

Facts & Trends Future of The Church Study

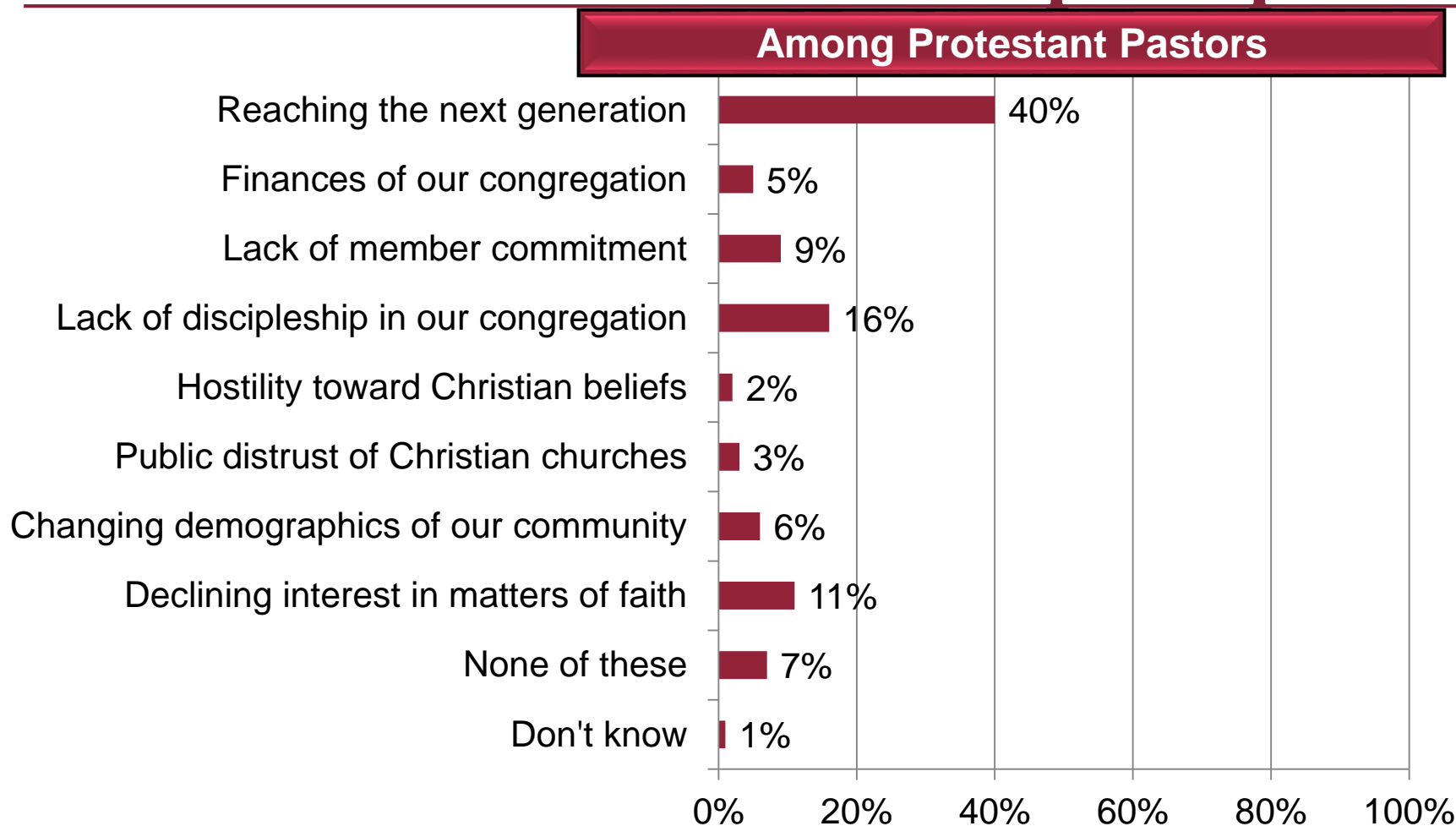
Survey of Protestant Pastors' Views
on the Future of Their Church
July 2018

Methodology

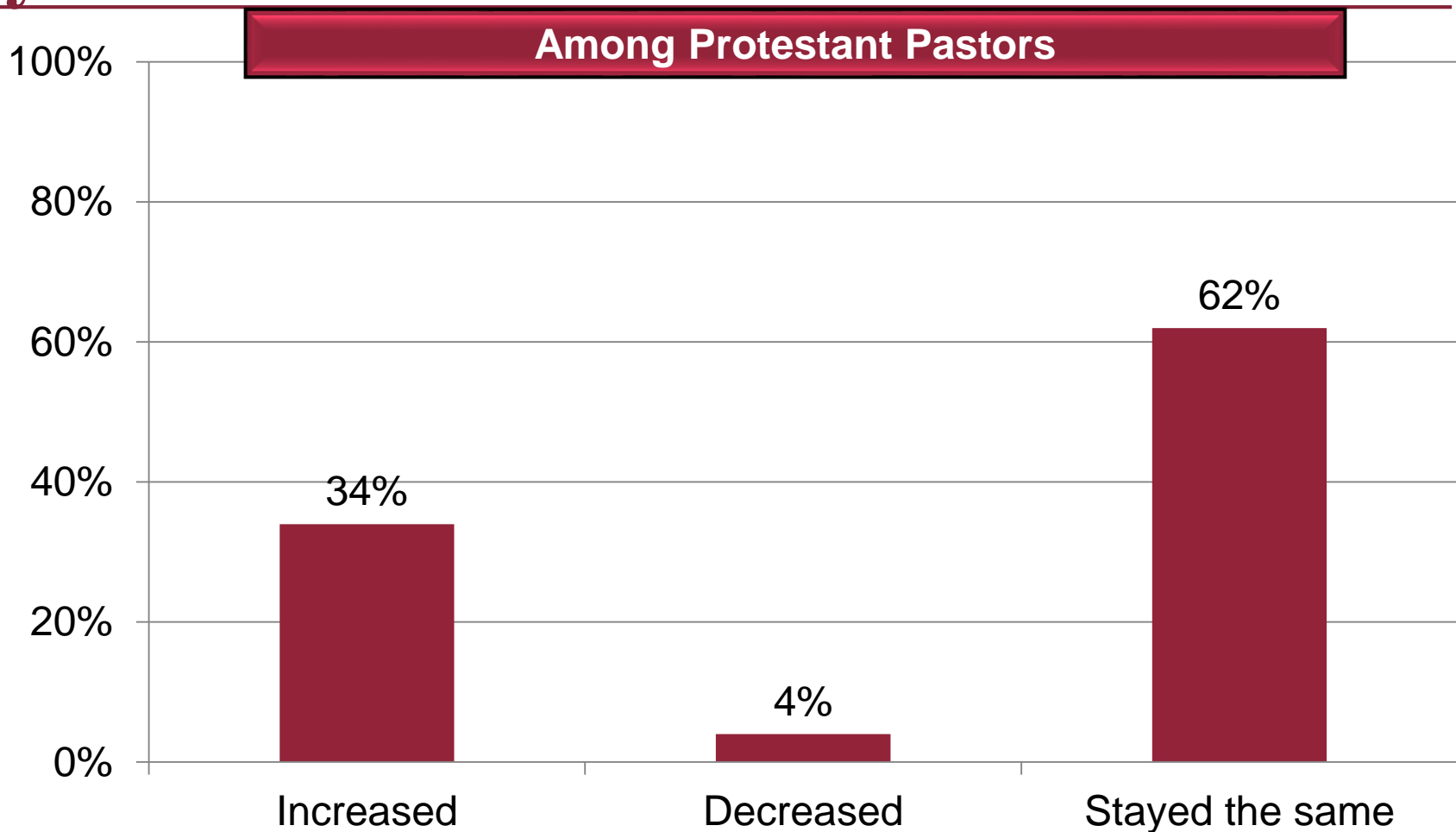
- ❑ The phone survey of 1,000 Protestant pastors was conducted June 19 – July 2, 2018
- ❑ The calling list was a stratified random sample, drawn from a list of all Protestant churches. Quotas were used for church size
- ❑ Each interview was conducted with the senior pastor, minister or priest of the church called
- ❑ Responses were weighted by region to more accurately reflect the population
- ❑ The completed sample is 1,000 surveys
- ❑ The sample provides 95% confidence that the sampling error does not exceed $\pm 3.2\%$
- ❑ Margins of error are higher in sub-groups

Survey Responses

40% are most concerned about reaching the next generation; 16% are most concerned about lack of discipleship

