

# **Pastors' Views on July Fourth Services and Patriotism**

A SURVEY OF AMERICAN PROTESTANT PASTORS

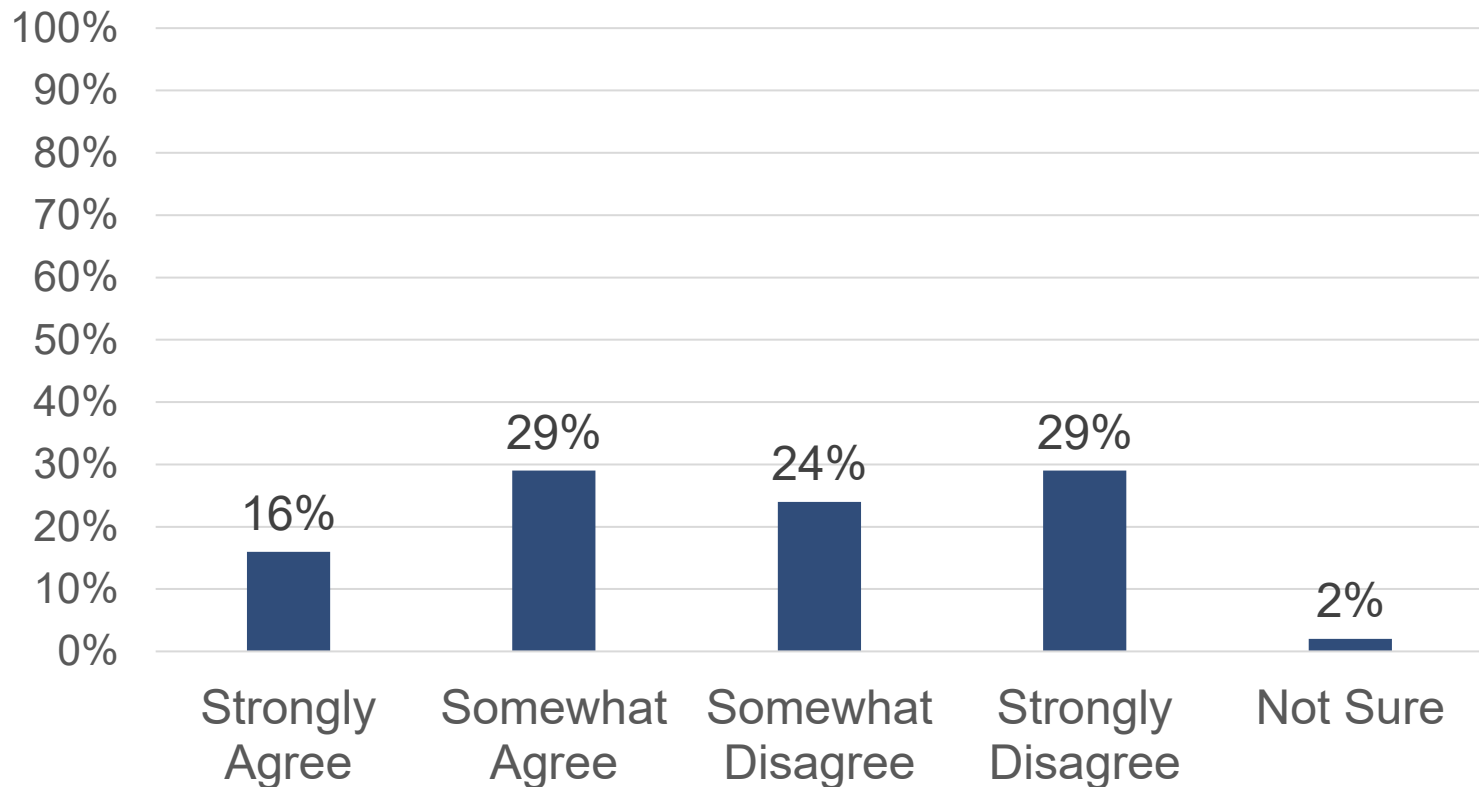
**Lifeway** Research

# Methodology

- The phone survey of 1,003 Protestant pastors was conducted September 2-24, 2025
- 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 1,003 surveys
- The sample provides 95% confidence that the sampling error does not exceed  $\pm 3.3\%$  This margin of error accounts for the effect of weighting
- Margins of error are higher in sub-groups
- Comparisons are made to surveys of 1,000 Protestant pastors conducted by Lifeway Research September 1-29, 2021 and March 9-24, 2016, using the same methodology

