

# Churchgoers and Donations to Charities

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Representative Survey of 1,010  
American Churchgoers

# Methodology

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LifeWay Research conducted the study August 22 – 30, 2017. The survey was conducted using the web-enabled KnowledgePanel®, a probability-based panel designed to be representative of the U.S. population. Initially, participants are chosen scientifically by a random selection of telephone numbers and residential addresses. Persons in selected households are then invited by telephone or by mail to participate in the web-enabled KnowledgePanel®. For those who agree to participate, but do not already have Internet access, GfK provides at no cost a laptop and ISP connection.

# Methodology

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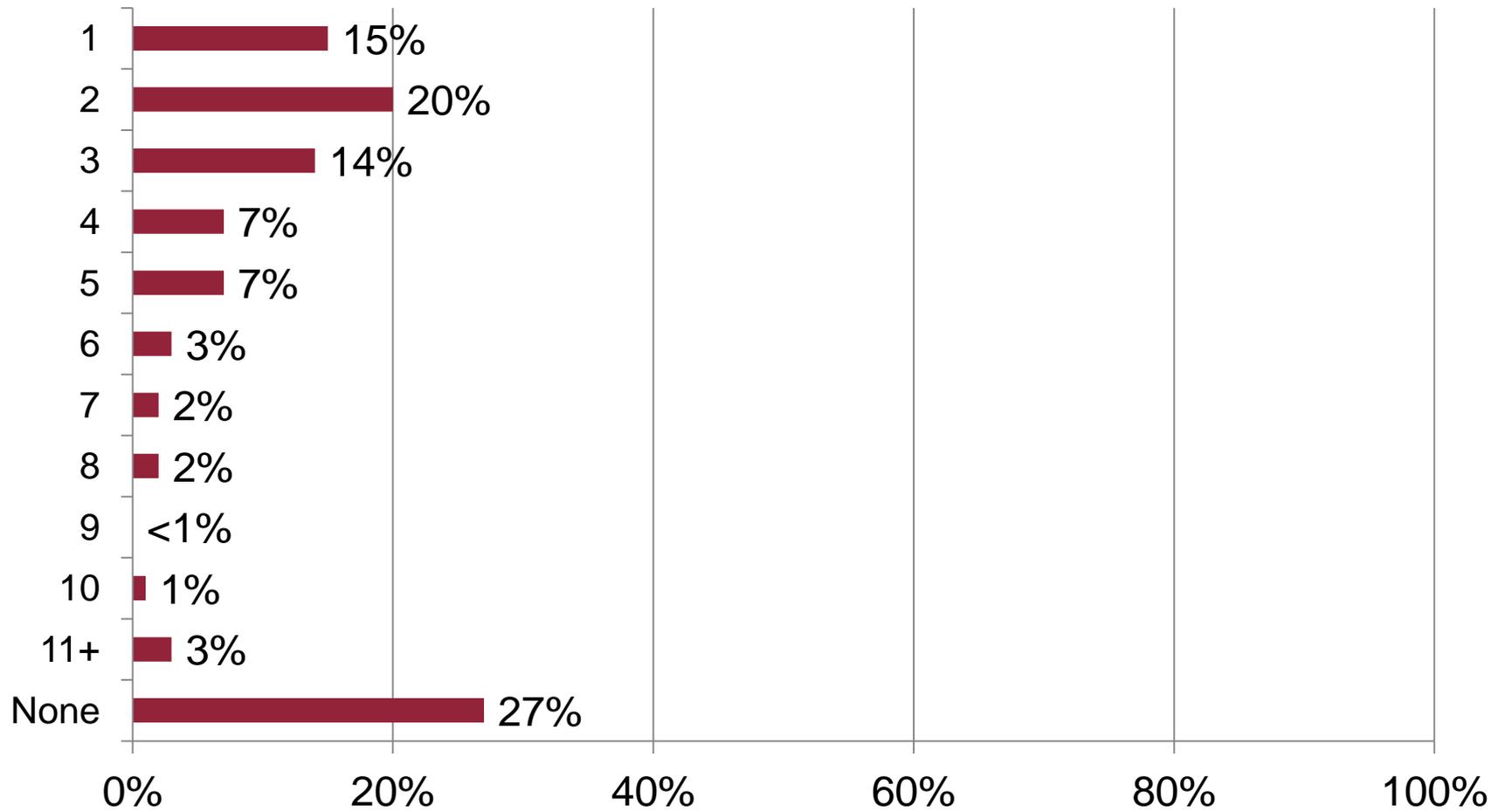
For this survey, a nationally representative sample of U.S. Protestant and non-denominational adults (18 and older) which attends religious services once a month or more often was selected from the KnowledgePanel®.