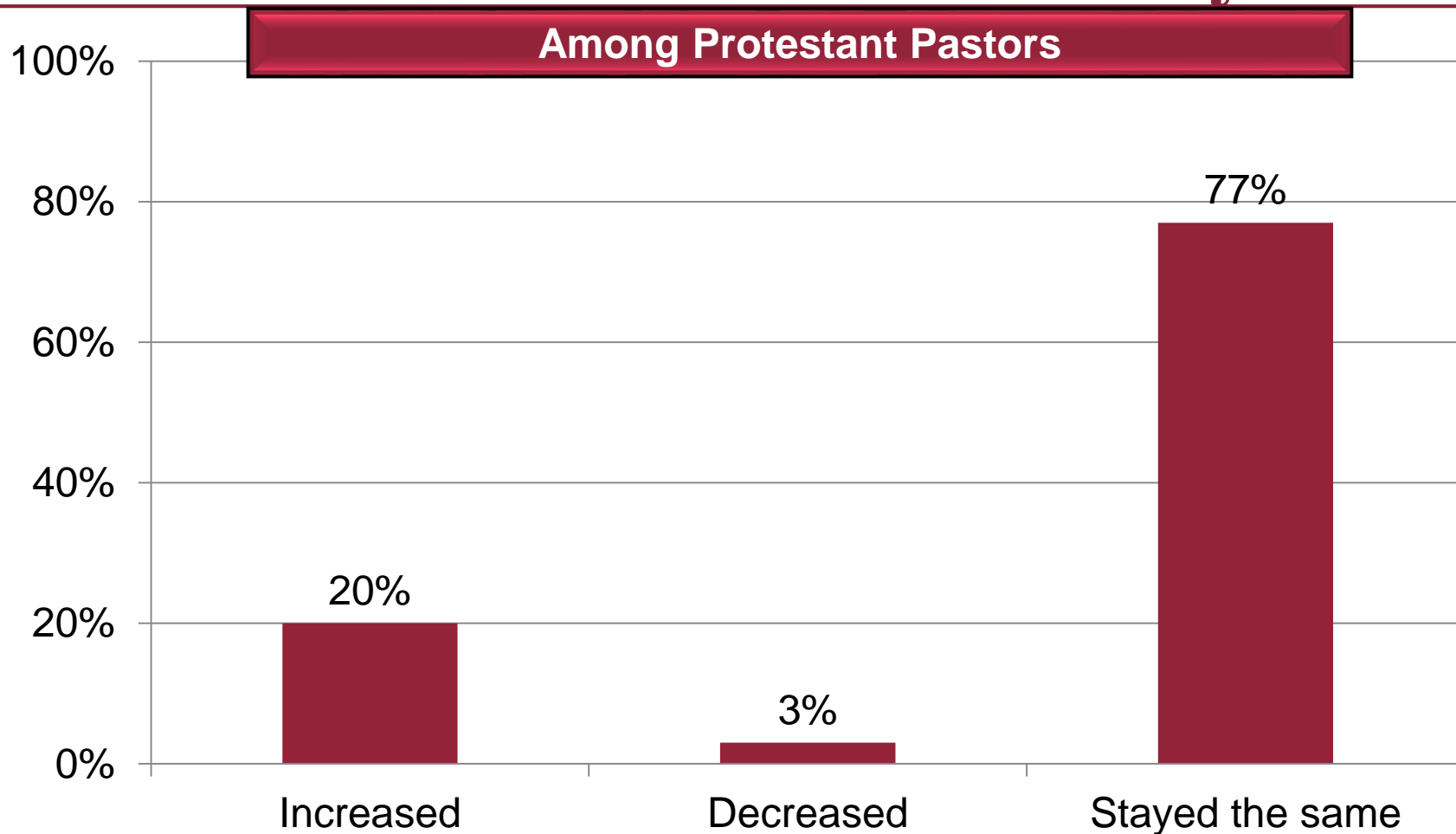


34% say that the ethnic diversity of attendees has increased in the last 5 years



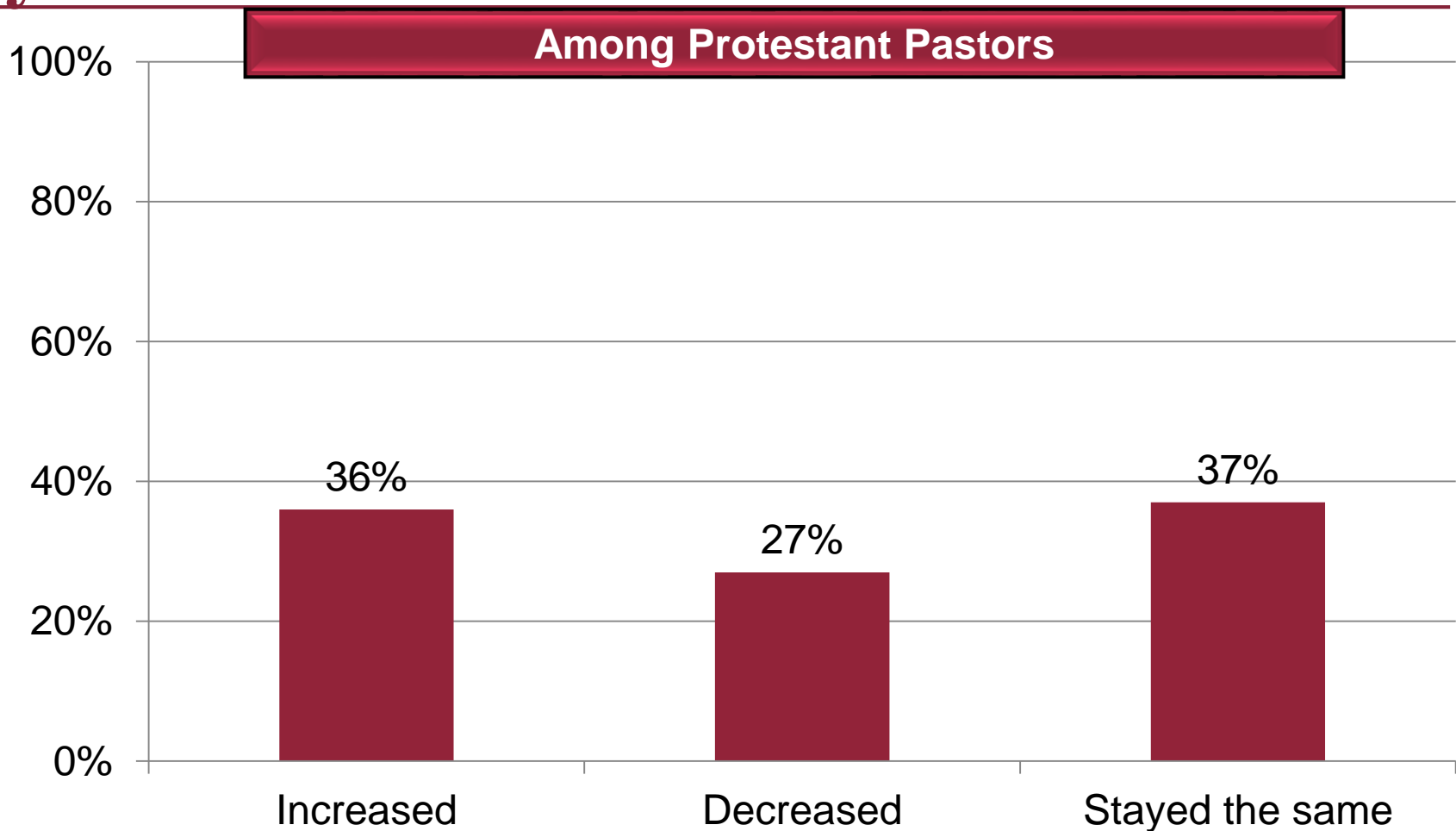
Q3_1: "For each of the following please indicate if it has increased, decreased or stayed the same at your church in the last 5 years? **Ethnic diversity of attendees**" n=990

20% say that the ethnic diversity of leaders has increased in the last 5 years



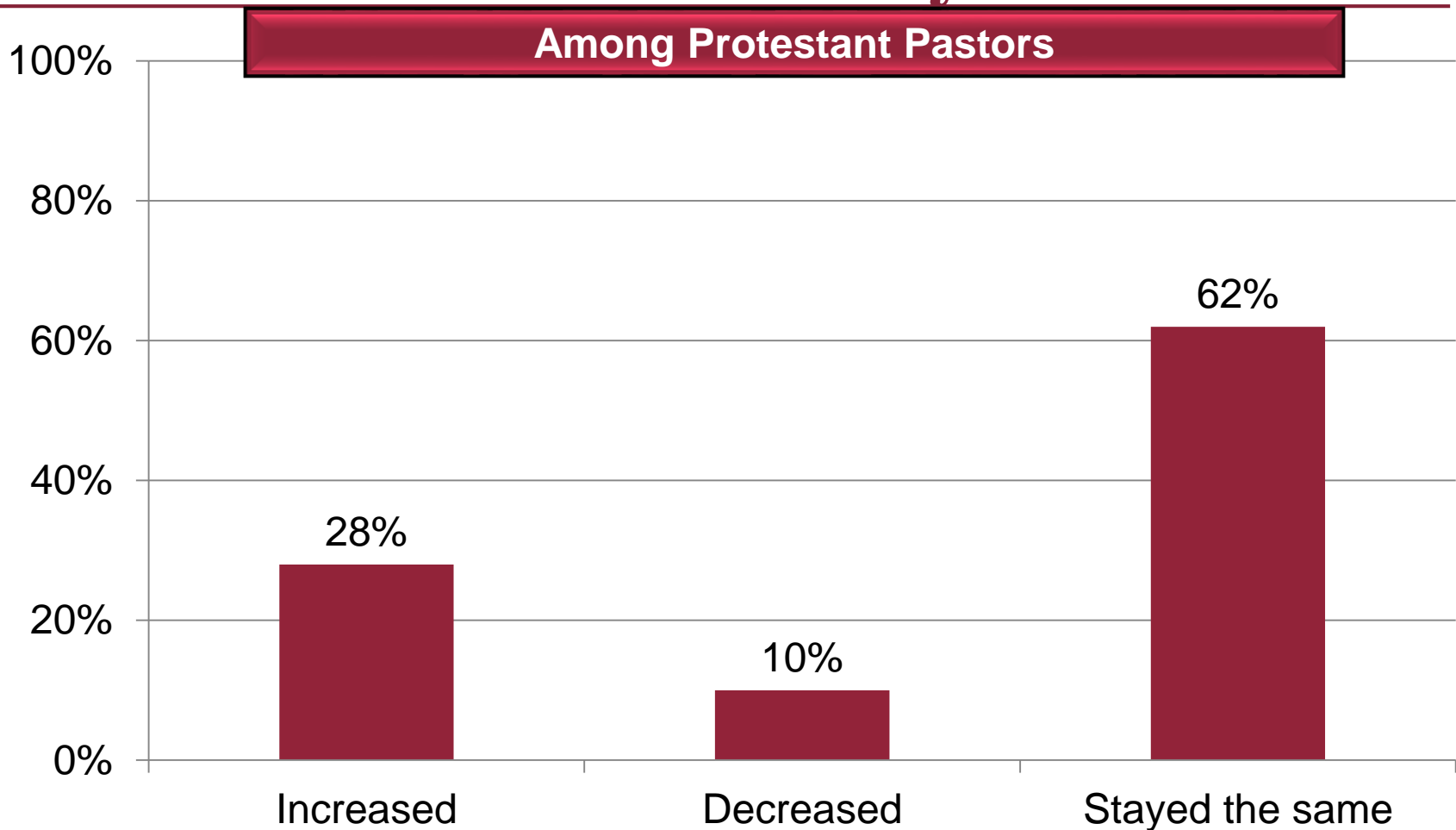
Q3_2: "For each of the following please indicate if it has increased, decreased or stayed the same at your church in the last 5 years? **Ethnic diversity of leaders**" n=989