# 45% say that it is important to incorporate patriotic elements into worship services the week of July Fourth

Among Protestant Pastors

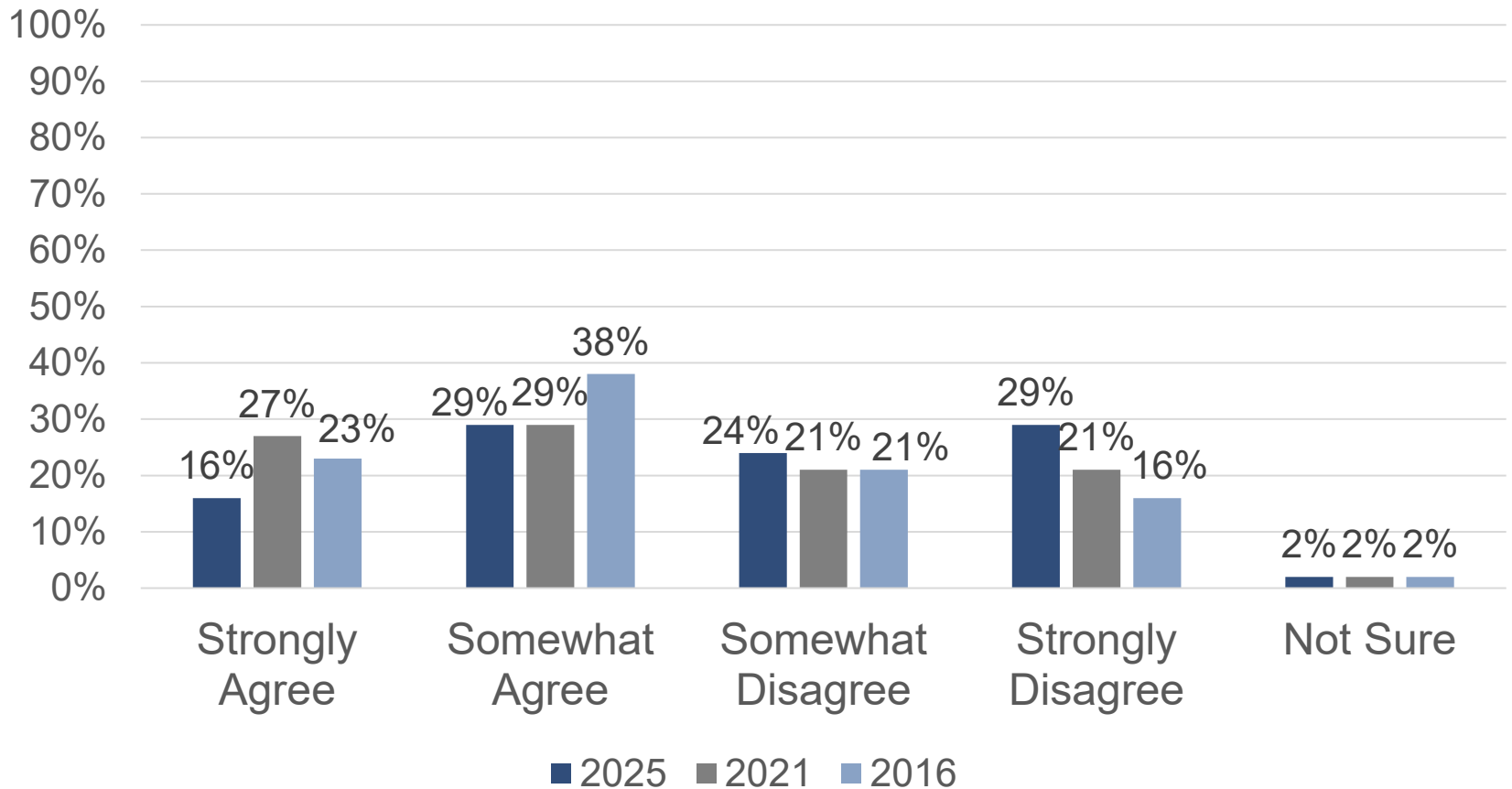


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Q: "It is important that worship services the week of July Fourth incorporate patriotic elements to celebrate America." n=1,003

# Fewer pastors in 2025 (45%) agree it is important to incorporate patriotic elements into worship services the week of July Fourth than in 2021 (56%) and 2016 (61%)