Sample stratification and base weights were used for gender, age, race/ethnicity, region, metro/non-metro, home ownership, education, and income to reflect the most recent US Census data. Study specific weights included for gender by age, race/ethnicity, region, and education to reflect GSS 2016 data. The completed sample is 1,010 surveys. The sample provides 95 percent confidence that the sampling error does not exceed plus or minus 3.1 percentage points. Margins of error are higher in sub-groups.

# Survey Responses

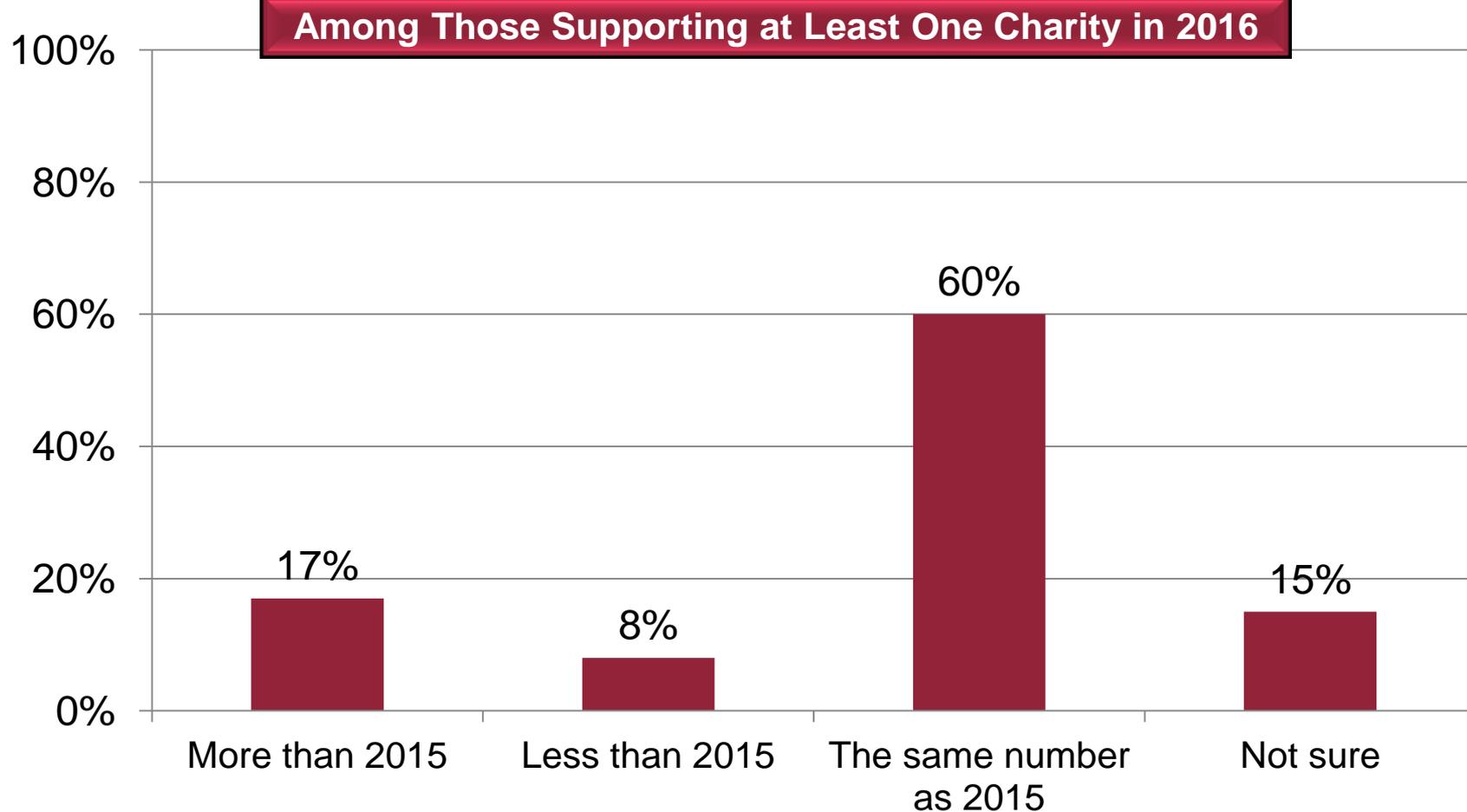
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# Number of charities financially supported



Q20: "Apart from financially supporting your church, how many charities (ministry or non-ministry related) did you financially support in 2016? Please exclude non-monetary donations such as personal property, volunteer time, etc." n=1003