36% say that weekly worship attendance has increased in the last 5 years



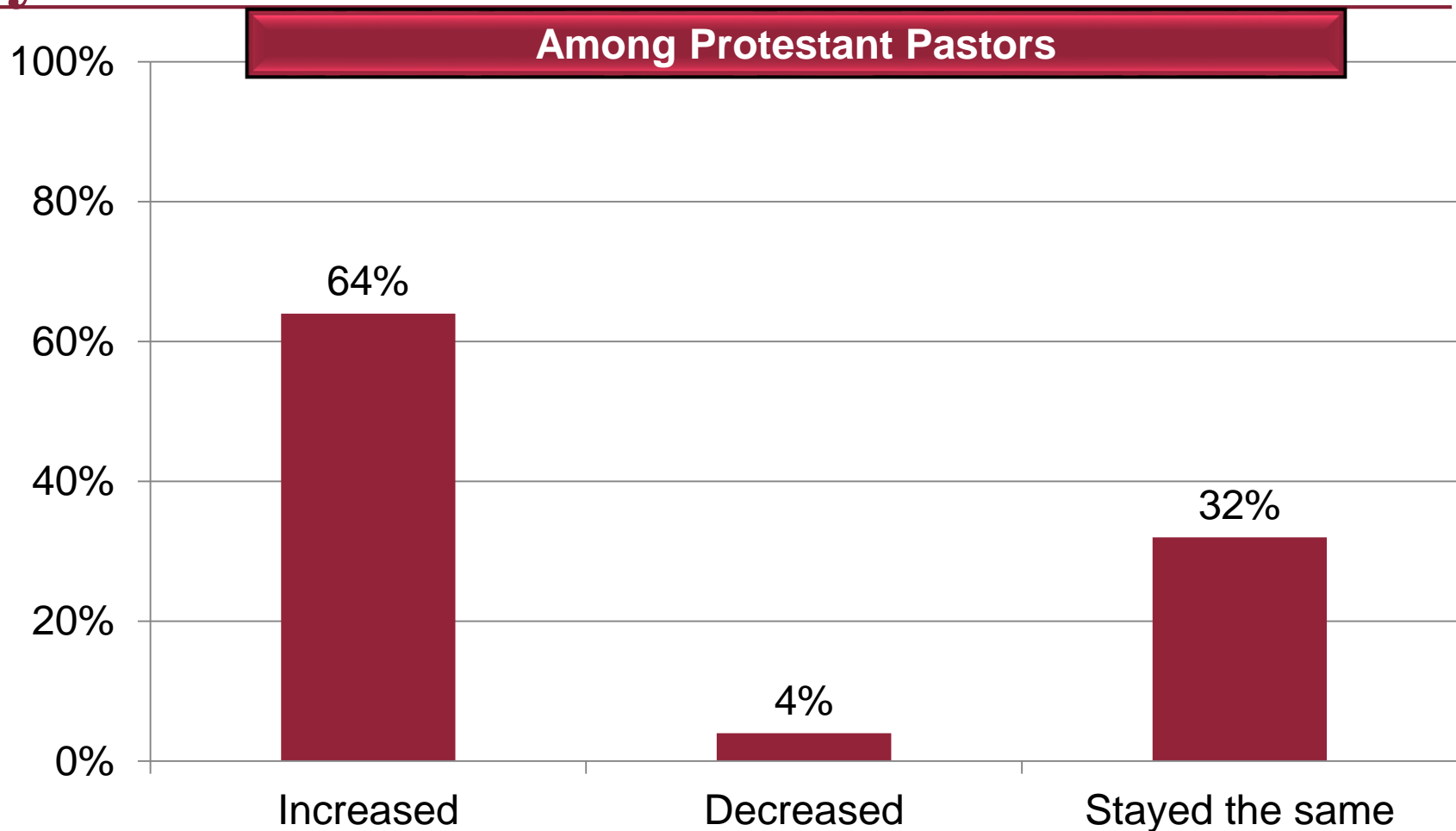
Q3_3: "For each of the following please indicate if it has increased, decreased or stayed the same at your church in the last 5 years? **Weekly worship attendance**" n=985

28% say denominational involvement has increased in the last 5 years



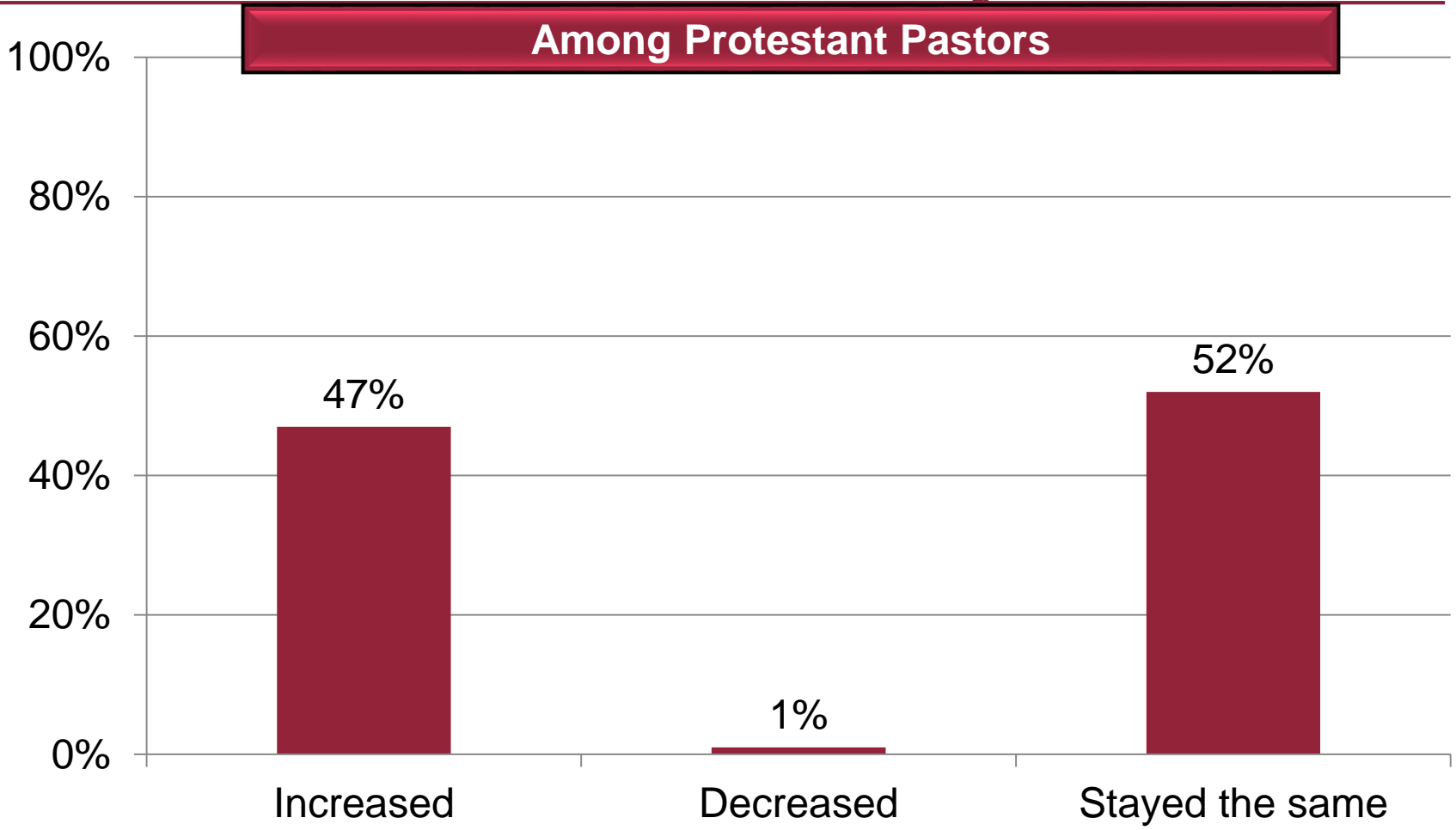
Q3_4: "For each of the following please indicate if it has increased, decreased or stayed the same at your church in the last 5 years? **Denominational involvement**" n=941

64% say that ministry in their community has increased in the last 5 years



Q3_5: "For each of the following please indicate if it has increased, decreased or stayed the same at your church in the last 5 years? **Ministry in our community**" n=993

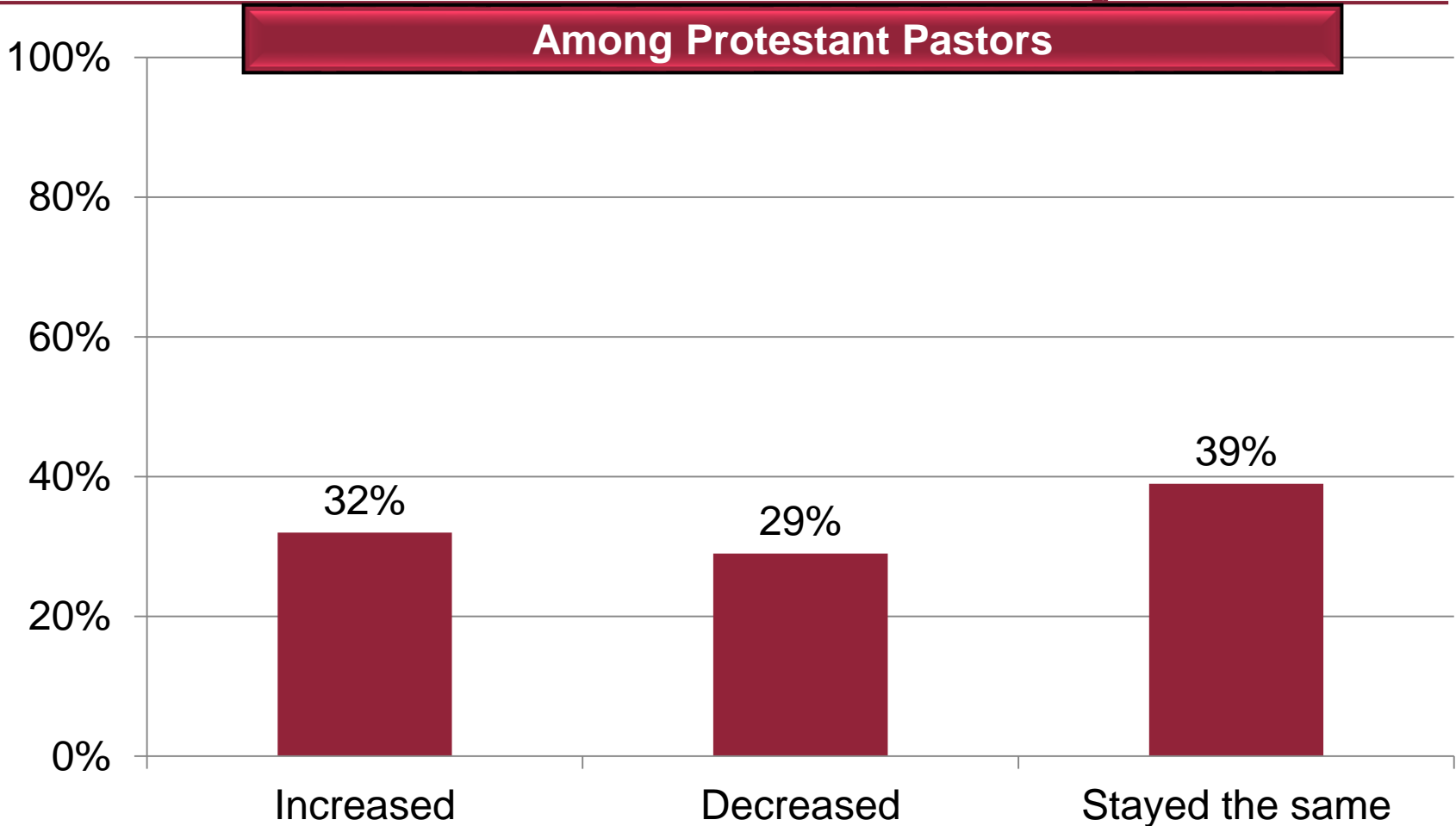
47% say women in leadership roles have increased in the last 5 years