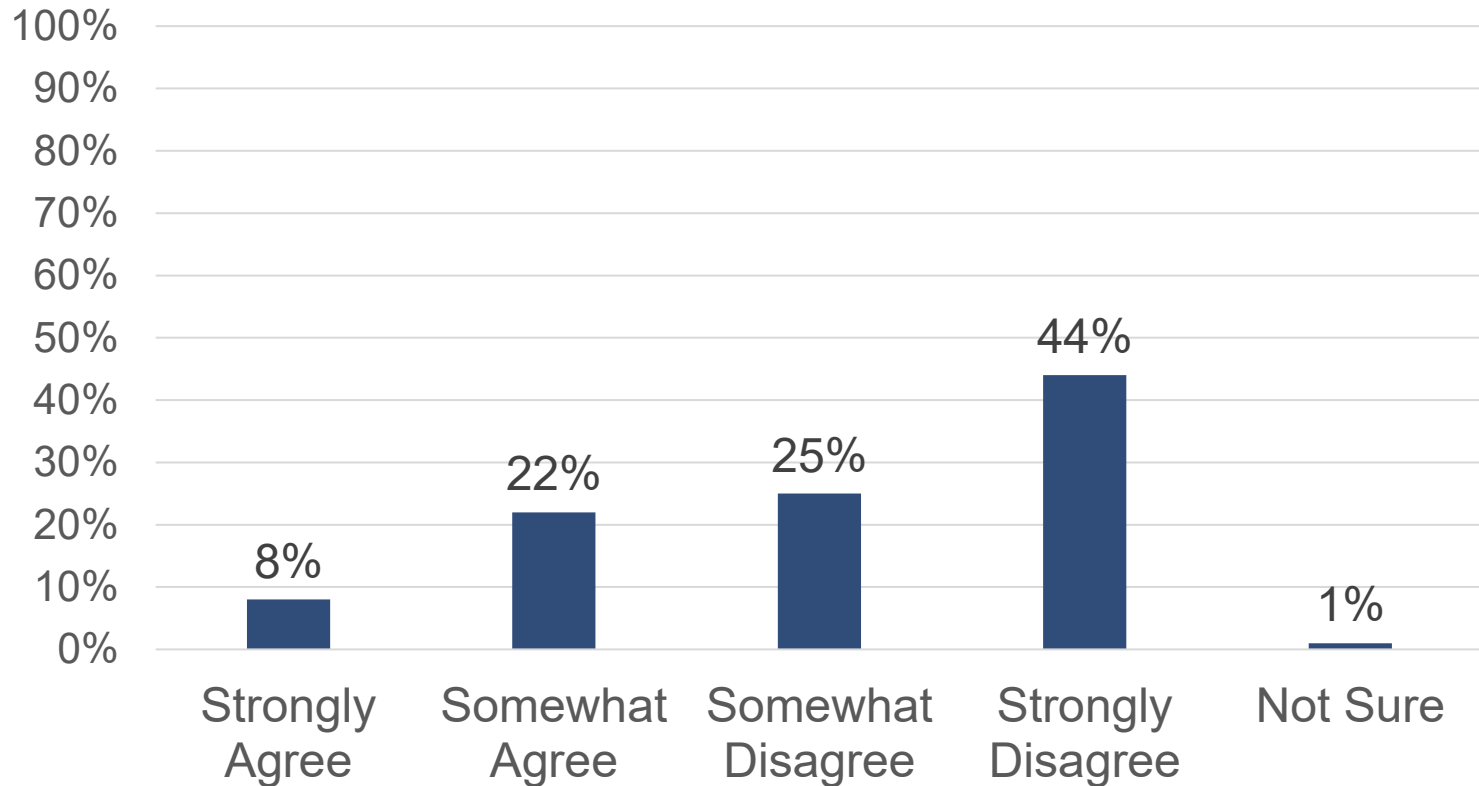
Among Protestant Pastors



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# 30% say that their congregation's love for America sometimes seems greater than their love for God