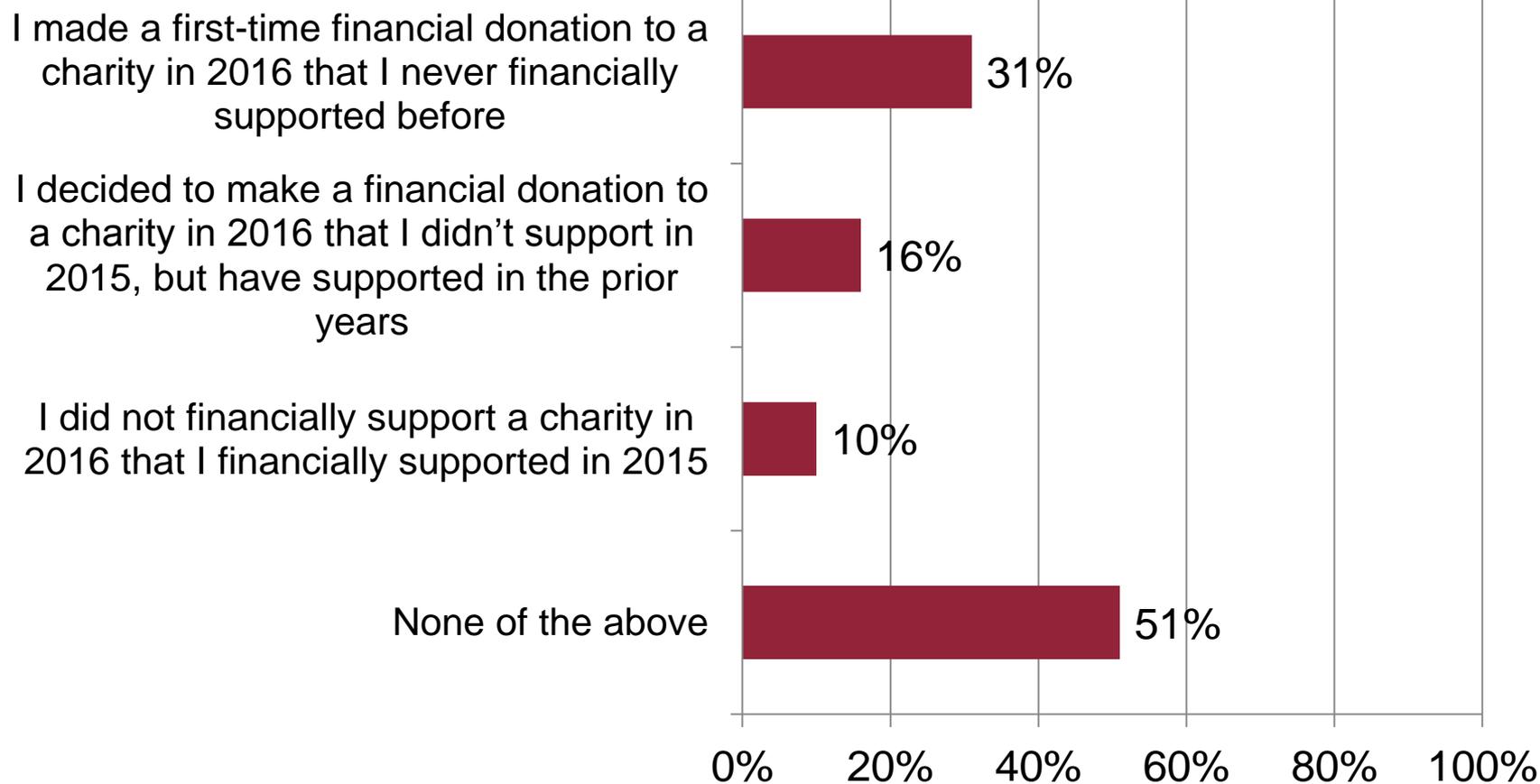
# 60% financially supported the same number of charities for 2016 as they did in 2015



Q21: "Was the number of charities you financially supported in 2016 more or less than the number of charities you financially supported in 2015?" n=731