Q3_6: "For each of the following please indicate if it has increased, decreased or stayed the same at your church in the last 5 years? **Women in leadership roles**" n=988



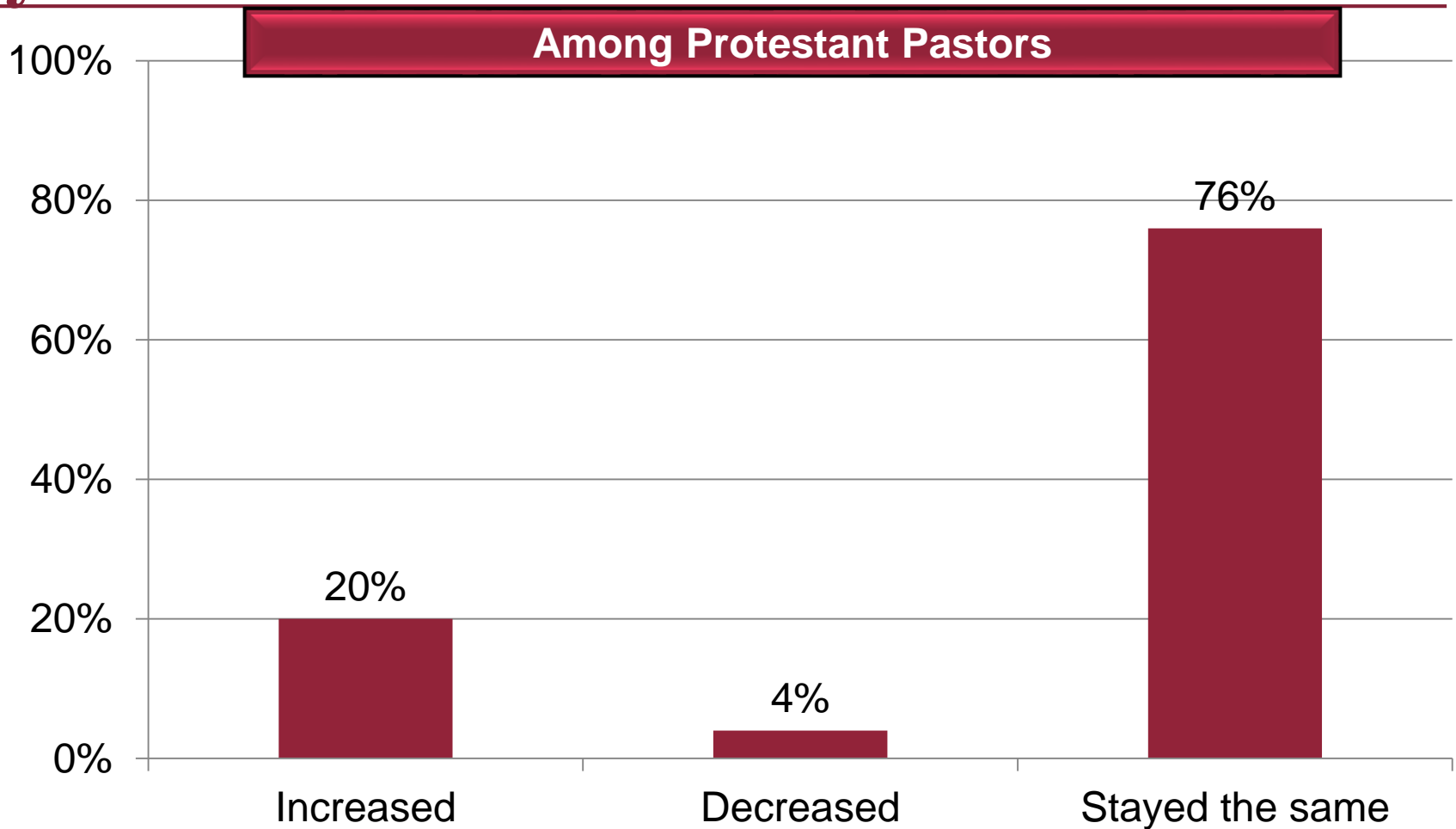
32% say that attendance of 18-29 year olds has increased in the last 5 years



Q3_7: "For each of the following please indicate if it has increased, decreased or stayed the same at your church in the last 5 years? Attendance of 18-29 year olds" n=976

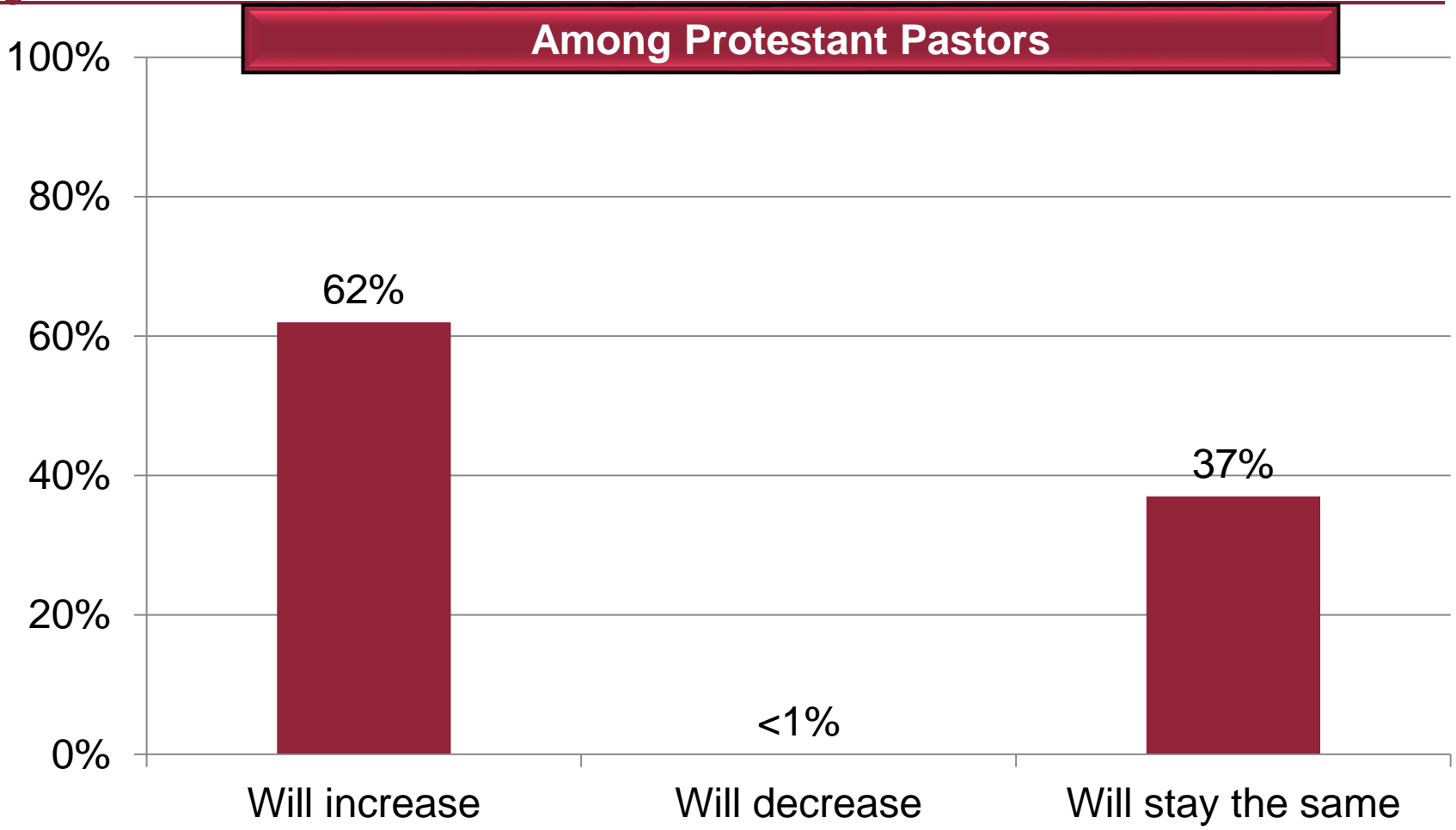


20% say the attendance of LGBT individuals has increased in the last 5 years



Q3_8: "For each of the following please indicate if it has increased, decreased or stayed the same at your church in the last 5 years? **Attendance of LGBT individuals**" n=873