Among Protestant Pastors

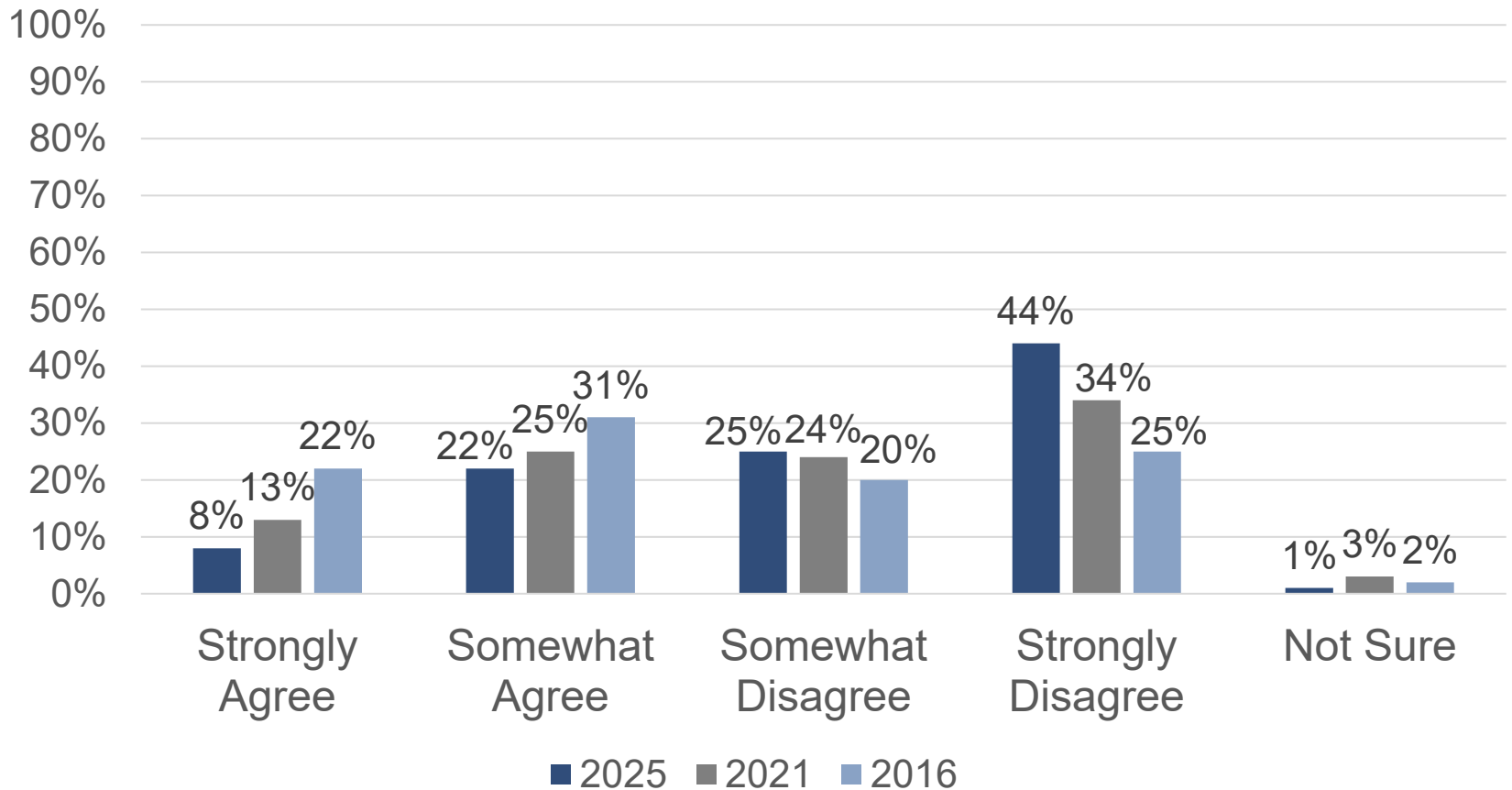


**Lifeway Research**

Q: "Our congregation's love for America sometimes seems greater than their love for God." n=1,003

# Fewer pastors in 2025 (30%) say their congregation's love for America sometimes exceeds their love for God than in 2021 (38%) or 2016 (53%)

