

Protestant Churchgoer Views On Church Membership

A SURVEY OF 1,008 AMERICAN PROTESTANT CHURCHGOERS

Lifeway research

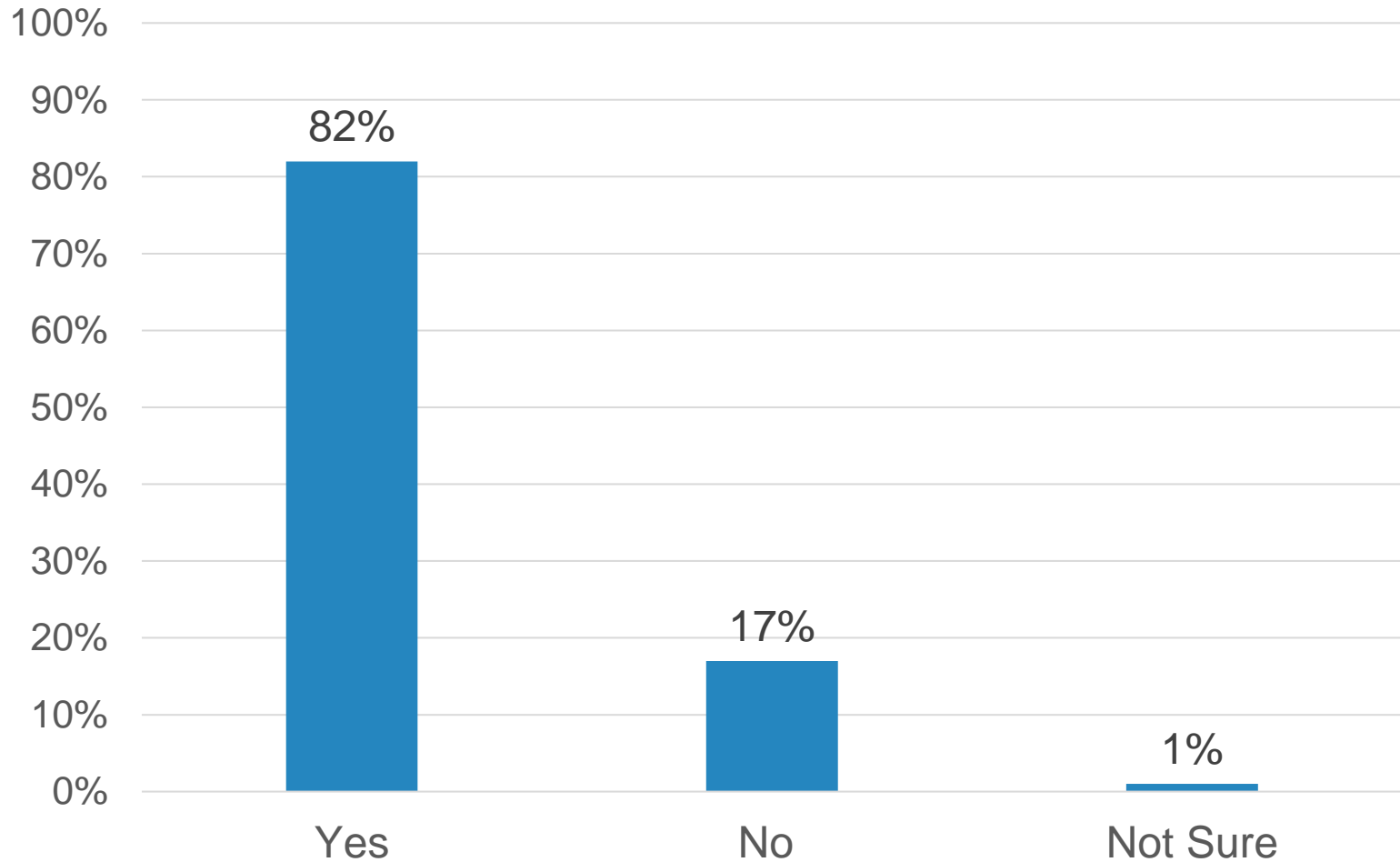
Methodology

- The online survey of 1,008 American Protestant churchgoers was conducted September 19-29, 2023, using a national pre-recruited panel
- Respondents were screened to include those who identified as Protestant/non-denominational and attend religious services at least once a month
- Quotas and slight weights were used to balance gender, age, region, ethnicity, education, and religion to more accurately reflect the population
- The completed sample is 1,008 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

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

82% of Protestants who attend church in a typical month are members of the church they attend

