

Protestant Churchgoer Views On Sermon Length

A SURVEY OF 1,200 AMERICAN PROTESTANT CHURCHGOERS

Lifeway Research

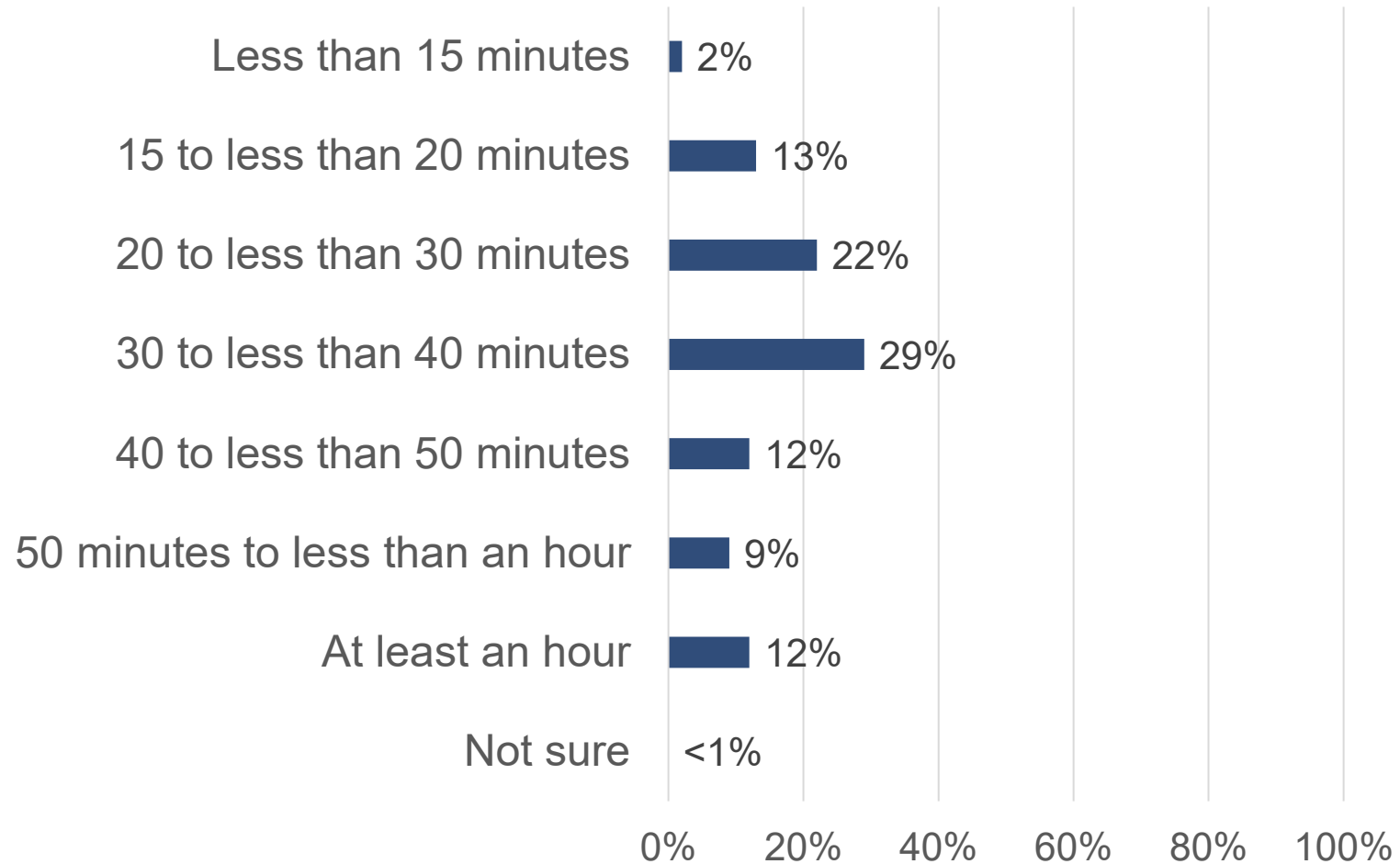
Methodology

- The online survey of 1,200 American Protestant churchgoers was conducted September 2-7, 2025, 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 1,200 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
- Comparisons are made to an online survey of 1,002 churchgoers using the same methodology conducted September 20-27, 2019