Among Protestant Pastors

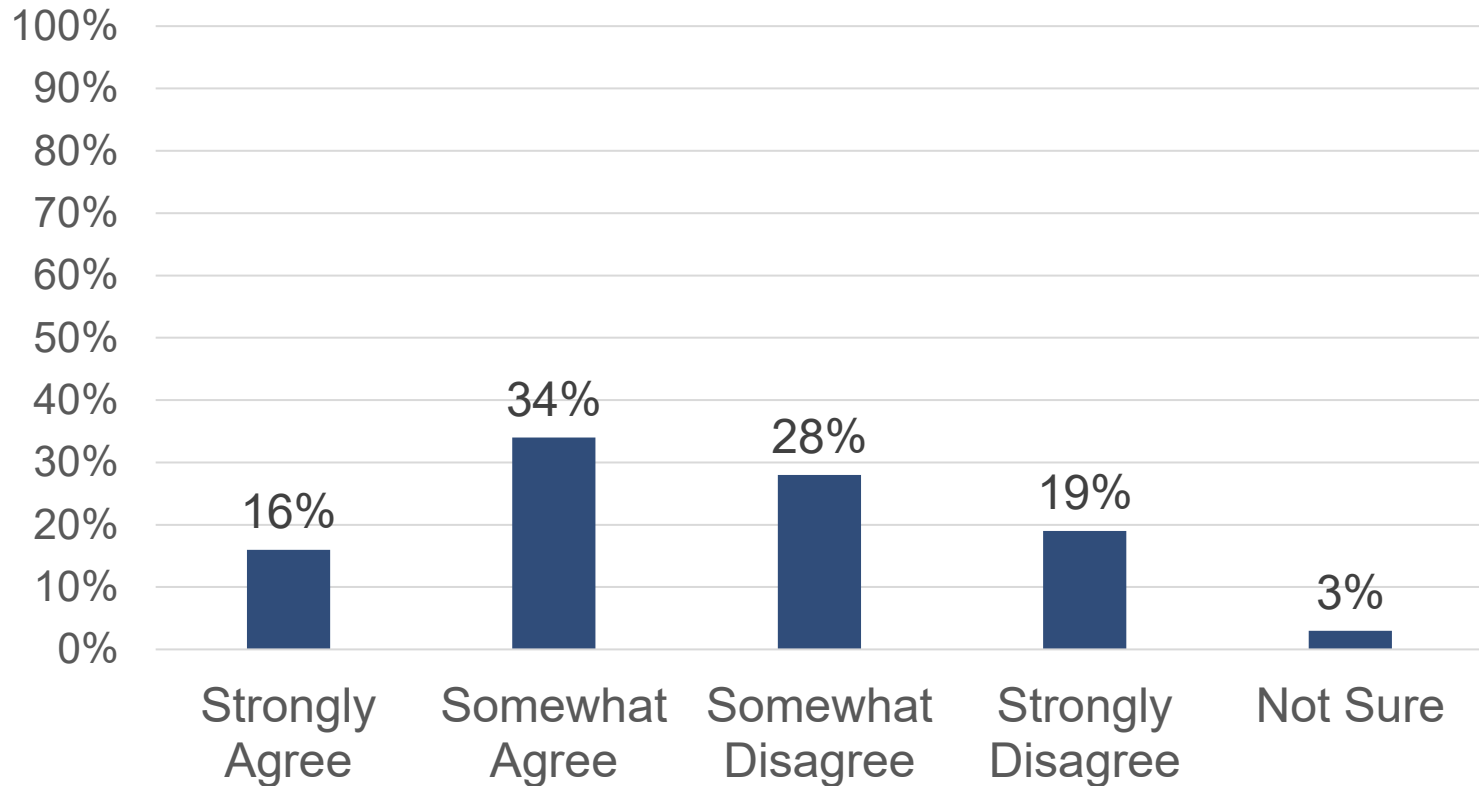


**Lifeway Research**

Q: "Our congregation's love for America sometimes seems greater than their love for God." n=1,003