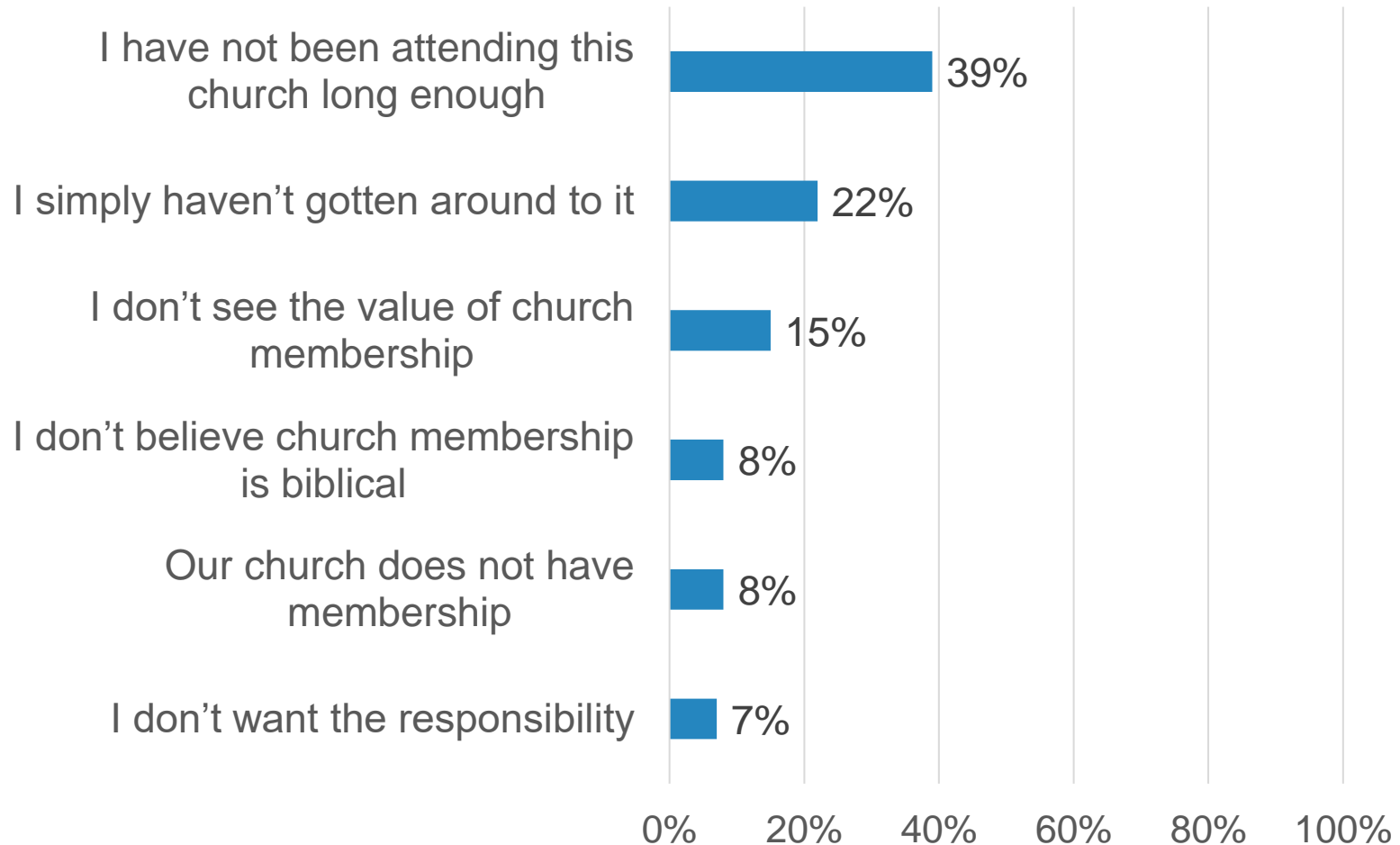


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Q: "Are you currently a member of the church you attend?" n=1,008

“Why are you currently not a member of your church?”