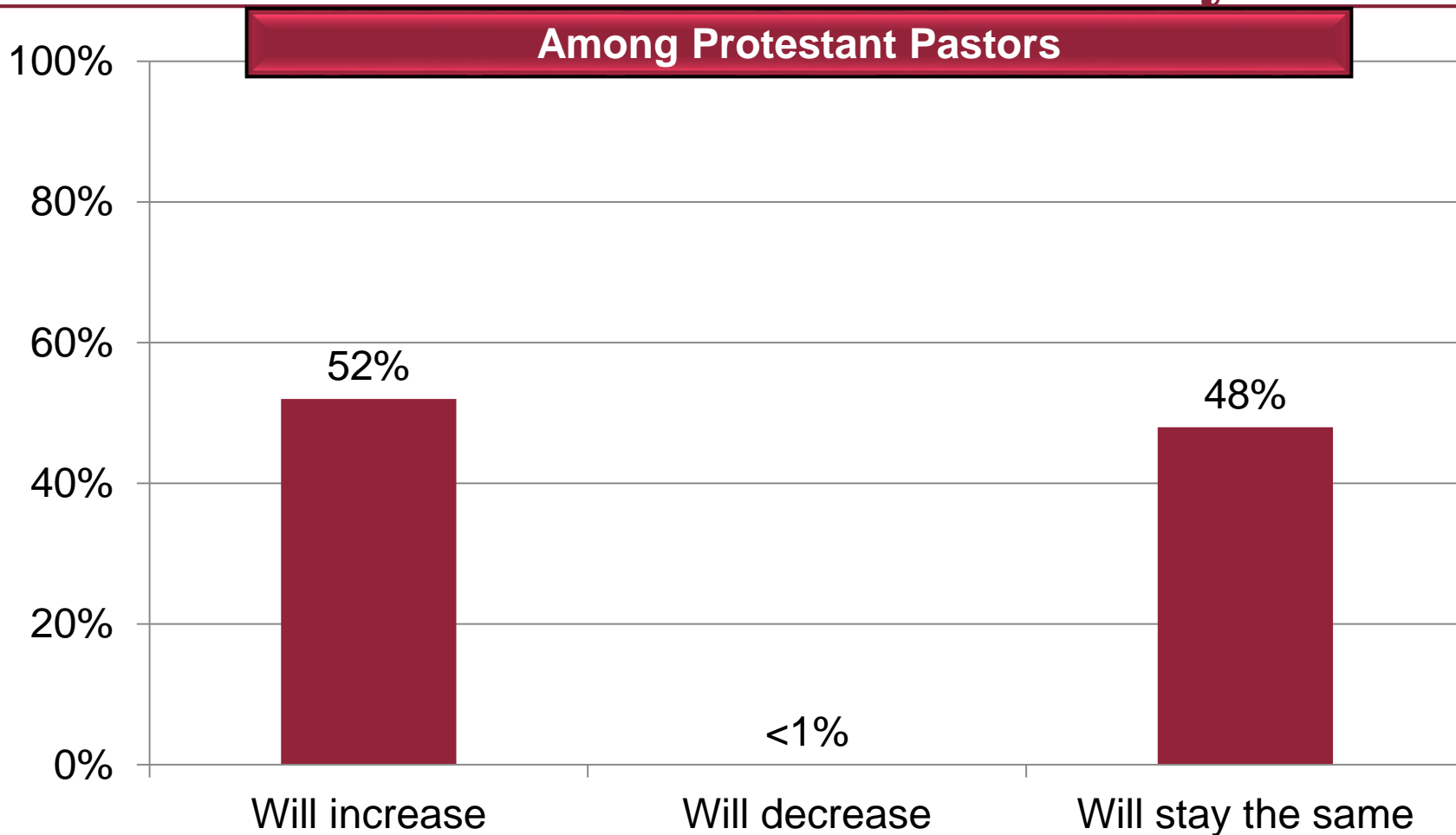
62% say that the ethnic diversity of attendees will increase in the next 5 years



Q4_1: "For each of the following please indicate if it will increase, decrease or stay the same at your church in the next 5 years? Ethnic diversity of attendees" n=976

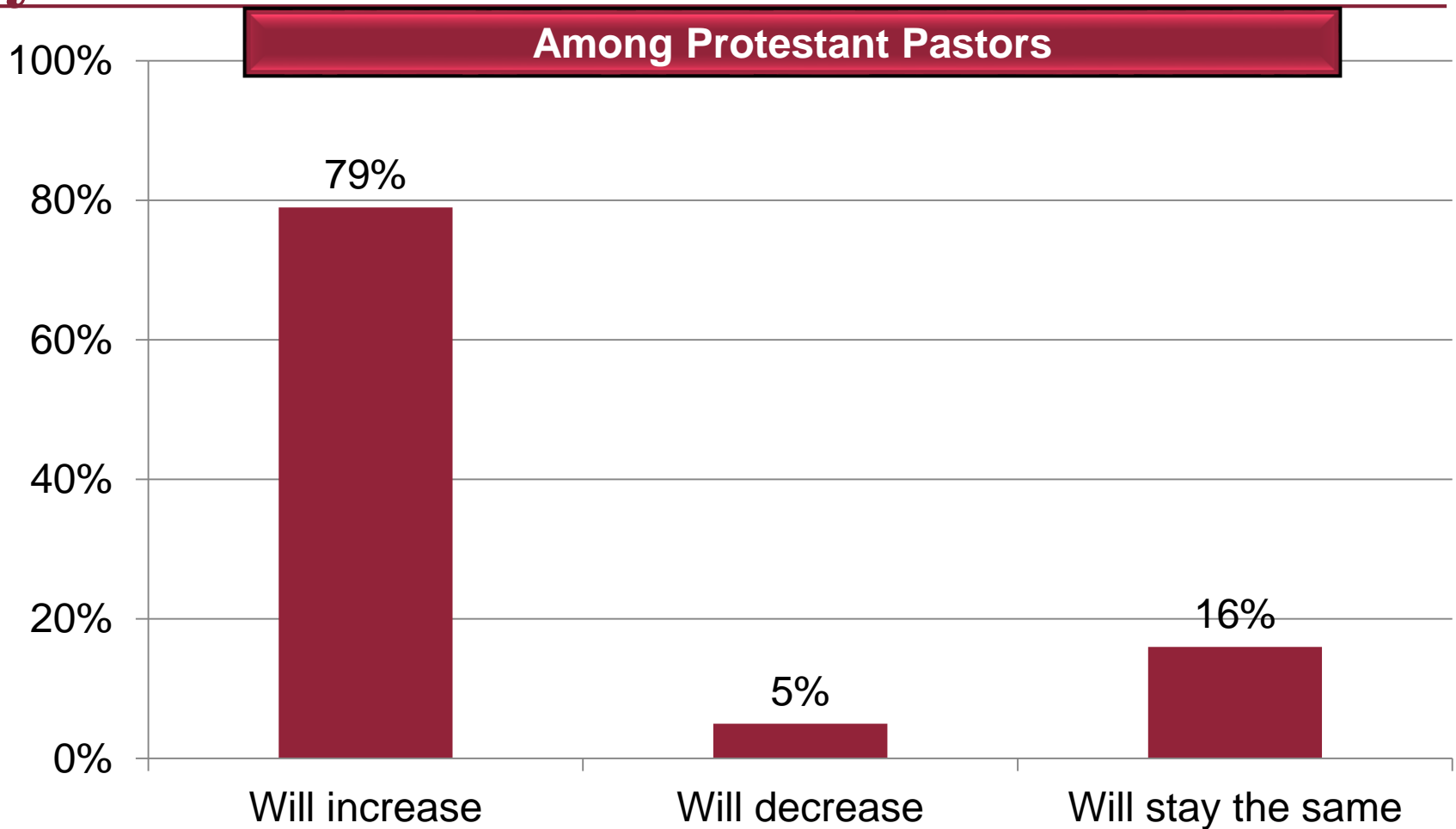


52% say that the ethnic diversity of leaders will increase in the next 5 years



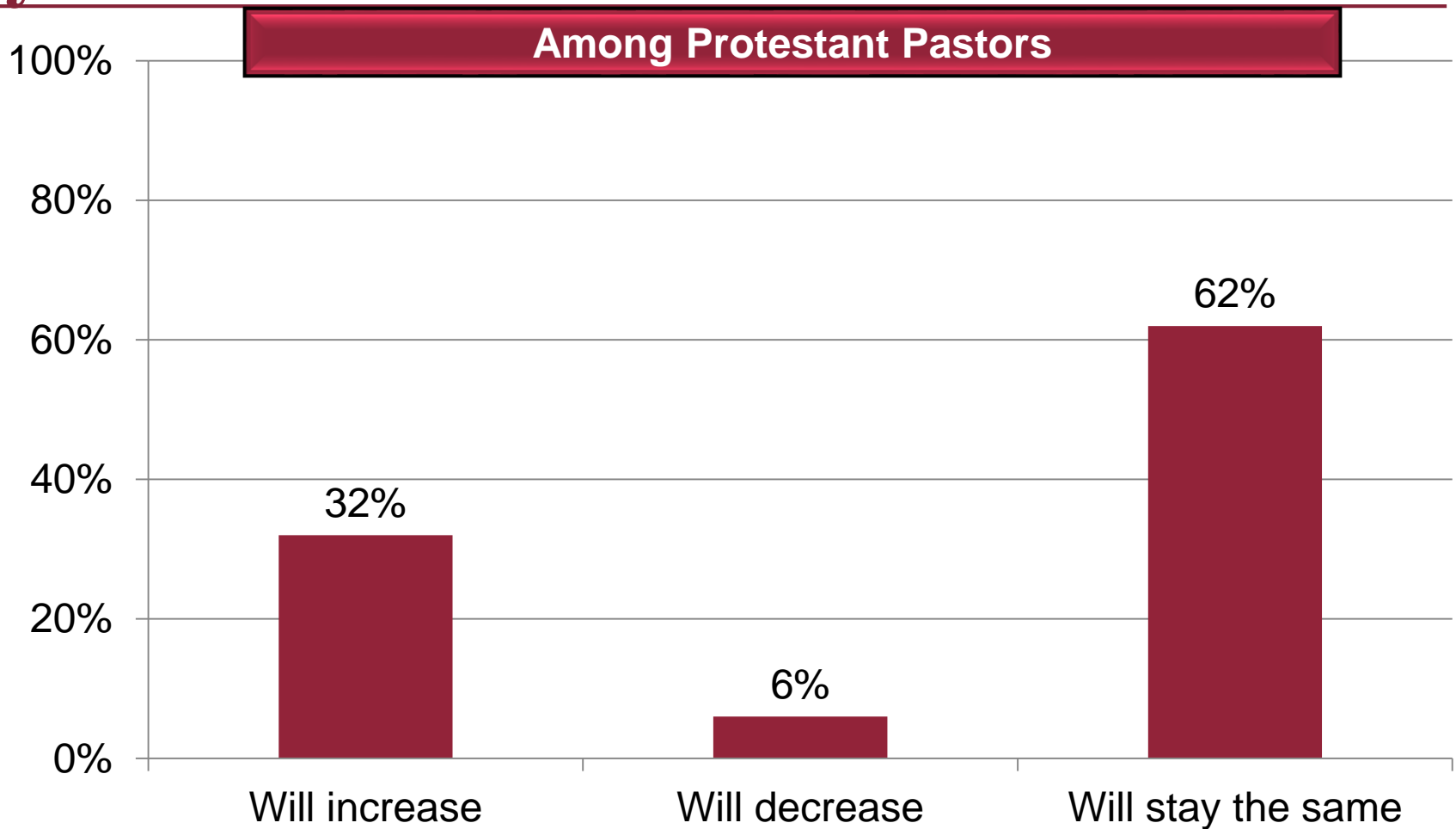
Q4_2: "For each of the following please indicate if it will increase, decrease or stay the same at your church in the next 5 years? **Ethnic diversity of leaders**" n=975