# 50% believe that their church should do something special to commemorate our country's 250th birthday July Fourth 2026

Among Protestant Pastors

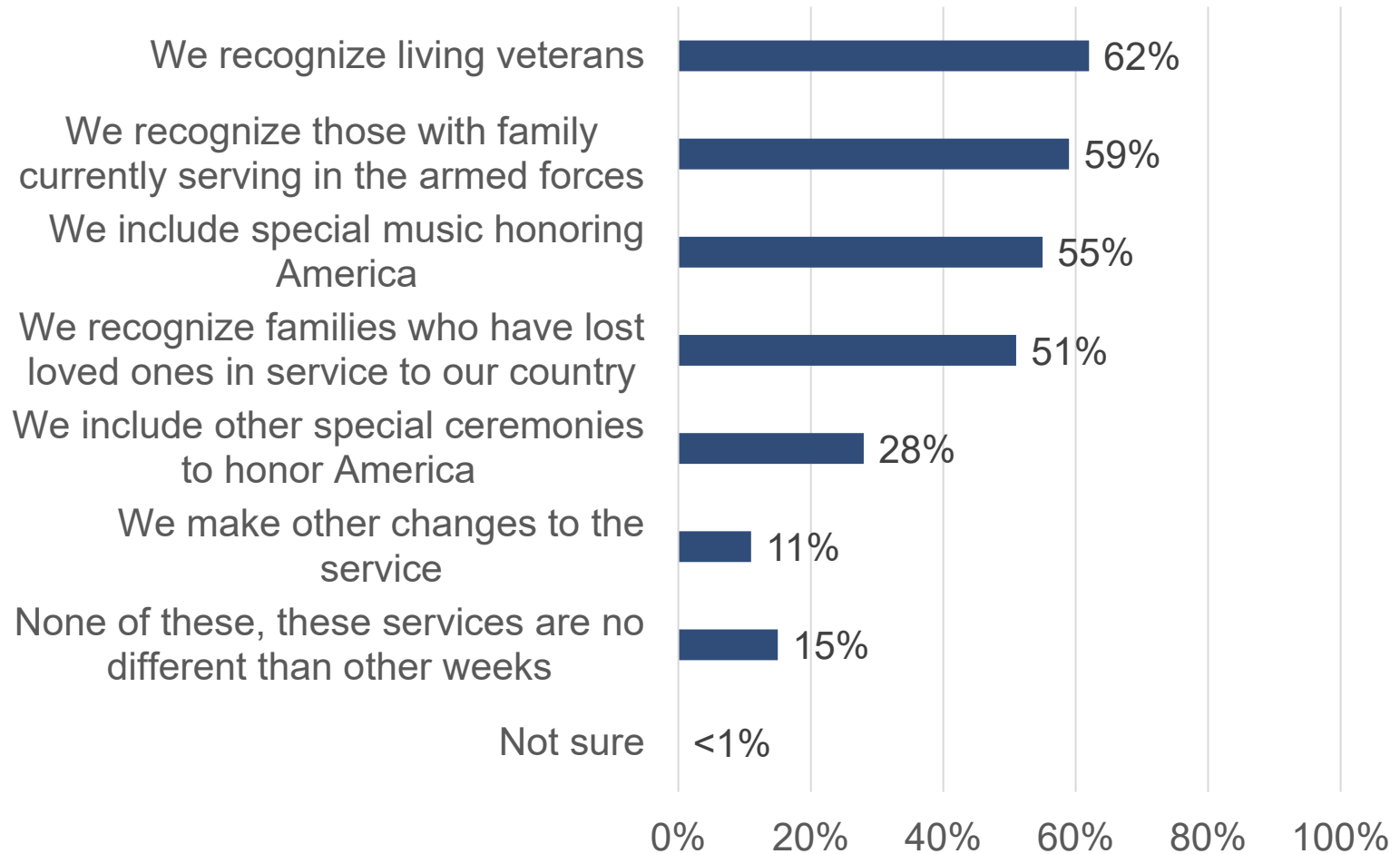


**Lifeway Research**

Q: "My church should do something special to commemorate our country's 250th birthday July Fourth 2026." n=1,003