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

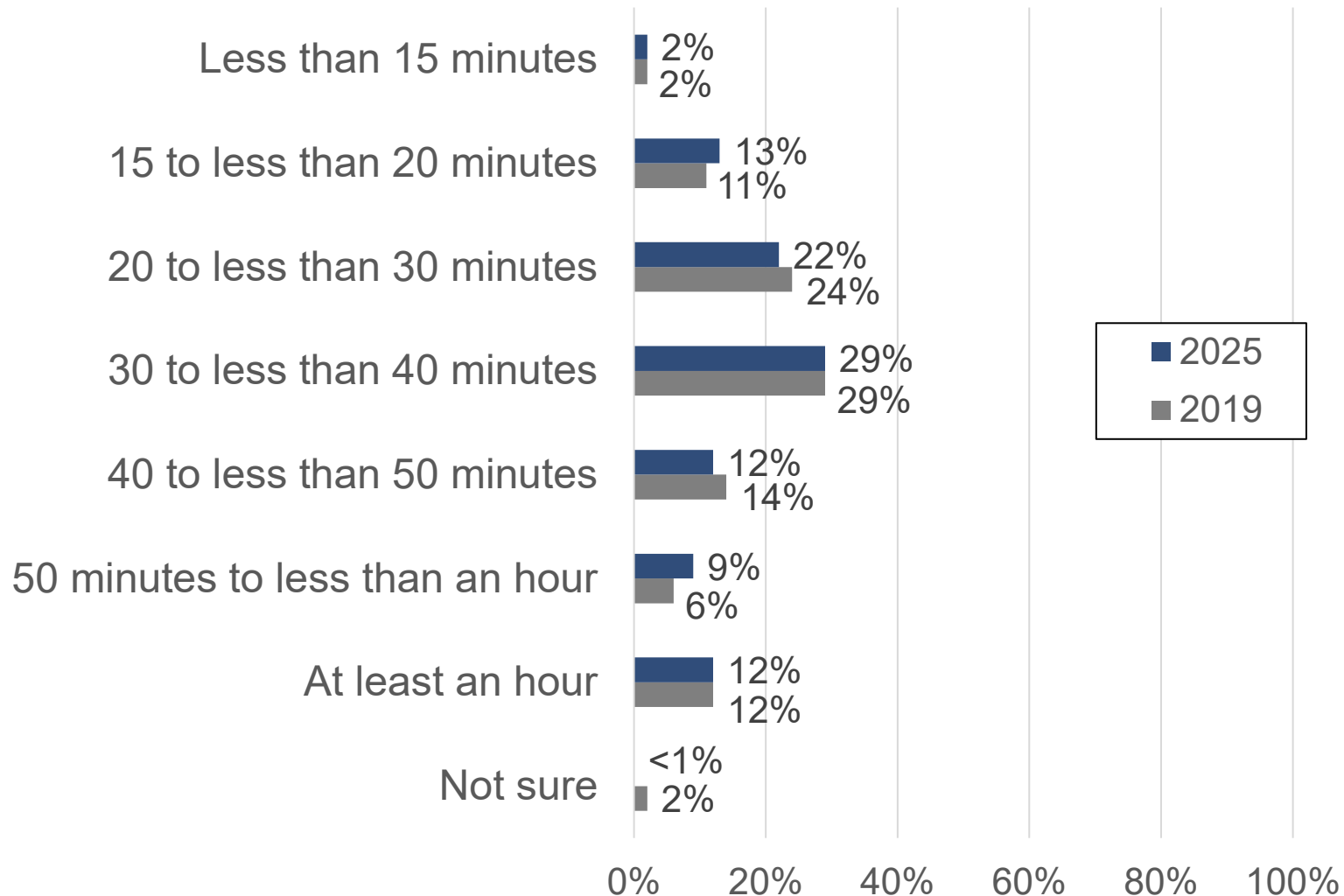
51% say that their pastor typically preaches between 20 minutes to less than 40 minutes