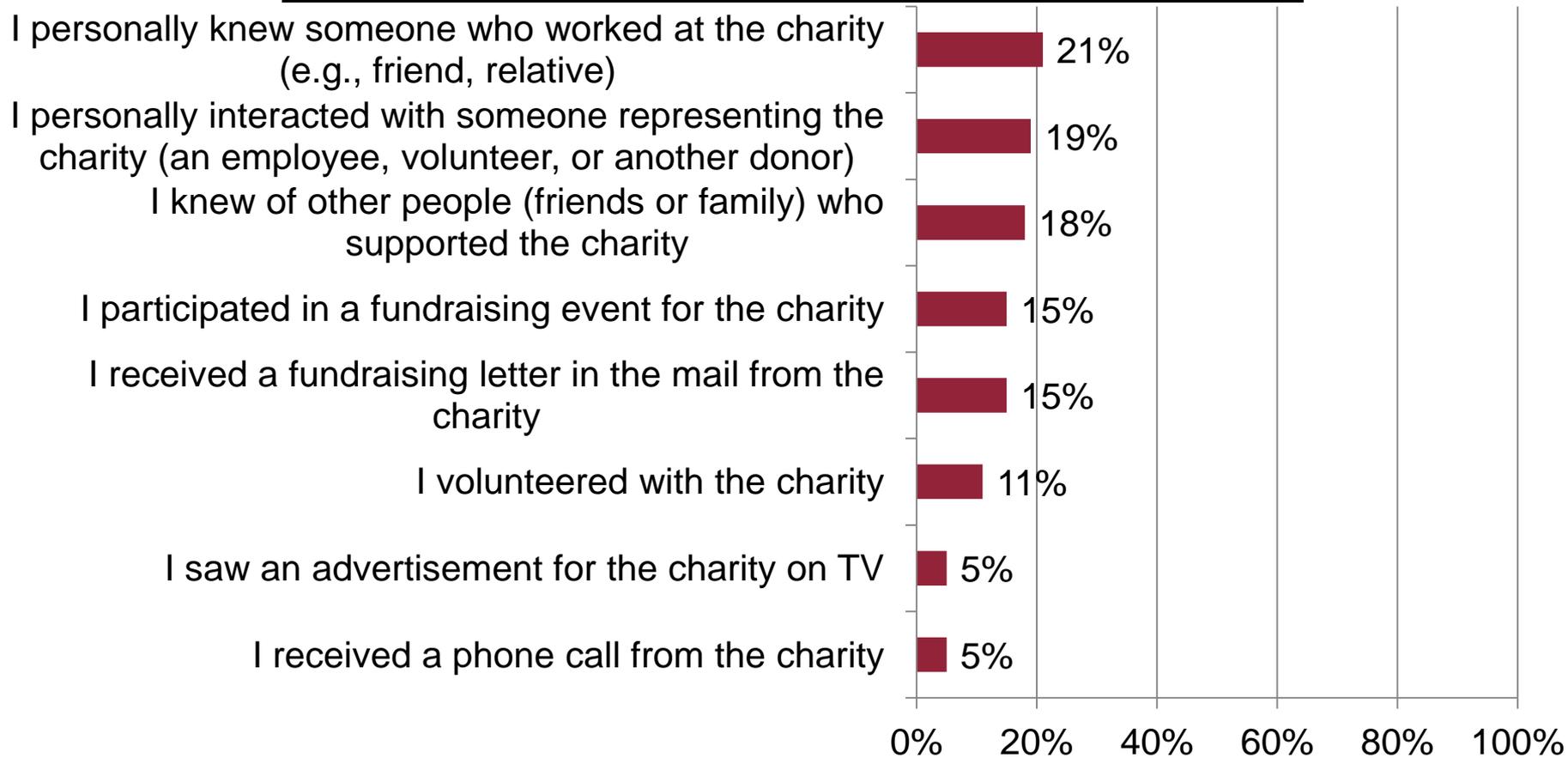
# “And thinking about the specific charities you financially supported in 2016, did you do any of the following?”

Among Those Supporting at Least One Charity in 2016



# “Thinking about the most recent charity you decided to financially support for the first time, which of the following influenced you to make that decision?”