# “Which of the following describe how your church changes its worship service the week of July 4th?”

Among Protestant Pastors

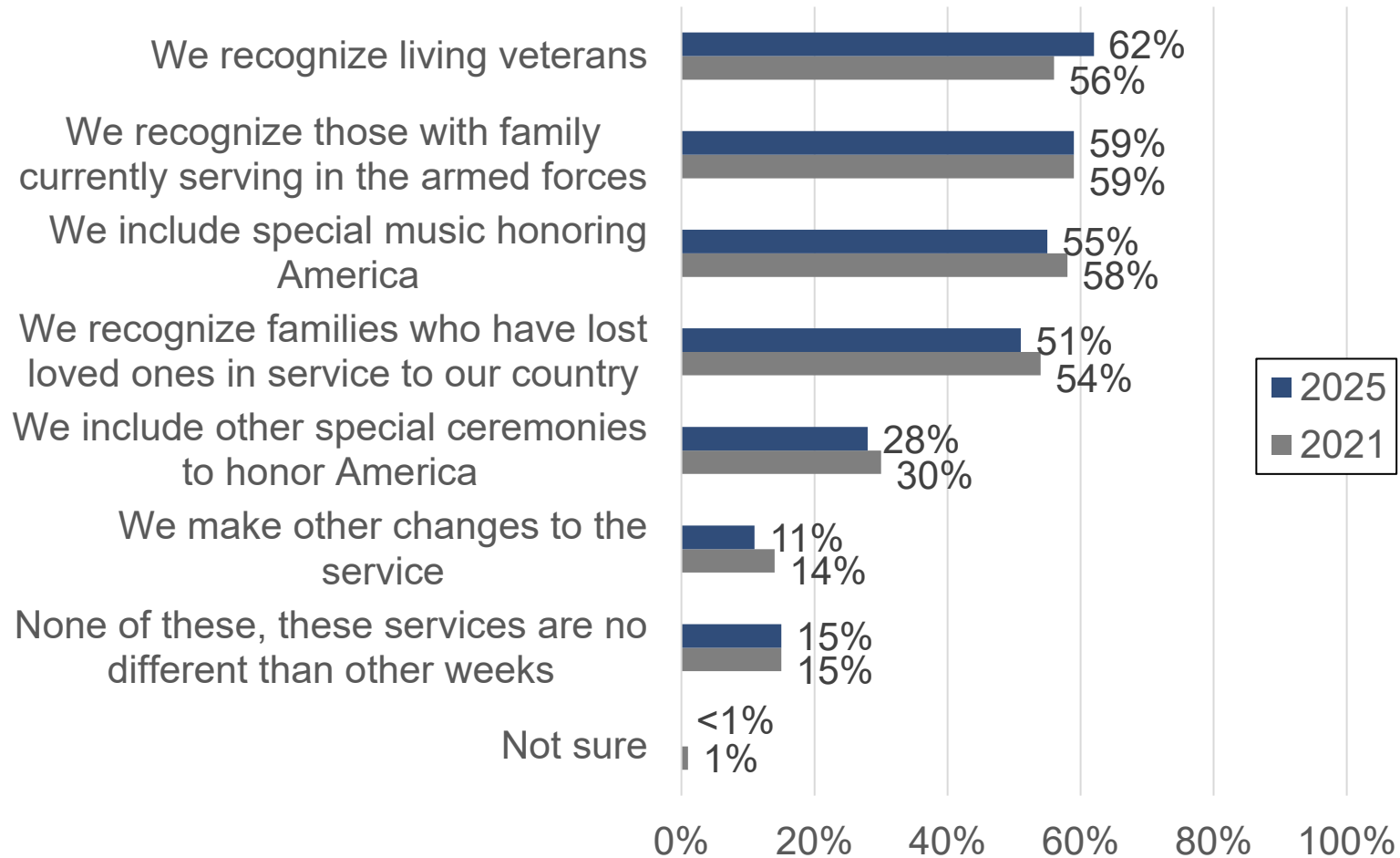


**Lifeway Research**

Q: “Which of the following describe how your church changes its worship service the week of July 4th? (Select all that apply)” n=1,003

# More pastors change their worship service the week of July 4<sup>th</sup> to recognize veterans than in 2021 (62% v. 56%)

Among Protestant Pastors



**Lifeway Research**

Q: "Which of the following describe how your church changes its worship service the week of July 4th? (Select all that apply)" n=1,003

# Significant Differences

Pastor

Ethnicity

Age

Gender

Education Level

Self-identified Evangelical/Mainline

Church

Region

Denomination

Average Attendance

Location

**Lifeway Research**

# 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		Other Ethnicities	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, attendance, and location.

REGION	DENOMINATION GROUP	ATTENDANCE	LOCATION
Northeast	Baptist	0-49	Urban
South	Lutheran	50-99	Suburban
Midwest	Methodist	100-249	Rural
West	Pentecostal	250+	
	Presbyterian/Reformed		
	Holiness		
	Non-Denominational		

Note: Region is defined by the US Census locations

## **“It is important that worship services the week of July Fourth incorporate patriotic elements to celebrate America.”**

- Pastors age 65+ are the most likely to Agree (63%) followed by pastors age 55-64 (49%) 45-54 (40%) 18-44 (29%)
- Female pastors are more likely to Agree than males (52% v. 43%)
- Pastors with no college degree are the most likely to Agree (68%)
- Mainline pastors are more likely to Disagree than Evangelical pastors (52% v. 46%)
- Pastors in the South (51%) and West (50%) are more likely to Agree than those in the Northeast (37%) and Midwest (39%)
- Baptists (53%), Methodists (49%), Pentecostals (64%), Holiness (48%), and Non-denominational (47%) are more likely to Agree than Lutherans (32%) and Presbyterian/Reformed (29%)
- Pastors at churches with attendance 0-49 (51%) are more likely to Agree than those at churches with attendance of 50-99 (41%)
- Pastors at churches in an urban area (54%) are more likely to Disagree than pastors in a rural area (45%)

## **“Our congregation’s love for America sometimes seems greater than their love for God.”**

- Pastors age 18-44 (37%) are more likely to Agree than pastors age 65+ (25%)
- Male pastors are more likely to Agree than females (34% v. 21%)
- Pastors with no college degree are the most likely to Disagree (78%)
- Baptists (35%), Lutherans (30%), Methodists (36%), Presbyterian/Reformed (36%), and Holiness (36%) are more likely to Agree than Non-denominational (20%)
- Pastors at churches with attendance 50-99 (35%) are more likely to Agree than those at churches with attendance of 0-49 (26%)