Lifeway Research

Q: "How long does your pastor typically preach?" n=1,200

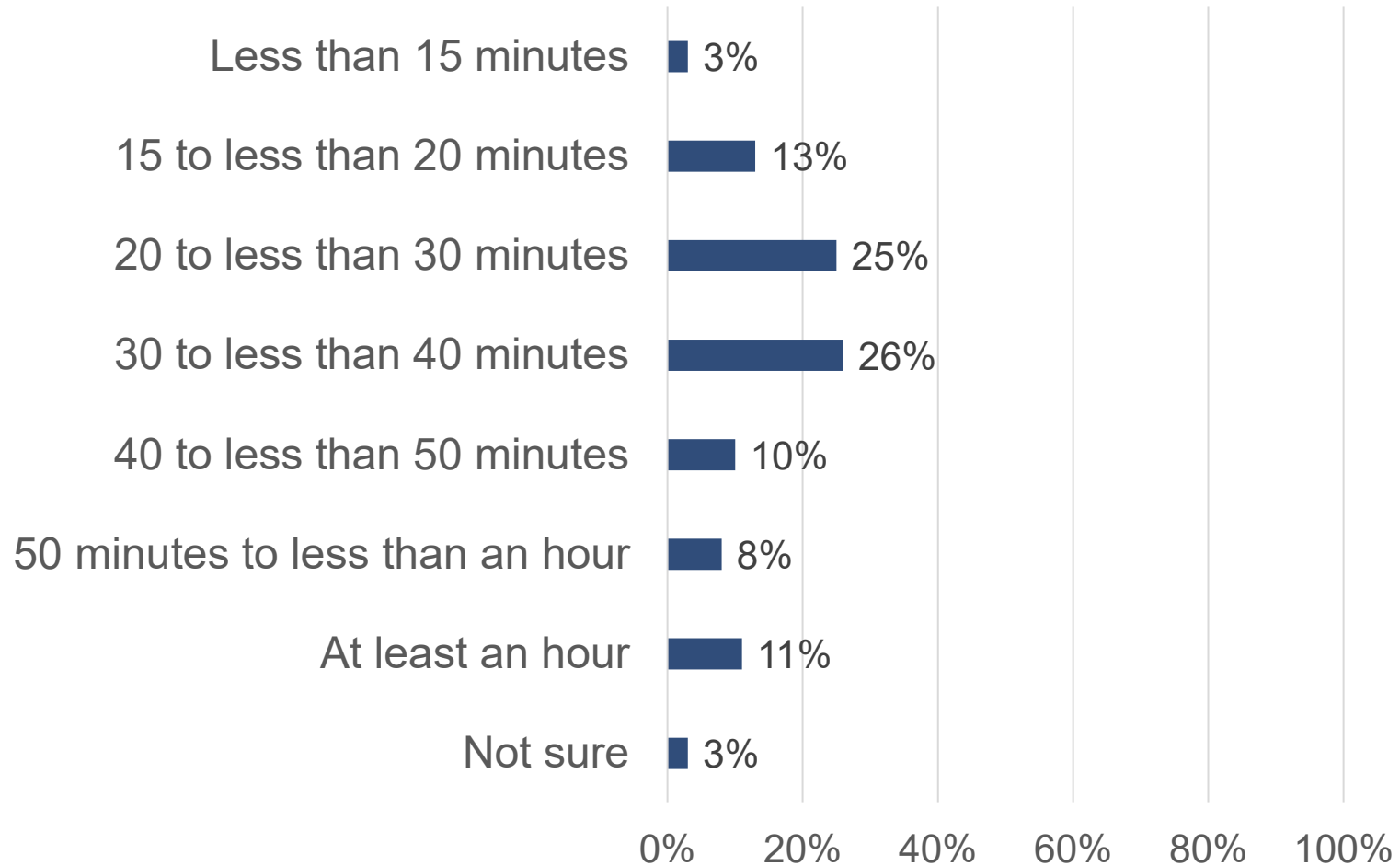
The number that say that their pastor typically preaches between 20 minutes to less than 40 minutes is similar to 2019 (51% v. 53%)