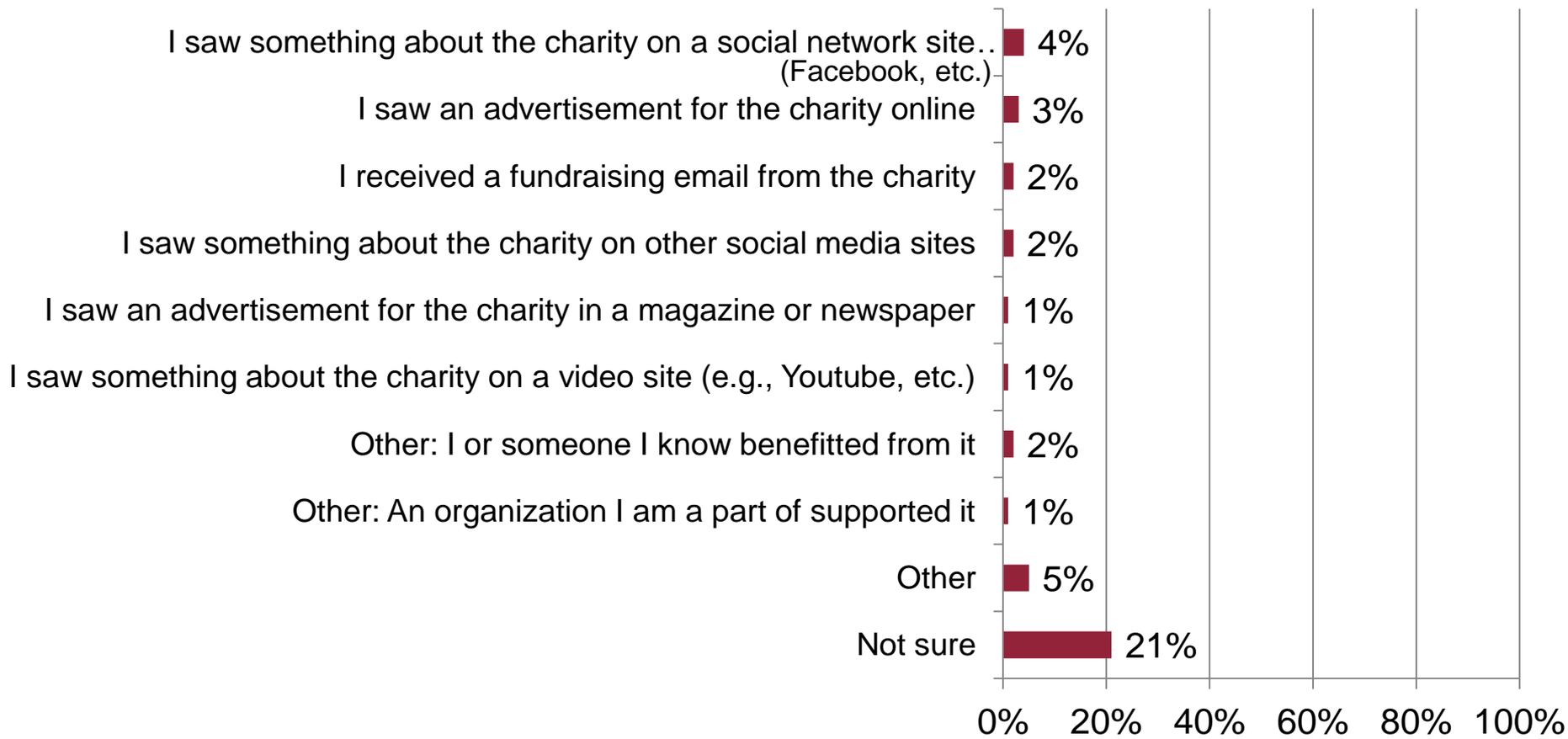
Among Those Supporting at Least One Charity in 2016



Q23: “Thinking about the most recent charity you decided to financially support for the first time, which of the following influenced you to make that decision?” n=723

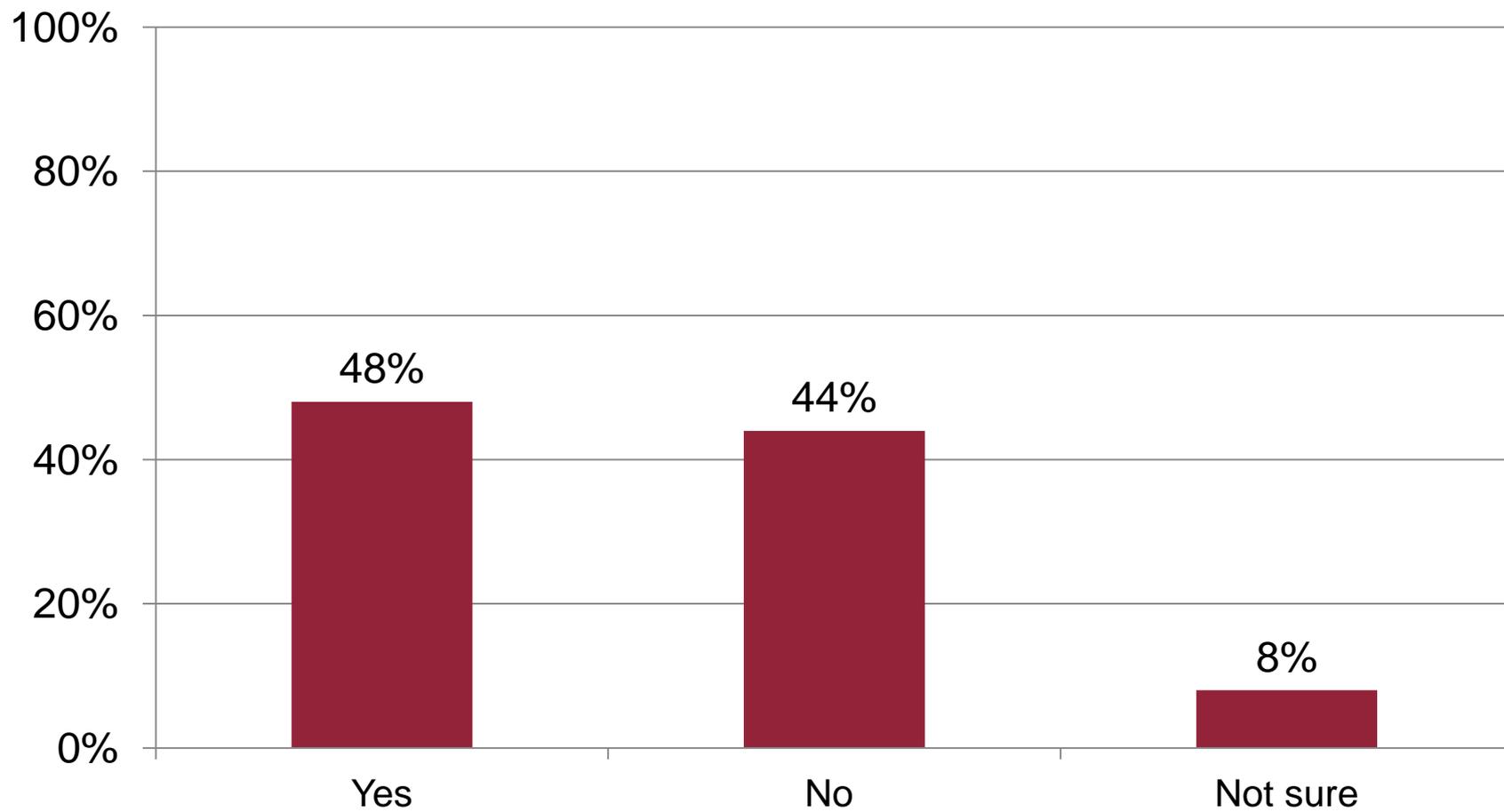
# “Thinking about the most recent charity you decided to financially support for the first time, which of the following influenced you to make that decision?”