79% say that weekly worship attendance will increase in the next 5 years



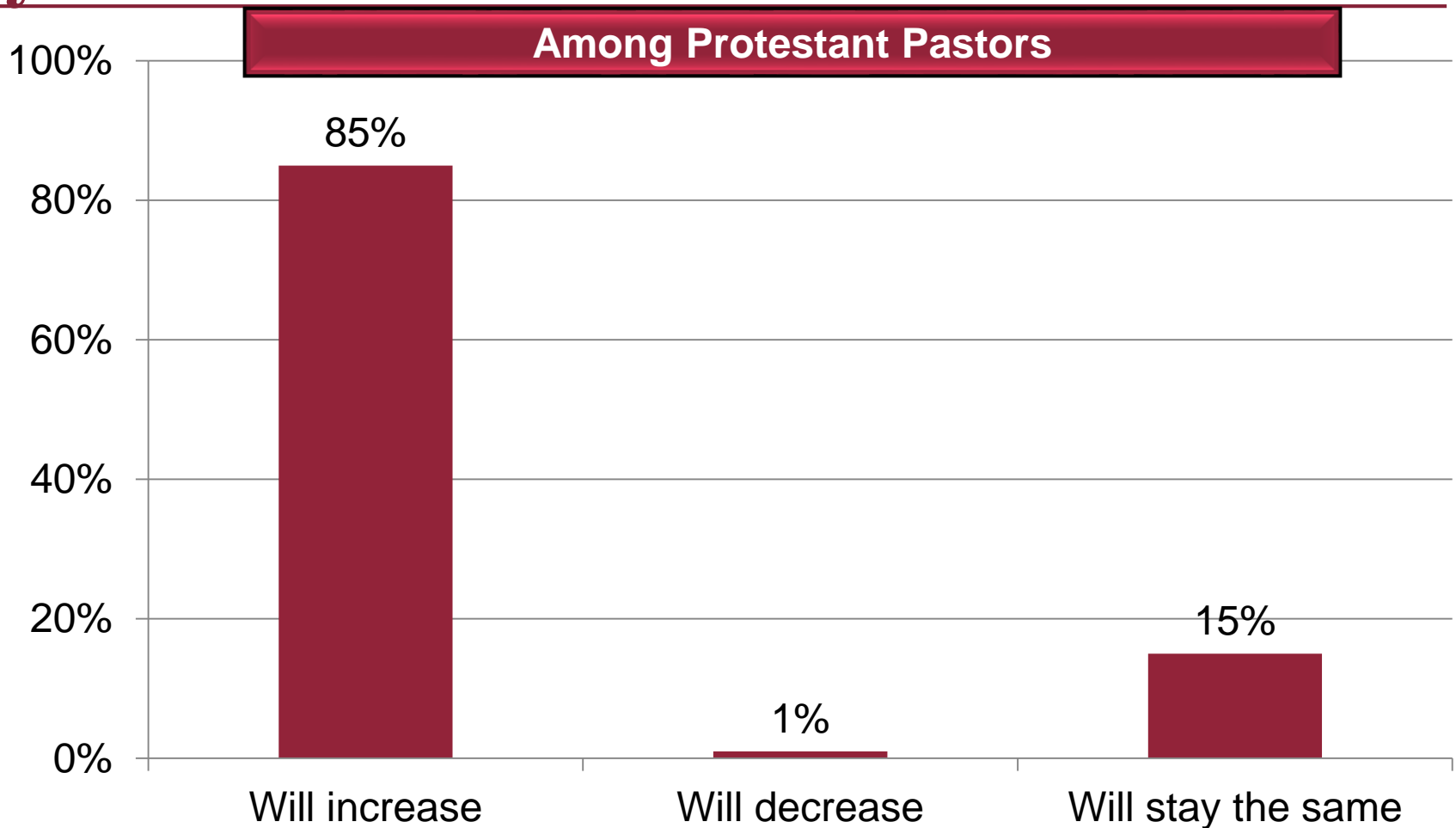
Q4_3: "For each of the following please indicate if it will increase, decrease or stay the same at your church in the next 5 years? **Weekly worship attendance**" n=987

32% say that denominational involvement will increase in the next 5 years



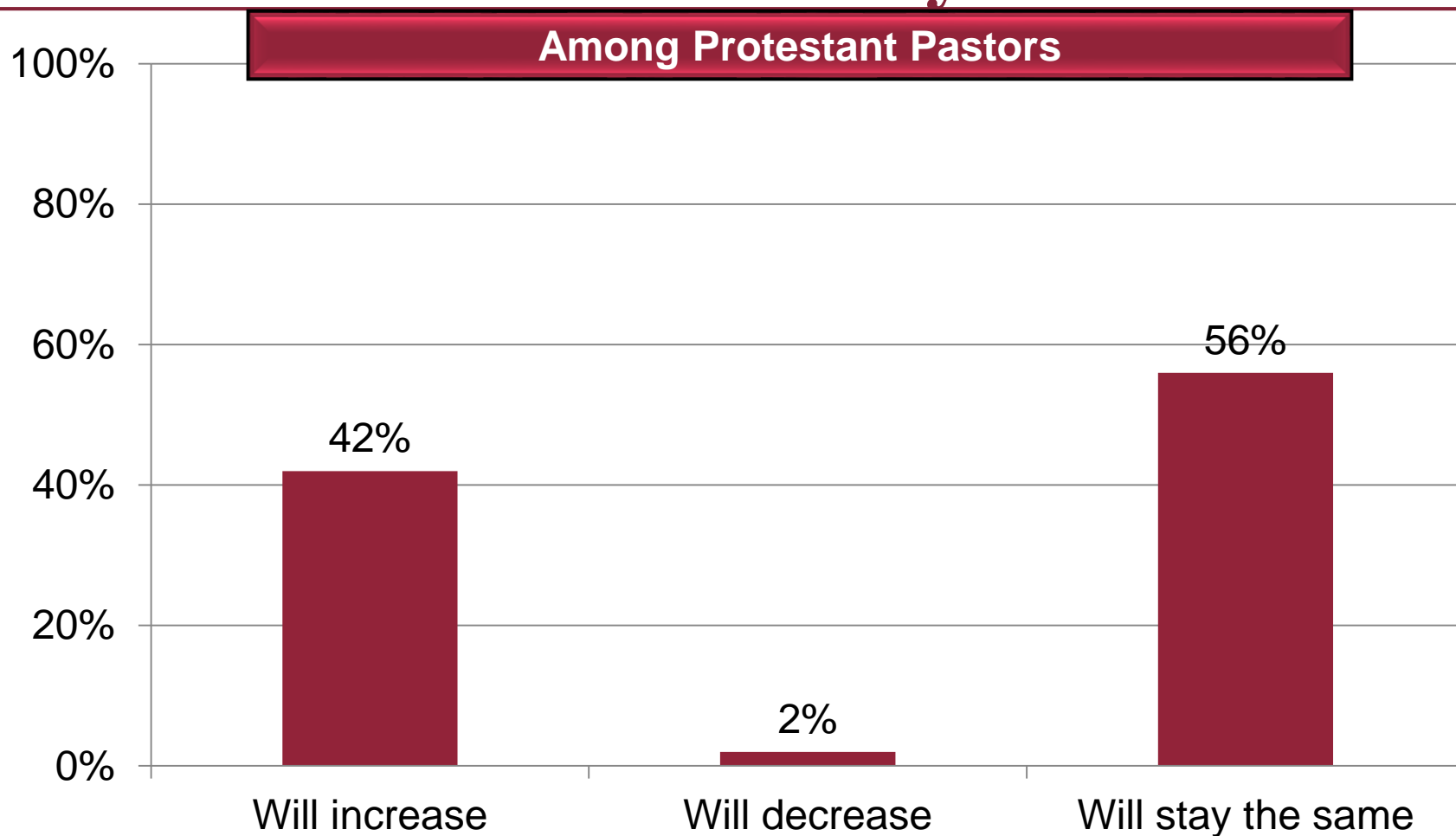
Q4_4: "For each of the following please indicate if it will increase, decrease or stay the same at your church in the next 5 years? **Denominational involvement**" n=948