Lifeway Research

Q: "How long does your pastor typically preach?" n=1,200

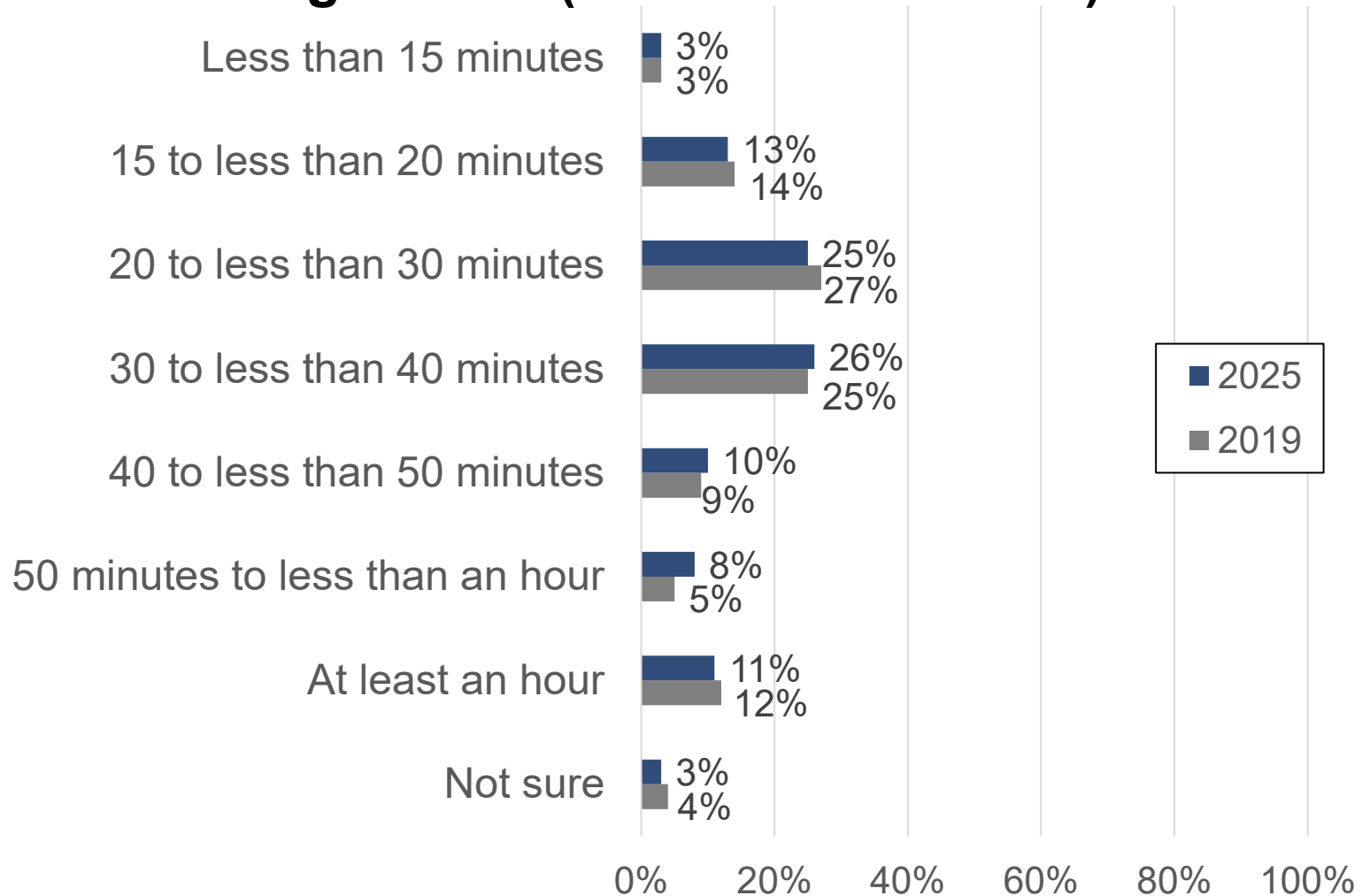
41% say that their preferred sermon length is less than 30 minutes