Among Those Supporting at Least One Charity in 2016



Q23: “Thinking about the most recent charity you decided to financially support for the first time, which of the following influenced you to make that decision?” n=723

# 48% participated in volunteer work for a charity in 2016



# Significant Differences

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Gender  
Region  
Age  
Ethnicity  
Education Level  
Church Service Attendance  
Evangelical Beliefs  
Church Size (Attendance)  
Denomination

# Significant Statistical Differences

Comparisons were made to determine if there are any significant statistical differences among churchgoers' gender, region, age, ethnicity, and education.

Gender	Region	Age	Ethnicity	Education
Male	Northeast	18-34	White, Non-Hispanic	High School graduate or less
Female	Midwest	35-49	Black, Non-Hispanic	Some college
	South	50-64	Hispanic	Bachelor's Degree
	West	65+	Other Ethnicities	Graduate Degree

Note: Region is defined by US Census locations

# Significant Statistical Differences

Comparisons were made to determine if there are any significant statistical differences among churchgoers' service attendance, Evangelical Beliefs, church size (by attendance), and denomination.

Church Service Attendance	Evangelical Beliefs	Church Size (Attendance)	Denomination
At least once a week	Yes	Less than 50	Baptist
Once or twice a month	No	50-99	Lutheran
		100-249	Methodist
		250-499	Non-denominational
		500-999	Assemblies of God/Pentecostal
		1000 or more	

# Evangelical Beliefs

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- 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

# **“Apart from financially supporting your church, how many charities (ministry or non-ministry related) did you financially support in 2016?”**

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- Those in the South are the least likely regional group to answer “5 or more” (13%)
- Those age 18-34 are the most likely age group to answer “None” (45%) and the least likely age group to answer “5 or more” (8%)
- Black, Non-Hispanics (35%) and Hispanics (42%) are more likely to answer “None” than White, Non-Hispanics (22%)
- White, Non-Hispanics (26%) are more likely to answer “3-4” than Black, Non-Hispanics (13%) and Hispanics (12%)
- Those who are high school graduates or less (31%) or with some college (30%) are more likely to answer “None” than those with a Bachelor’s degree (20%) or a graduate degree (13%)
- Those with a graduate degree (32%) are the most likely education level to answer “5 or more”, followed by those with a bachelor’s degree (21%)
- Those with Evangelical Beliefs are more likely to answer “1-2” than those without Evangelical Beliefs (40% v. 30%) and less likely to answer “5 or more” (15% v. 20%)

# **“Apart from financially supporting your church, how many charities (ministry or non-ministry related) did you financially support in 2016?”**

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- Those attending a church with attendance of less than 50 are the most likely church size to answer “None” (41%), while those attending a church of 250-499 are the least likely church size to answer “None” (14%)
- Baptists (29%), Non-denominational (30%), and Assemblies of God/Pentecostals (38%) are more likely to answer “None” than Lutherans (14%)
- Lutherans (29%) are more likely to answer “5 or more” than Baptists (13%), Non-denominational (12%), and Assemblies of God/Pentecostals (10%)

# “Was the number of charities you financially supported in 2016 more or less than the number of charities you financially supported in 2015?”

