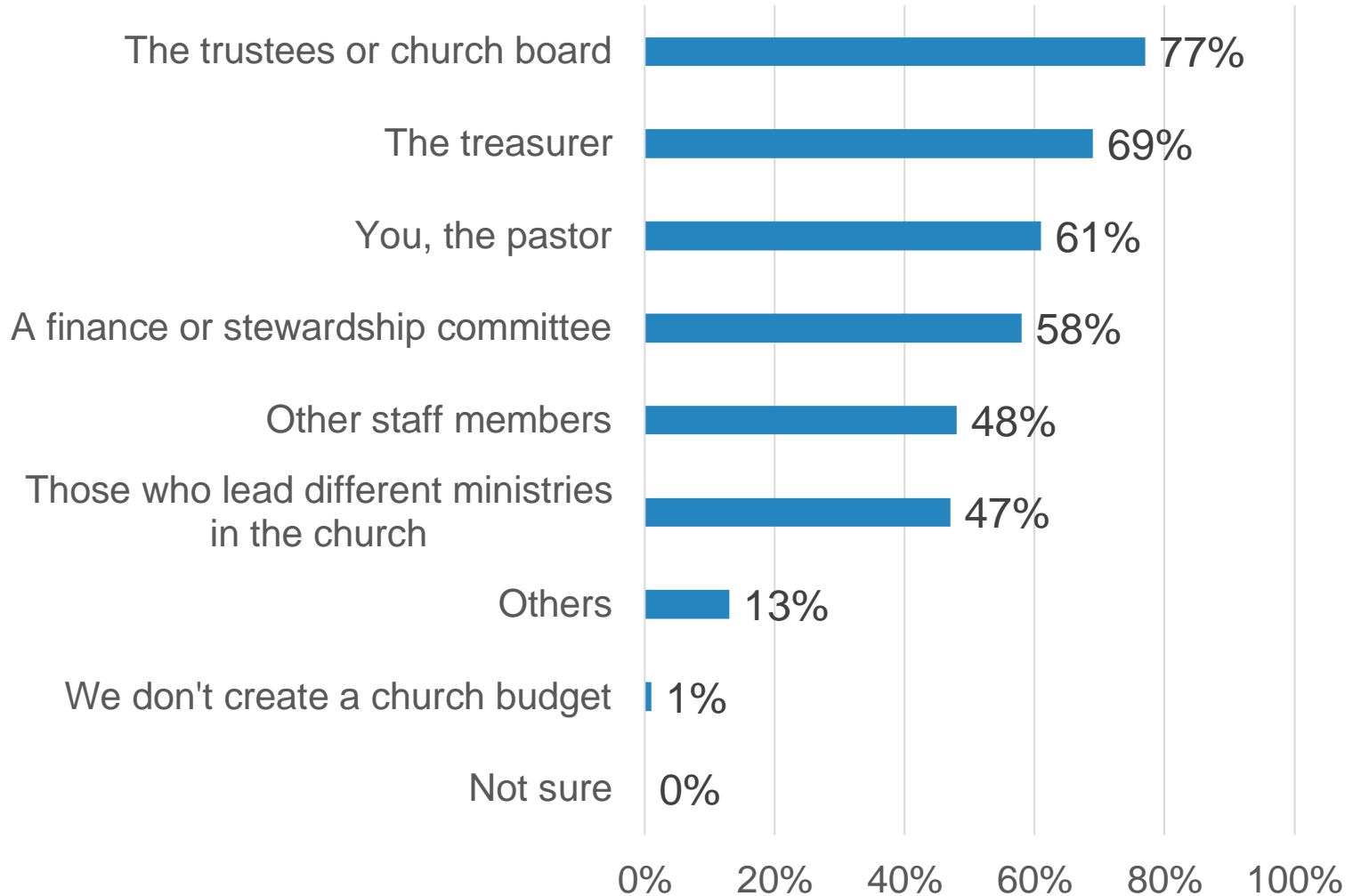


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Q: "In what month does your church's new fiscal year start? (Select one)" n=1,004

# “Who is involved in creating your church’s budget?”

Among Protestant Pastors



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Q: “Who is involved in creating your church’s budget? (Select all that apply)” n=1,004

# 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+		Other Ethnicities	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	DENOMINATION GROUP	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