Lifeway Research

Q: "What is your preferred length for a typical sermon?" n=1,200

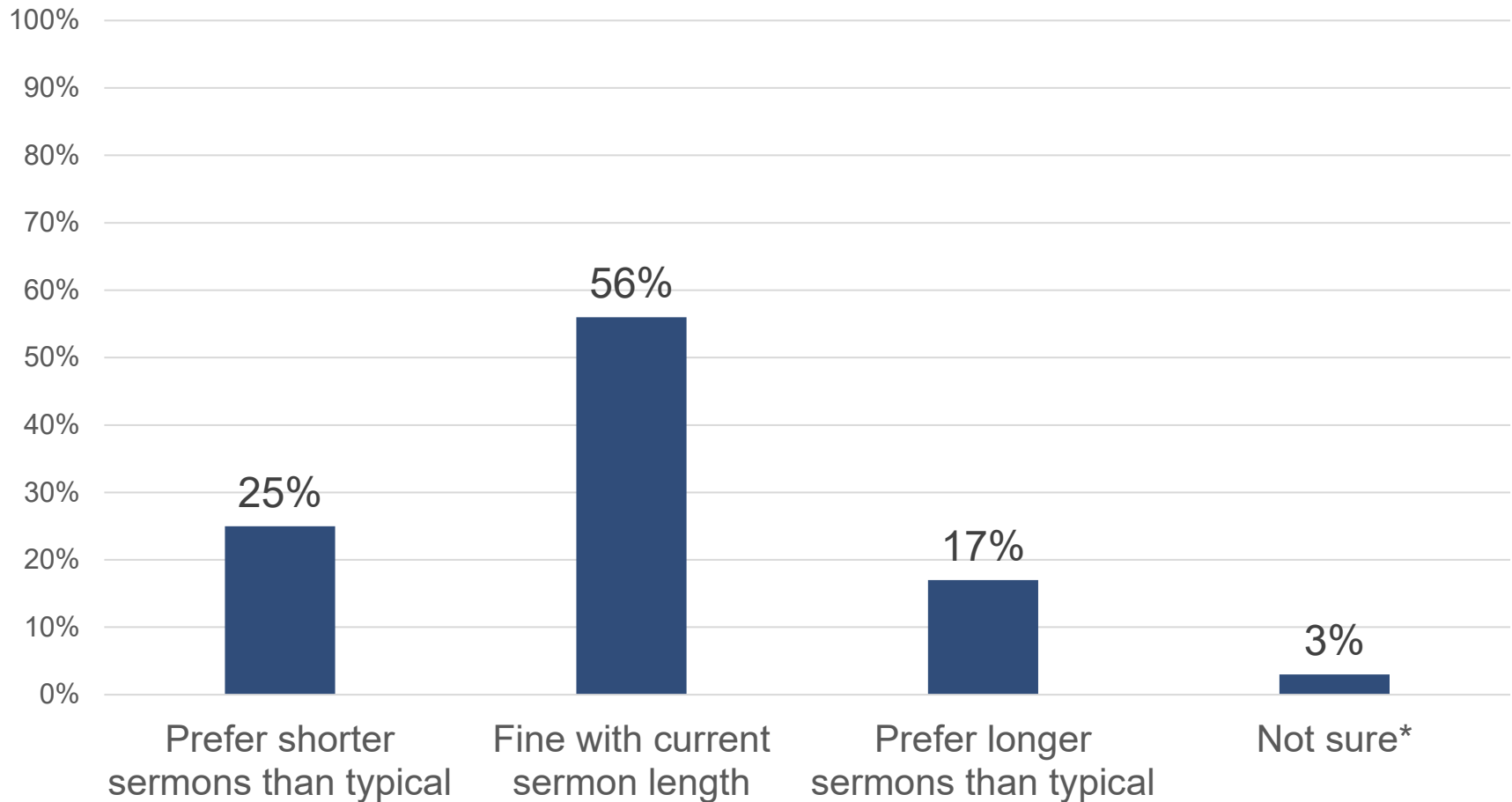
Those that prefer sermons to be less than 30 minutes moved but not enough to be statistically significant (41% v. 45% in 2019)