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- Those age 18-34 are the most likely age group to answer “More than 2015” (33%) and the least likely age group to answer “The same number as 2015” (43%)
- Those with a graduate degree (25%) are more likely to answer “More than 2015” than those who are high school graduates or less (14%)
- Those attending church services at least once a week are less likely to answer “Less than 2015” than attending once or twice a month (7% v. 13%)
- Those attending a church with attendance of 1000 or more (25%) are more likely to answer “More than 2015” than those attending a church with attendance of less than 50 (12%) and 100-249 (15%)
- Those attending a church with attendance of 50-99 (14%) are more likely to answer “Less than 2015” than those attending a church with attendance of less 50 (5%), 100-249 (7%), and 1000 or more (5%)

# **“Was the number of charities you financially supported in 2016 more or less than the number of charities you financially supported in 2015?”**

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- Assemblies of God/Pentecostals (24%) are more to answer “More than 2015” than Baptists (13%) and Methodists (10%)
- Baptists (9%) and Non-denominational (11%) are more likely to answer “Less than 2015” than Assemblies of God/Pentecostals (1%)
- Lutherans (71%) and Assemblies of God/Pentecostals (66%) are more likely to answer than “The same number as 2015” than Non-denominational (50%)

# “And thinking about the specific charities you financially supported in 2016, did you do any of the following?”

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## **I made a first-time financial donation to a charity in 2016 that I never financially supported before**

- Those in the Northeast (42%) and Midwest (35%) are more likely to select than those in the South (26%)
- Those age 18-34 (40%) are more likely to select than those 50-64 (28%) and 65+ (28%)
- Hispanics are the most likely ethnic group to select (46%)
- Those with a graduate degree (47%) are more likely to select than those who are high school graduates or less (26%) or with some college (26%)
- Those attending a church with attendance of 250-499 (38%) are more likely to select than those attending a church with attendance of 100-249 (27%)

# “And thinking about the specific charities you financially supported in 2016, did you do any of the following?”

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## I decided to make a financial donation to a charity in 2016 that I didn't support in 2015, but have supported in prior years

- Those in the Northeast (24%) are more likely to select than those in the Midwest (12%)
- Those age 65+ (22%) are more likely to select than those 18-34 (8%) and 50-64 (14%)
- Black, Non-Hispanics (25%) are more likely to select than White, Non-Hispanics (12%)
- Those attending a church with attendance of 50-99 (20%), 250-499 (20%), and 1000 or more (19%) are more likely to select than those attending a church with attendance of 100-249 (10%)
- Methodists (22%) and Assemblies of God/Pentecostals (25%) are more likely to select than Non-denominational (7%)

# “And thinking about the specific charities you financially supported in 2016, did you do any of the following?”

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## **I did not financially support a charity in 2016 that I financially supported in 2015**

- Those in the Northeast (16%) are more likely to select than those in the West (6%)
- Those with a graduate degree (15%) are more likely to select than those who are high school graduates or less (8%)

# “Thinking about the most recent charity you decided to financially support for the first time, which of the following influenced you to make that decision?”

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## I personally knew someone who worked at the charity (e.g., friend, relative)

- Those in the Midwest (28%) are more likely to select than those in the Northeast (12%) and South (20%)
- Those age 18-34 (30%) are more likely to select than those 65+ (16%)
- White, Non-Hispanics (25%) are more likely to select than Black, Non-Hispanics (14%)
- Those with a Bachelor’s degree (27%) or a graduate degree (33%) are more likely to select than those who are high school graduates or less (16%)
- Those attending a church with attendance of 250-499 (33%) are more likely to select than those attending a church with attendance of less than 50 (14%), 50-99 (17%), and 100-249 (18%)
- Non-denominational (32%) are more likely to select than Baptists (19%) and Assemblies of God/Pentecostals (18%)

# “Thinking about the most recent charity you decided to financially support for the first time, which of the following influenced you to make that decision?”

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## I knew of other people (friends or family) who supported the charity

- White, Non-Hispanics (20%) are more likely to select than Hispanics (8%)
- Those who are high school graduates or less are the least likely education level to select (12%)
- Those with Evangelical Beliefs are less likely to select than those without Evangelical Beliefs (15% v. 22%)
- Those attending a church with attendance of 250-499 (29%) and 500-999 (25%) are more likely to select than those attending a church with attendance of less than 50 (11%) and 1000 or more (9%)

# “Thinking about the most recent charity you decided to financially support for the first time, which of the following influenced you to make that decision?”

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**I personally interacted with someone representing the charity (an employee, volunteer, or another donor)**

- Hispanics (33%) are more likely to select than White, Non-Hispanics (19%) and Black, Non-Hispanics (15%)
- Those a Bachelor's degree (25%) are more likely to select than those some college (16%)

# “Thinking about the most recent charity you decided to financially support for the first time, which of the following influenced you to make that decision?”