## **“My church should do something special to commemorate our country’s 250th birthday July Fourth 2026.”**

- Pastors 55-64 (56%) and 65+ (62%) age are more likely to Agree than pastors age 18-44 (38%) and 45-54 (41%)
- Pastors of Other Ethnicities (56%) are more likely to Agree than African American pastors (40%)
- Pastors with no college degree (63%) or a Bachelor’s Degree (56%) are more likely to Agree than those with a Master’s Degree (41%)
- Mainline pastors are more likely to Disagree than Evangelical pastors (48% v. 41%)
- Baptists (55%), Methodists (56%), and Pentecostals (65%) are more likely to Agree than Lutherans (39%) and Presbyterian/Reformed (31%)
- Pastors at churches with attendance 250+ (52%) are more likely to Disagree than those at churches with attendance of 0-49 (41%)
- Pastors at churches in a suburban area (61%) are more likely to Agree than those at churches in an urban area (46%)

# “Which of the following describe how your church changes its worship service the week of July 4th?”

## We recognize living veterans

- Pastors age 65+ are the most likely to select (74%)
- Female pastors are more likely to select than males (67% v. 60%)
- White pastors are the least likely to select (59%)
- Pastors with no college degree (81%) or a Bachelor’s Degree (75%) are more likely to select than those with a Master’s Degree (50%) or a Doctoral Degree (60%)
- Evangelical pastors are more likely to select than Mainline pastors (68% v. 58%)
- Pastors in the South (68%) are more likely to select than those in the Northeast (56%) and Midwest (57%)
- Pentecostals are the most likely to select (93%)

## **“Which of the following describe how your church changes its worship service the week of July 4th?”**

### **We recognize those with family currently serving in the armed forces**

- Pastors age 65+ are the most likely to select (70%)
- African American pastors are the most likely to select (81%)
- Pastors with no college degree are the most likely to select (78%)
- Pastors with a Master's Degree are the least likely to select (47%)
- Evangelical pastors are more likely to select than Mainline pastors (63% v. 57%)
- Pastors in the South (64%) are more likely to select than those in the Midwest (54%)
- Pentecostals are the most likely to select (84%)

# **“Which of the following describe how your church changes its worship service the week of July 4th?”**

## **We recognize families who have lost loved ones in service to our country**

- Pastors age 65+ (59%) are more likely to select than pastors age 18-44 (48%) and 45-54 (44%)
- Pastors of Other Ethnicities (61%) are more likely to select than white pastors (49%)
- Pastors with no college degree are the most likely to select (70%)
- Pastors in the South (55%) are more likely to select than those in the Midwest (46%)
- Pentecostals are the most likely to select (74%)

## **“Which of the following describe how your church changes its worship service the week of July 4th?”**

### **We include special music honoring America**

- Pastors age 55-64 (66%) and 65+ (70%) are more likely to select than pastors age 18-44 (37%) and 45-54 (44%)
- African American pastors are the least likely to select (28%)
- Pastors with no college degree (63%) are more likely to select than those with a Master’s degree (52%)
- Mainline pastors are more likely to select than Evangelical pastors (65% v. 56%)
- Methodists are the most likely to select (71%)
- Pastors at churches with attendance 0-49 are the most likely to select (65%)
- Pastors at church in an urban area are the least likely to select (51%)

## **“Which of the following describe how your church changes its worship service the week of July 4th?”**

### **We include other special ceremonies to honor America**

- Pastors age 55-64 (34%) and 65+ (32%) are more likely to select than pastors age 18-44 (21%)
- Pastors with a Master’s Degree are the least likely to select (22%)
- Pastors in the South (37%) are more likely to select than those in the Midwest (23%) and West (18%)
- Baptists (40%), Methodists (34%), and Pentecostals (42%) and are more likely to select than Lutherans (12%), Presbyterian/Reformed (20%), and Non-denominational (23%)

**“Which of the following describe how your church changes its worship service the week of July 4th?”**

**We make other changes to the service**

- African American pastors are the least likely to select (3%)
- Pastors in the Midwest (12%) and South (13%) are more likely to select than those in the West (6%)

## **“Which of the following describe how your church changes its worship service the week of July 4th?”**

### **None of these, these services are no different than other weeks**

- Pastors age 18-44 (21%) and 45-54 (24%) are more likely to select than pastors age 55-64 (9%) and 65+ (8%)
- Pastors with a Master’s Degree (21%) are more likely to select than those with no college degree (7%) or a Bachelor’s Degree (10%)
- Pastors in the Northeast (21%) are more likely to select than those in the South (12%)
- Lutherans (18%), Presbyterian/Reformed (19%), and Holiness (20%) are more likely to select than Methodists (9%) and Pentecostals (7%)

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