Lifeway Research

Q: "What is your preferred length for a typical sermon?" n=1,200

25% prefer shorter sermons than their pastor typically preaches, but 17% would prefer the pastor preach longer than they typically do



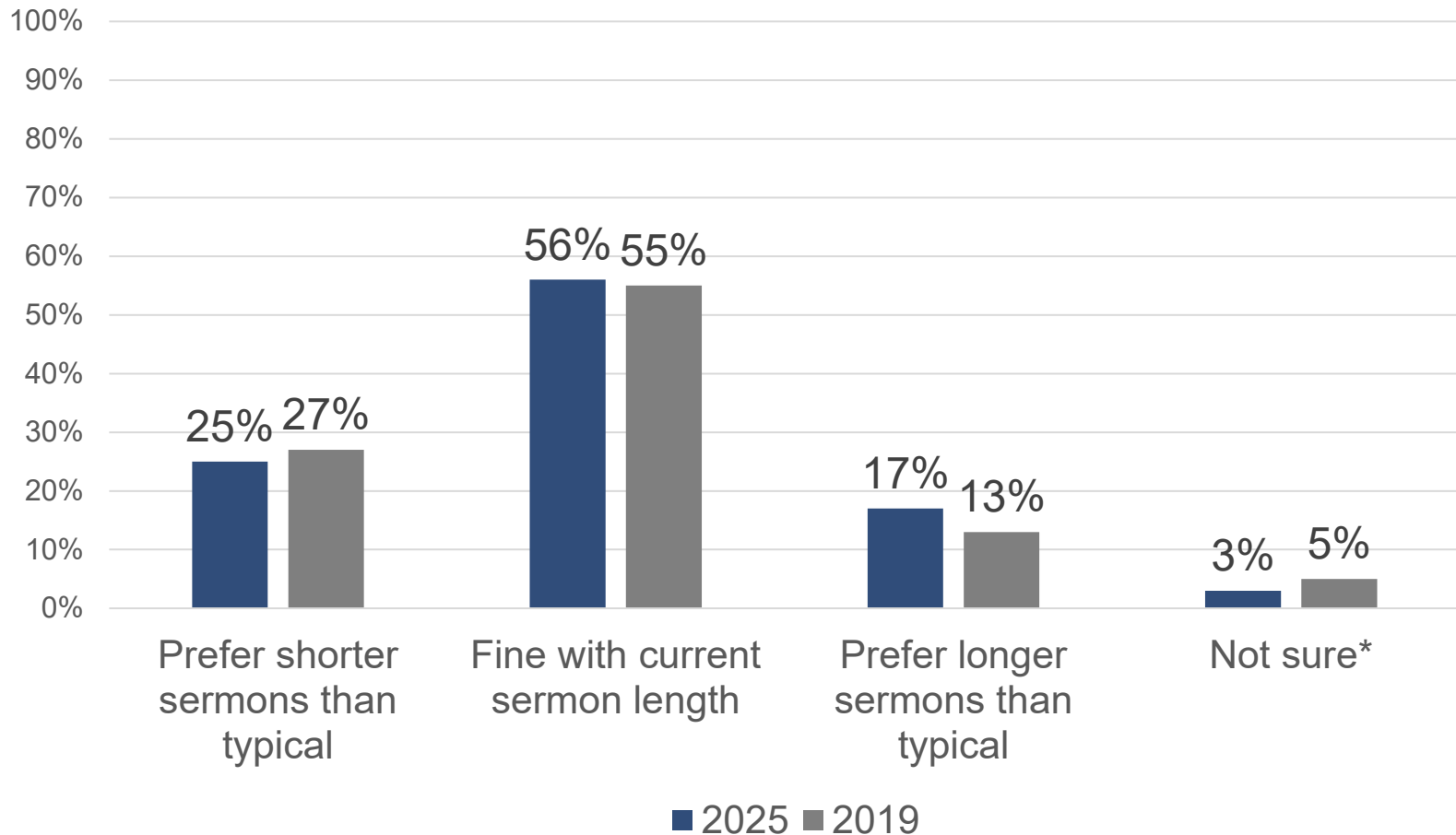
* Includes those who selected "Not sure" for either question