## **“In what month does your church’s new fiscal year start?”**

- Pastors with a Master’s Degree (79%) or a Doctoral Degree (79%) are more likely to answer “January” than those with no college degree (64%)
- Mainline pastors are more likely to answer “January” than Evangelical pastors (79% v. 70%)
- Pastors in the Northeast (80%) are more likely to answer “January” than those in the West (68%)
- Pastors in the South are the most likely to answer “September” (7%)
- Methodists (87%) and Presbyterian/Reformed (85%) are more likely to answer “January” than Baptists (65%) and Pentecostals (72%)
- Baptists are the most likely to answer “September” (11%)



# “Who is involved in creating your church’s budget?”

## You, the pastor

- Male pastors are more likely to select than females (63% v. 55%)
- White pastors (62%) are more likely to select than Hispanic pastors (50%)
- Pastors with a Doctoral Degree (70%) are more likely to select than those with no college degree (56%) or a Master’s Degree (60%)
- Baptists (65%) and Pentecostals (69%) and are more likely to select than Lutherans (51%), Presbyterian/Reformed (52%), and Christian/Church of Christ (42%)

# “Who is involved in creating your church’s budget?”

## Other staff members

- African American pastors (61%) are more likely to select than white pastors (47%)
- Pastors with no college (54%) or a Doctoral Degree (56%) are more likely to select than those with a Master’s degree (45%)
- Pastors in the West (56%) are more likely to select than those in the Midwest (44%)
- Baptists (49%), Methodists (54%), Pentecostals (53%), and Non-denominational (53%) are more likely to select than Presbyterian/Reformed (35%)
- Pastors at churches with attendance 250+ (62%) are more likely to select than those at churches with attendance of 0-49 (43%) and 50-99 (47%)

# “Who is involved in creating your church’s budget?”

## The trustees or church board

- Pastors with a Master’s Degree (80%) are more likely to select than those with a Bachelor’s Degree (71%)
- Pastors in the South are the least likely to select (69%)
- Lutherans (85%) and Pentecostals (88%) are more likely to select than Baptists (64%) and Christian/Church of Christ (70%)

# “Who is involved in creating your church’s budget?”

## A finance or stewardship committee

- Pastors age 18-44 (61%) and 55-64 (64%) are more likely to select than pastors age 65+ (49%)
- Female pastors are more likely to select than males (66% v. 57%)
- Pastors with a Master’s Degree (65%) or a Doctoral Degree (67%) are more likely to select than those with no college degree (45%) or a Bachelor’s Degree (47%)
- Mainline pastors are more likely to select than Evangelical pastors (69% v. 55%)
- Pastors in the South (64%) are more likely to select than those in the Midwest (54%) and West (52%)
- Methodists are the most likely to select (90%)
- Baptists (64%), Lutherans (63%), Methodists (90%), and Presbyterian/Reformed (57%) are more likely to select than Pentecostals (20%) and Non-denominational (34%)
- Pastors at churches with attendance 50-99 (61%) and 100-249 (64%) are more likely to select than those at churches with attendance of 0-49 (50%)

# “Who is involved in creating your church’s budget?”

## The treasurer

- Pastors with a Doctoral Degree (77%) are more likely to select than those with no college degree (64%) or a Bachelor’s Degree (65%)
- Lutherans (79%) and Methodists (76%) are more likely to select than Baptists (64%), Pentecostals (59%), and Non-denominational (60%)
- Pastors at churches with attendance 250+ are the least likely to select (55%)

# “Who is involved in creating your church’s budget?”

## Those who lead different ministries in the church

- Pastors age 18-44 (50%) and 45-54 (56%) are more likely to select than pastors age 65+ (39%)
- Methodists (58%) are more likely to select than Pentecostals (37%), Presbyterian/Reformed (33%), and Non-denominational (40%)
- Pastors at churches with attendance 100-249 (57%) are more likely to select than those at churches with attendance of 0-49 (42%) and 50-99 (44%)

# “Who is involved in creating your church’s budget?”

## Others

- Baptists (18%), Lutheran (11%), Methodists (10%), Presbyterian/Reformed (11%), and Christian/Church of Christ (18%) are more likely to select than Non-denominational (1%)

# “Who is involved in creating your church’s budget?”

## **We don’t create a church budget**

- No significant differences



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