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## **I participated in a fundraising event for the charity**

- Those in the Northeast (22%) are more likely to select than those in the West (10%)
- Those age 18-34 (18%) are more likely to select than those 65+ (10%)
- Black, Non-Hispanics (22%) are more likely to select than White, Non-Hispanics (13%) and Hispanics (6%)
- Those with some college (18%) or a graduate degree (19%) are more likely to select than those who are high school graduates or less (11%)
- Those attending church services at least once a week are less likely to select than attending once or twice a month (14% v. 22%)
- Those with Evangelical Beliefs are less likely to select than those without Evangelical Beliefs (11% v. 19%)
- Lutherans (17%), Methodists (17%), and Non-denominational (17%) are more likely to select than Assemblies of God/Pentecostals (5%)

# “Thinking about the most recent charity you decided to financially support for the first time, which of the following influenced you to make that decision?”

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## **I volunteered with the charity**

- Males (14%) are more likely to select than females (8%)
- Those in the Northeast (20%) are more likely to select than those in the South (9%) and West (6%)
- Those with a graduate degree (15%) are more likely to select than those who are high school graduates or less (7%)

## **I saw an advertisement for the charity on TV**

- Those in the Northeast (12%) are more likely to select than those in the Midwest (3%) and West (3%)

# “Thinking about the most recent charity you decided to financially support for the first time, which of the following influenced you to make that decision?”

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## **I saw an advertisement for the charity online**

- Those in the Midwest are the least likely regional group to select (<1%)
- Those age 35-49 (6%) are more likely to select than those 50-64 (2%) and 65+ (2%)
- Black, Non-Hispanics (5%) and Hispanics (8%) are more likely to select than White, Non-Hispanics (2%)

## **I saw an advertisement for the charity in a magazine or newspaper**

- No significant differences

# “Thinking about the most recent charity you decided to financially support for the first time, which of the following influenced you to make that decision?”

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## I received a fundraising letter in the mail from the charity

- Those in the Northeast (24%) are more likely to select than those in the South (14%)
- Those age 65+ are the most likely age group to select (27%)
- White, Non-Hispanics (15%) and Black, Non-Hispanics (21%) are more likely to select than Hispanics (5%)
- Those attending a church with attendance of 50-99 (20%) are more likely to select than those attending a church with attendance of 500-999 (8%) and 1000 or more (9%)

# “Thinking about the most recent charity you decided to financially support for the first time, which of the following influenced you to make that decision?”

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## I received a fundraising email from the charity

- Those in the Northeast (11%) and West (4%) are more likely to select than those in the Midwest (<1%) and South (1%)
- Those age 65+ (5%) are more likely to select than those 50-64 (1%)
- Black, Non-Hispanics (4%) are more likely to select than White, Non-Hispanics (2%)
- Those who are high school graduates or less (4%) are more likely to select than those with some college (1%)
- Those with Evangelical Beliefs are less likely to select than those without Evangelical Beliefs (1% v. 4%)
- Those attending a church with attendance of 100-249 (5%) are more likely to select than those attending a church with attendance of 50-99 (1%)

# “Thinking about the most recent charity you decided to financially support for the first time, which of the following influenced you to make that decision?”

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## **I received a phone call from the charity**

- Those in the Northeast (9%) and Midwest (8%) are more likely to select than those in the South (4%) and West (2%)
- Those age 18-34 are the least age group likely to select (<1%)
- Black, Non-Hispanics (11%) are more likely to select than White, Non-Hispanics (3%)
- Baptists (7%) are more likely to select than Assemblies of God/Pentecostals (<1%)

## **I saw something about the charity on a social network site (Facebook, etc.)**

- Those age 65+ are the least likely to select (1%)
- Those with some college (8%) or Bachelor's degree (7%) are more likely to select than those who are high school graduates or less (1%)
- Non-denominational (9%) are more likely to select than Baptists (3%) and Lutherans (1%)

# “Thinking about the most recent charity you decided to financially support for the first time, which of the following influenced you to make that decision?”

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## **I saw something about the charity on a video site (e.g., Youtube, etc.)**

- Assemblies of God/Pentecostals (4%) are more likely to select than Baptists (<1%)

## **I saw something about the charity on other social media sites**

- No significant differences

# “Did you participate in any type of volunteer work for a charity (ministry, church, or non-ministry) in 2016?”

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- Those in the West (54%) are more likely to answer “Yes” than those in the Northeast (40%)
- Those age 35-49 (51%) and 50-64 (52%) are more likely to answer “Yes” than those 18-34 (41%)
- White, Non-Hispanics (51%) are more likely to answer “Yes” than Black, Non-Hispanics (43%)
- Those who are high school graduates or less are the least likely education level to answer “Yes” (38%)
- Those attending church services at least once a week are more likely to answer “Yes” than attending once or twice a month (51% v. 30%)
- Those attending a church with attendance of 500-999 (62%) are more likely to answer “Yes” than those attending a church with attendance of less than 50 (46%), 50-99 (45%), and 100-249 (49%)
- Lutherans (55%), Methodists (63%), and Non-denominational (53%) are more likely to answer “Yes” than Baptists (38%)

# Churchgoers and Donations to Charities

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