Q41: "How long does your pastor typically preach?" n=1,200

Q42: "What is your preferred length for a typical sermon?" n=1,200

Lifeway Research

The percentage of churchgoers preferring longer sermons than their pastor typically preaches has grown slightly since 2019 (17% v. 13%)



* Includes those who selected "Not sure" for either question

Q41: "How long does your pastor typically preach?" n=1,200

Q42: "What is your preferred length for a typical sermon?" n=1,200

Lifeway Research

Significant Differences

Gender

Age

Ethnicity

Region

Education Level

Denomination

Worship Service Attendance

Evangelical Beliefs

Church Size

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	18-29	White	Northeast	High School graduate or less
Female	30-49	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, evangelical beliefs, and church size.

DENOMINATION	WORSHIP SERVICE ATTENDANCE	EVANGELICAL BELIEFS	CHURCH SIZE
Baptist	1 to 3 times a month	Yes	Less than 50
Methodist	4 or more times a month	No	50-99
Lutheran	Not sure		100-249
Presbyterian/Reformed			250-499
Christian/Church of Christ			500 or more
Non-denominational			

“How long does your pastor typically preach?”

- Females are more likely to select “At least an hour” than males (14% v. 10%)
- Those age 65+ are the most likely to select “15 to less than 20 minutes” (21%)
- Those age 50-64 (25%) and 65+ (28%) are more likely to select “20 to less than 30 minutes” than those 18-29 (12%) and 30-49 (18%)
- Those age 18-29 are the most likely to select “At least an hour” (28%)
- Whites are the most likely to select “15 to less than 20 minutes” (16%)
- Whites (24%) are more likely to select “20 to less than 30 minutes” than Hispanics (14%)
- African Americans (22%) and Hispanics (20%) are more likely to select “At least an hour” than Whites (9%) and Other ethnicities (8%)
- Those in the Northeast (17%) and Midwest (21%) are more likely to select “15 to less than 20 minutes” than those in the South (9%)
- Those in the South (15%) are more likely to select “At least an hour” than those in the Midwest (9%) and West (9%)

“How long does your pastor typically preach?” *continued*

- Those who are High School Graduates or less (19%) or with some college (15%) are more likely to select “At least an hour” than those with a Bachelor’s Degree (5%) or a Graduate Degree (4%)
- Lutherans are the most likely to select “Less than 20 minutes” (47%)
- Methodists (28%), Lutherans (28%), and Presbyterian/Reformed (38%) are more likely to select “20 to less than 30 minutes” than Baptists (18%) and Non-denominational (16%)
- Baptists (34%) and Non-denominational (38%) are more likely to select “30 to less than 40 minutes” than Methodists (23%), Lutherans (12%), and Presbyterian/Reformed (20%)
- Those who attend a worship service 4 or more times a month (14%) are more likely to select “40 to less than 50 minutes” than those who attend 1 to 3 times a month (10%)
- Those with evangelical beliefs are more likely to select “30 to less than 40 minutes” than those without evangelical beliefs (34% v. 24%)
- Those without evangelical beliefs are more likely to select “Less than 20 minutes” than those with evangelical beliefs (20% v. 10%)