Among churchgoers who are not members of the church they attend

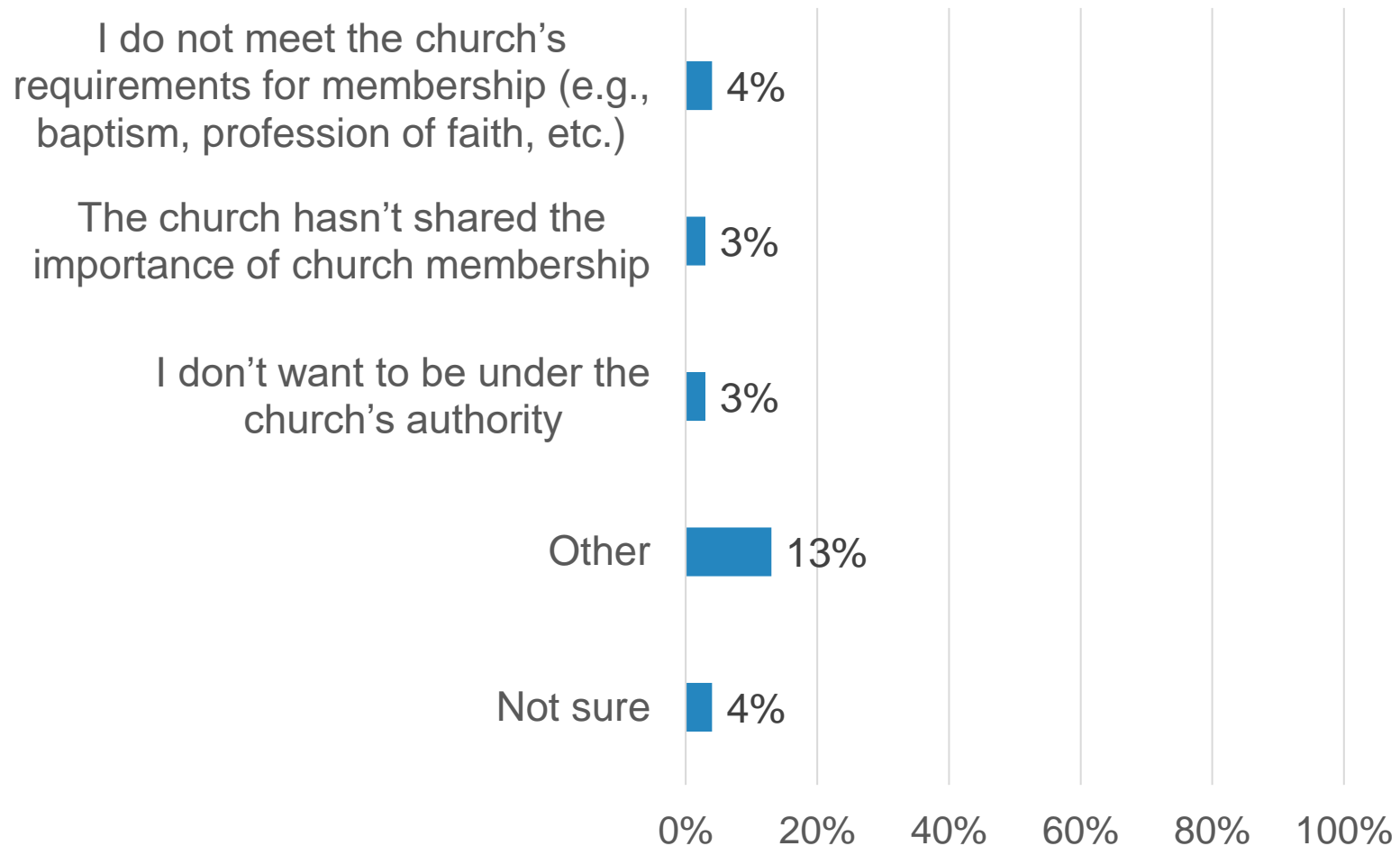


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Q: “Why are you currently not a member of your church? (Select all that apply)” n=165

“Why are you currently not a member of your church?” *Continued*

Among churchgoers who are not members of the church they attend



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Q: “Why are you currently not a member of your church? (Select all that apply)” n=165

Significant Differences

Gender

Age

Ethnicity

Region

Education Level

Denomination

Worship Service Attendance

Church Size

Evangelical Beliefs

Significant 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 the US Census locations

Significant Statistical Differences

Comparisons were made to determine if there are any significant statistical differences among denomination, worship service attendance, church size and evangelical beliefs.

DENOMINATION	WORSHIP SERVICE ATTENDANCE	CHURCH'S WORSHIP ATTENDANCE	EVANGELICAL BELIEFS
Baptist	1 to 3 times a month	Less than 50	Yes
Methodist	4 or more times a month	50 to 99	No
Lutheran		100 to 249	
Presbyterian/Reformed		250 to 499	
Christian/Church of Christ		500 or more	
Non-denominational			

“Are you currently a member of the church you attend?”

- Males are more likely to select “Yes” than females (86% v. 79%)
- Those age 35-49 (86%) are more likely to select “Yes” than those 50-64 (79%)
- Whites (18%) are more likely to select “No” than Other Ethnicities (6%)
- Those with a Bachelor’s Degree (86%) are more likely to select “Yes” than those who are High School Graduates or less (80%) or with some college (80%)
- Christian/Church of Christ (92%) are more likely to select than Methodists (75%) and Non-denominational (77%)
- Those who attend a worship service 4 or more times a month (88%) are more likely to select “Yes” than those who attend 1 to 3 times a month (74%)

“Why are you currently not a member of your church?”

Our church does not have membership

- Non-denominational (18%) are more likely to select than Baptists (1%)

I have not been attending this church long enough

- No significant differences

The church hasn't shared the importance of church membership

- No significant differences

I do not meet the church's requirements for membership (e.g., baptism, profession of faith, etc.)

- No significant differences

“Why are you currently not a member of your church?”

I simply haven't gotten around to it

- Baptists (29%) are more likely to select than Non-denominational (9%)
- Those who attend a worship service 1 to 3 times a month (26%) are more likely to select than those who attend 4 or more times a month (15%)

I don't see the value of church membership

- No significant differences

I don't want the responsibility

- No significant differences

“Why are you currently not a member of your church?”

I don't want to be under the church's authority

- No significant differences

I don't believe church membership is biblical

- No significant differences

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