85% say that ministry in our community will increase in the next 5 years



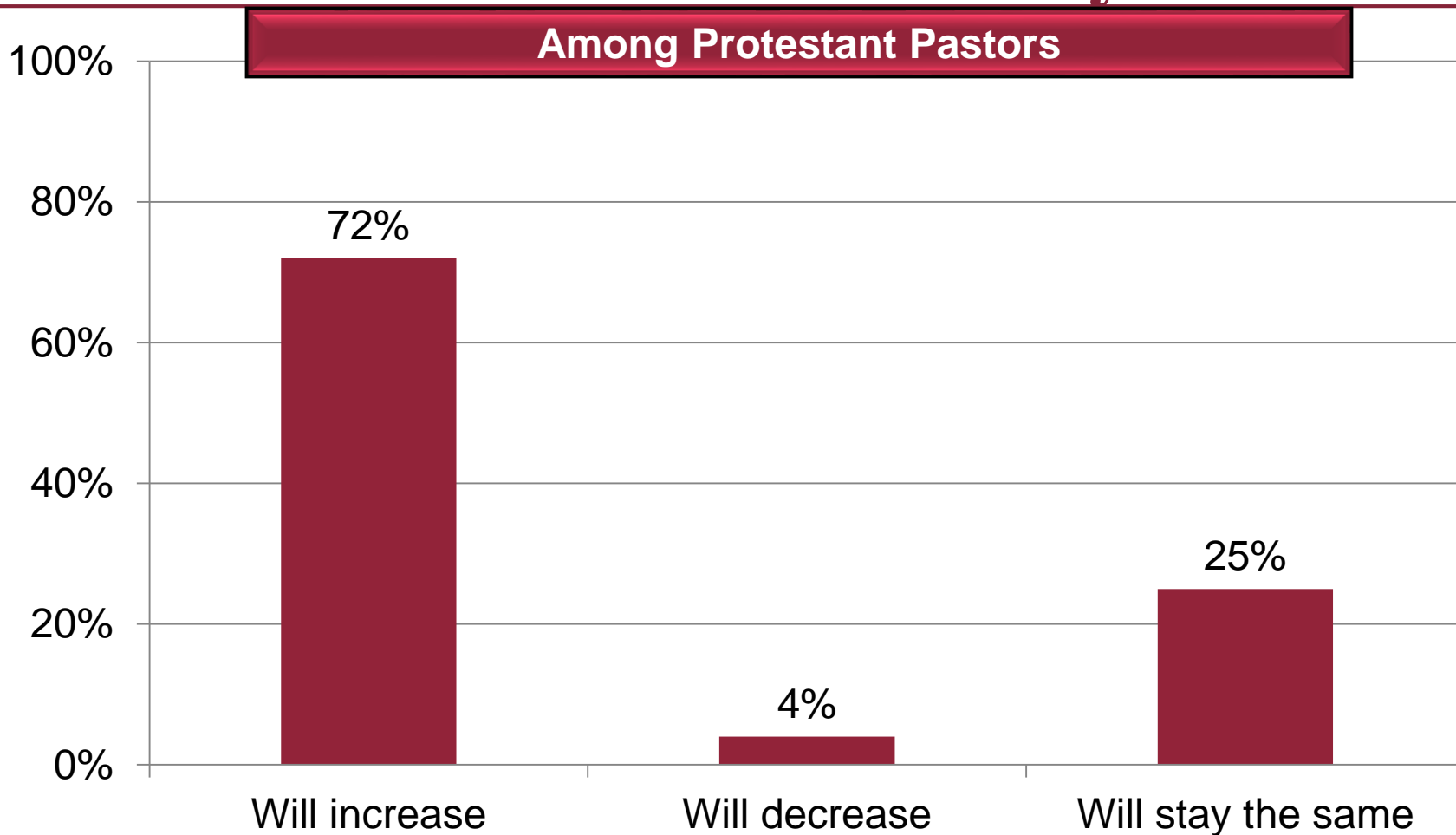
Q4_5: "For each of the following please indicate if it will increase, decrease or stay the same at your church in the next 5 years? **Ministry in our community**" n=995

42% say that women in leadership roles will increase in the next 5 years



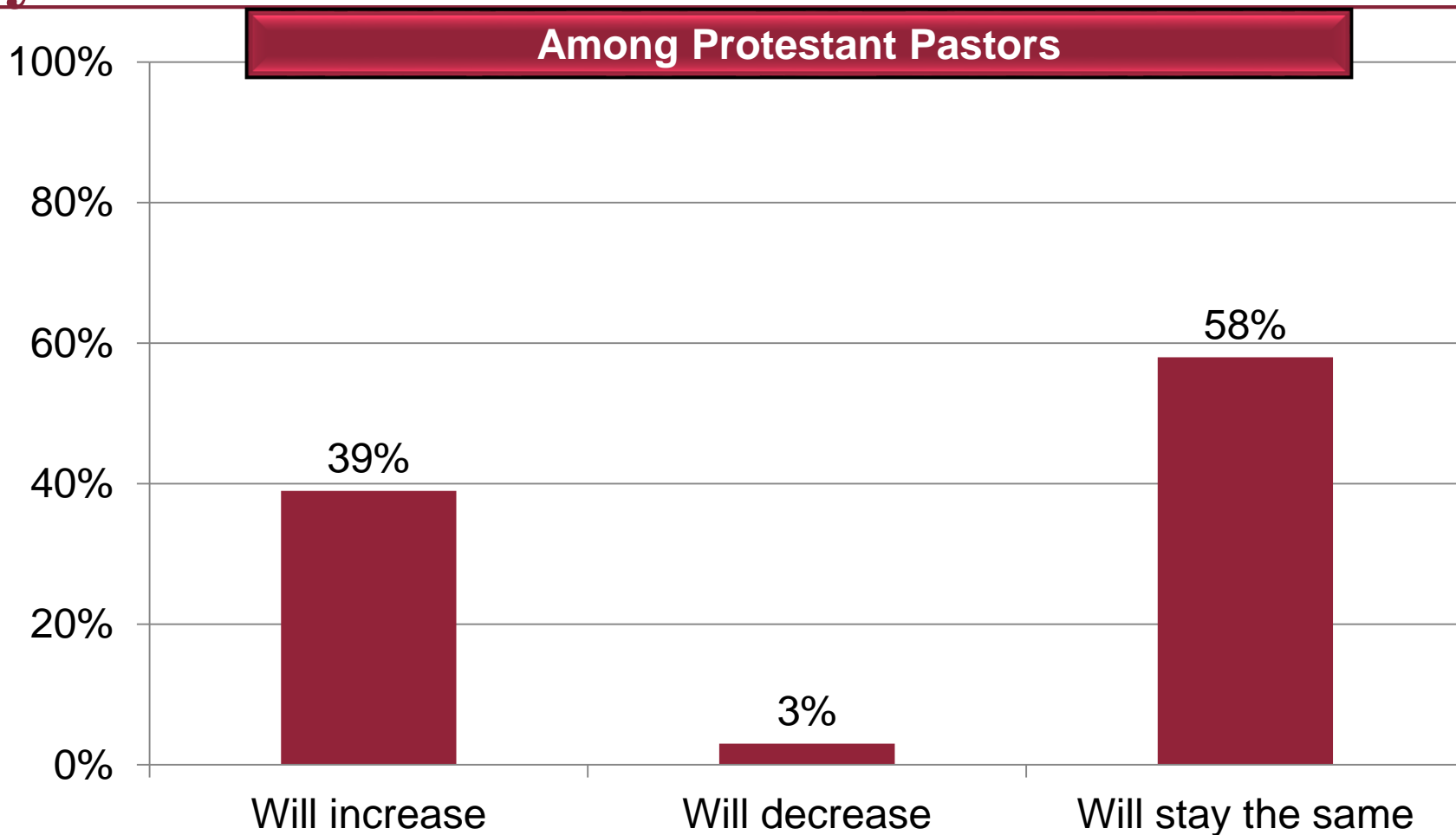
Q4_6: "For each of the following please indicate if it will increase, decrease or stay the same at your church in the next 5 years? **Women in leadership roles**" n=992

72% say that attendance of 18-29 year olds will increase in the next 5 years



Q4_7: "For each of the following please indicate if it will increase, decrease or stay the same at your church in the next 5 years? Attendance of 18-29 year olds" n=980

39% say that attendance of LGBT individuals will increase in the next 5 years



Q4_8: "For each of the following please indicate if it will increase, decrease or stay the same at your church in the next 5 years? **Attendance of LGBT individuals**" n=909

Significant Differences

Pastor

Ethnicity

Age

Education Level

Self-identified Evangelical/Mainline

Church

Region

Denomination

Average Attendance

Significant Statistical Differences

- Comparisons were also made to determine if there are any significant statistical differences among the pastor's ethnicity, age, education level, and self-identified evangelical/mainline.

Pastor's Ethnicity	Pastor's Age	Education Level	Self-Identified
White	18-44	No College Degree	Evangelical
African-American	45-54	Bachelor's Degree	Mainline
Other Ethnicities	55-64	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, and attendance.

Region	Denomination	Attendance
Northeast	Baptist	0-49
Midwest	Lutheran	50-99
South	Methodist	100-249
West	Pentecostal	250+
	Presbyterian/Reformed	
	Holiness	
	Christian/Church of Christ	

Note: Region is defined by US Census regions

“Which one of the following are you most concerned about as you think about the future of your church?”

- White pastors (13%) are more likely to select “Declining interest in matters of faith” than African-American pastors (2%)
- Pastors age 55-64 (43%) and 65+ (47%) are more likely to select “Reaching the next generation” than those 18-44 (31%)
- Pastors age 18-44 are the most likely to select “Lack of discipleship in our congregation” (26%)
- Pastors age 18-44 (13%) are more likely to select “Lack of member commitment” than pastors age 55-64 (7%) and 65+ (6%)
- Pastors age 45-54 (15%) are more likely to select “Declining interest in matters of faith” than pastors age 18-44 (8%)
- Pastors with a Master’s degree (17%) are more likely to select “Lack of discipleship in our congregation” than those with a Doctoral degree (10%)
- Pastors with a Doctoral degree (14%) are more likely to select “Declining interest in matters of faith” than those with a Bachelor’s degree (7%)

“Which one of the following are you most concerned about as you think about the future of your church?” (continued)

- Evangelical pastors (18%) are more likely to select “Lack of discipleship in our congregation” than Mainline pastors (12%)
- Mainline pastors (14%) are more likely to select “Declining interest in matters of faith” than Evangelical pastors (9%)
- Pentecostals (51%) are more likely to select “Reaching the next generation” than Lutherans (34%) and Presbyterian/Reformed (35%)
- Baptists (19%) and Holiness (22%) are more likely to select “Lack of discipleship in our congregation” than Lutherans (10%) and Presbyterian/Reformed (10%)
- Presbyterian/Reformed (19%) are more likely to select “Declining interest in matters of faith” than Baptists (7%), Methodists (10%) and Pentecostals (5%)
- Pastors of churches with attendance of 250+ (49%) are more likely to select “Reaching the next generation” than those with attendance of 0-49 (36%)
- Pastors of churches with attendance of 50-99 (14%) are more likely to select “Declining interest in matters of faith” than those with attendance of 250+ (6%)

“For each of the following please indicate if it has increased, decreased or stayed the same at your church in the last 5 years?”