“How long does your pastor typically preach?” *continued*

- Those at a church with attendance of 500+ are the least likely to select “Less than 20 minutes” (5%)
- Those at a church with attendance of 250-499 (40%) are more likely to select “30 to less than 40 minutes” than churches of less than 50 (27%), 50-99 (25%), and 100-249 (27%)

“What is your preferred length for a typical sermon?”

- Females are more likely to select “At least an hour” than males (13% v. 9%)
- Those age 65+ are the most likely to select “15 to less than 20 minutes” (19%)
- Those age 18-29 are the most likely to select “At least 50 minutes” (30%)
- Whites are the most likely to select “15 to less than 20 minutes” (16%)
- African Americans (17%) and Hispanics (17%) are more likely to select “At least an hour” than Whites (10%)
- Those in the Midwest (19%) are more likely to select “15 to less than 20 minutes” than those in the South (11%) or West (10%)
- Those in the South (28%) are more likely to select “30 to less than 40 minutes” than those in the Midwest (21%)
- Those with a Graduate Degree are the most likely to select “Less than 20 minutes” (26%)
- Those with a Graduate Degree are the most likely to select “20 to less than 30 minutes” (33%)

“What is your preferred length for a typical sermon?” *continued*

- Those who are High School Graduates or less (17%) or with some college (14%) are more likely to select “At least an hour” than those with a Bachelor’s Degree (5%) or a Graduate Degree (6%)
- Lutherans are the most likely to select “Less than 20 minutes” (49%)
- Presbyterian/Reformed (39%) are more likely to select “20 to less than 30 minutes” than Baptists (21%), Christian/Church of Christ (19%), and Non-denominational (20%)
- Baptists (31%) and Non-denominational (31%) are more likely to select “30 to less than 40 minutes” than Lutherans (12%)
- Those who attend a worship service 1 to 3 times a month (15%) are more likely to select “15 to less than 20 minutes” than those who attend 4 or more times a month (11%)
- Those with evangelical beliefs are more likely to select “30 to less than 40 minutes” than those without evangelical beliefs (29% v. 23%)
- Those without evangelical beliefs are more likely to select “Less than 20 minutes” than those with evangelical beliefs (25% v. 9%)
- Those at a church with attendance of 250-499 (35%) are more likely to select “30 to less than 40 minutes” than churches of less than 50 (23%) and 50-99 (21%)

Compare typical to preferred sermon length

- Those age 18-29 are the most likely to Prefer shorter sermons than their pastor typically preaches (42%)
- Those age 65+ are the most likely to be Fine with current sermon length (68%)
- African Americans (34%) and Hispanics (30%) are more likely to Prefer shorter sermons than their pastor typically preaches than Whites (22%)
- Those who are High School Graduates or less (19%) are more likely to Prefer longer sermons than their pastor typically preaches than those with a Graduate Degree (12%)
- Baptists (19%) and Christian/Churches of Christ (20%) are more likely to Prefer longer sermons than their pastor typically preaches than Presbyterian/Reformed (7%)
- Those who attend a worship service 1 to 3 times a month (28%) are more likely to Prefer shorter sermons than their pastor typically preaches than those who attend 4 or more times a month (22%)

Compare typical to preferred sermon length *continued*

- Those without evangelical beliefs are more likely to Prefer shorter sermons than their pastor typically preaches than those with evangelical beliefs (30% v. 20)
- Those at a church with attendance of 500+ (64%) are more likely to be Fine with current sermon length than churches of 100-249 (53%)

Protestant Churchgoer Views On Sermon Length

A SURVEY OF 1,200 AMERICAN PROTESTANT CHURCHGOERS

Lifeway Research