Ethnic diversity of attendees

- African-American pastors (10%) are more likely to select “Decreased” than White pastors (4%)
- Pastors with a Doctoral degree (43%) are more likely to select “Increased” than those with no college degree (31%) or a Master’s degree (33%)
- Pastors in the South (35%) and West (44%) are more likely to select “Increased” than pastors in the Midwest (27%)
- Baptists (36%), Pentecostals (44%), Presbyterian/Reformed (36%), and Holiness (41%) are more likely to select “Increased” than Lutherans (22%) and Methodists (25%)
- Pastors of churches with attendance of 250+ are the most likely to select “Increased” (61%)

“For each of the following please indicate if it has increased, decreased or stayed the same at your church in the last 5 years?”

Ethnic diversity of leaders

- Pastors of Other Ethnicities (31%) are more likely to select “Increased” than White pastors (19%)
- Pastors age 45-54 (24%) are more likely to select “Increased” than those 18-44 (16%)
- Pastors with a Doctoral degree (29%) are more likely to select “Increased” than those with a Bachelor’s degree (19%) or a Master’s degree (18%)
- Pastors in the West (30%) are more likely to select “Increased” than pastors in the South (20%) and the Midwest (15%)
- Lutherans (82%) and Methodists (83%) are more likely to select “Stayed the same” than Pentecostals (67%)
- Pastors of churches with attendance of 250+ are the most likely to “Increased” (38%)

“For each of the following please indicate if it has increased, decreased or stayed the same at your church in the last 5 years?”

Weekly worship attendance

- Pastors of Other Ethnicities are the most likely to select “Increased” (50%)
- Pastors age 18-44 (41%) and 45-54 (41%) are more likely to select “Increased” than those 55-64 (33%) and 65+ (30%)
- Pastors with a Doctoral degree (45%) are more likely to select “Increased” than those with no college degree (33%) or a Master’s degree (34%)
- Pastors in the West (43%) are more likely to select “Increased” than pastors in the Midwest (30%)
- Baptists (41%) are more likely to select “Increased” than Lutherans (26%) and Methodists (29%)
- Pastors of churches with attendance of 250+ are the most likely to select “Increased” (56%)
- Pastors of churches with attendance of 0-49 are least likely to select “Increased” (21%) and more likely than churches 100+ to select “Decreased” (37%)

“For each of the following please indicate if it has increased, decreased or stayed the same at your church in the last 5 years?”

Denominational involvement

- Pastors age 18-44 (35%) are more likely to select “Increased” than those 45-54 (26%) and 65+ (21%)
- Pastors with a Bachelor’s degree (67%) or a Master’s degree (63%) are more likely to select “Stayed the same” than those with no college degree (53%)
- Pentecostals (33%) and Presbyterian/Reformed (34%), and Holiness (32%) are more likely to select “Increased” than Christian/Church of Christ (16%)
- Pastors of churches with attendance of 0-49 (65%) and 100-249 (63%) are more likely to select “Stayed the same” than those with attendance of 250+ (51%)

“For each of the following please indicate if it has increased, decreased or stayed the same at your church in the last 5 years?”

Ministry in our community

- Pastors age 65+ are the most likely to select “Stayed the same” (42%)
- Pastors with no college degree (41%) are more likely to select “Stayed about the same” than those with a Doctoral degree (28%)
- Holiness (77%) and Christian/Church of Christ (71%) are more likely to select “Increased” than Lutherans (54%)
- Pastors of churches with attendance of 100-249 (70%) and 250+ (77%) are more likely to select “Increased” than those with attendance of 0-49 (51%) and 50-99 (62%)

“For each of the following please indicate if it has increased, decreased or stayed the same at your church in the last 5 years?”

Women in leadership roles

- African-American pastors (62%) are more likely to select “Increased” than White pastors (46%)
- Pastors with a Doctoral degree (60%) are more likely to select “Stayed the same” than those with a Master’s degree (50%)
- Mainline pastors (51%) are more likely to select “Increased” than Evangelical pastors (44%)
- Pentecostals (63%) and Holiness (69%) are more likely to select “Increased” than Baptists (35%), Lutherans (42%), Presbyterian/Reformed (49%), and Christian/Church of Christ (32%)

“For each of the following please indicate if it has increased, decreased or stayed the same at your church in the last 5 years?”

Attendance of 18-29 year olds

- White pastors (32%) and pastors of Other Ethnicities (42%) are more likely to select “Increased” than African-American pastors (14%)
- Pastors age 18-44 (43%) are more likely to select “Increased” than those 55-64 (27%) and 65+ (25%)
- Pastors with a Doctoral degree (39%) are more likely to select “Increased” than those with a Master’s degree (29%)
- Evangelical pastors (35%) are more likely to select “Increased” than Mainline pastors (28%)
- Baptists (40%) and Holiness (43%) are more likely to select “Increased” than Lutherans (24%), Methodists (16%), and Presbyterian/Reformed (28%)
- Pastors of churches with attendance of 250+ are the most likely to select “Increased” (50%) followed by 100-249 (36%), 50-99 (30%), and 0-49 (20%)
- Pastors of churches with attendance 0-49 (35%) and 50-99 (32%) are more likely to select “Decreased” than those in churches 250+ (20%)

“For each of the following please indicate if it has increased, decreased or stayed the same at your church in the last 5 years?”

Attendance of LGBT individuals

- Pastors with a Master’s degree (24%) or a Doctoral degree (22%) are more likely to select “Increased” than those with no college degree (11%) or a Bachelor’s degree (11%)
- Mainline pastors (28%) are more likely to select “Increased” than Evangelical pastors (13%)
- Pastors in the West (29%) are more likely to select “Increased” than pastors in the South (19%) or Midwest (15%)
- Lutherans (21%), Methodists (27%), Presbyterian/Reformed (35%), Christian/Church of Christ (24%) are more likely to select “Increased” than Baptist (5%) and Pentecostals (6%)

“For each of the following please indicate if you think it will increase, decrease or stay the same at your church over the next 5 years?”

Ethnic diversity of attendees

- African-American pastors are the most likely to select “Will increase” (86%)
- Pastors age 18-44 (67%) are more likely to select “Will increase” than those 65+ (57%)
- Pastors with no college degree (71%) are more likely to select “Will increase” than those with a Master’s degree (59%)
- Evangelical pastors (65%) are more likely to select “Will increase” than Mainline pastors (56%)
- Pastors in the South (70%) and West (67%) are more likely to select than “Will increase” pastors in the Northeast (52%) and Midwest (50%)
- Pentecostals (83%) and Holiness (71%) are more likely to select “Will increase” than Lutherans (40%) and Methodists (52%)
- Pastors of churches with attendance of 250+ are the most likely to select “Will increase” (82%)

“For each of the following please indicate if you think it will increase, decrease or stay the same at your church over the next 5 years?”

Ethnic diversity of leaders

- African-American pastors are the most likely to select “Will increase” (73%)
- Evangelical pastors (55%) are more likely to select “Will increase” than Mainline pastors (47%)
- Pastors in the South (61%) and West (53%) are more likely to select “Will increase” than pastors in the Northeast (41%) and Midwest (39%)
- Pentecostals (76%) and Holiness (62%) are more likely to select “Will increase” than Lutherans (29%) and Methodists (45%)
- Pastors of churches with attendance of 100-249 (58%) and 250+ (68%) are more likely to select “Will increase” than those with attendance of 0-49 (37%) and 50-99 (49%)

“For each of the following please indicate if you think it will increase, decrease or stay the same at your church over the next 5 years?”

Weekly worship attendance

- Pastors age 45-54 (85%) are more likely to select “Will increase” than those 65+ (72%)
- Pastors with no college degree (86%) or a Bachelor’s degree (87%) are more likely to select “Will increase” than those with a Master’s degree (76%) or a Doctoral degree (74%)
- Evangelical pastors (85%) are more likely to select “Will increase” than Mainline pastors (74%)
- Pastors in the South (82%) are more likely to select “Will increase” than pastors in the Midwest (74%)
- Baptists (90%), Pentecostals (94%) and Holiness (93%) are more likely to select “Will increase” than Lutherans (55%), Methodists (68%), Presbyterian/Reformed (72%), and Christian/Church of Christ (75%)
- Pastors of churches with attendance of 250+ are the most likely to select “Will increase”(91%)

“For each of the following please indicate if you think it will increase, decrease or stay the same at your church over the next 5 years?”

Denominational involvement

- African-American pastors are the most likely to select “Will increase” (61%)
- Pastors with no college degree (44%) are more likely to select “Will increase” than those with a Master’s degree (30%) or a Doctoral degree (30%)
- Pentecostals (49%) and Holiness (47%) are more likely to select “Will increase” than Baptists (31%), Lutherans (28%), Presbyterian/Reformed (27%), and Christian/Church of Christ (15%)
- Pastors of churches with attendance of 50-99 (66%) are more likely to select “Will stay the same” than those with attendance of 250+ (54%)

“For each of the following please indicate if you think it will increase, decrease or stay the same at your church over the next 5 years?”

Ministry in our community

- African-American pastors are the most likely to select “Will increase” (97%)
- Pastors age 18-44 (88%) and 45-54 (90%) are more likely to select “Will increase” than those 65+ (78%)
- Pastors with no college degree (92%) are more likely to select “Will increase” than those with a Master’s degree (82%) or a Doctoral degree (83%)
- Evangelical pastors (87%) are more likely to select “Will increase” than Mainline pastors (82%)
- Pastors in the South (88%) are more likely to select “Will increase” than pastors in the West (80%)
- Baptists (90%), Pentecostals (98%), and Holiness (94%) are more likely to select “Will increase” than Lutherans (71%), Methodists (77%), and Presbyterian/Reformed (81%)
- Pastors of churches with attendance of 0-49 are the least likely to select “Will increase”(75%)

“For each of the following please indicate if you think it will increase, decrease or stay the same at your church over the next 5 years?”

Women in leadership roles

- African-American pastors are the most likely to select “Will increase” (78%)
- Pastors age 45-54 (47%) are more likely to select than those 55-64 (39%)
- Pastors with no college degree (54%) are more likely to select “Will increase” than those with a Master’s degree (38%)
- Pastors in the South (47%) are more likely to select “Will increase” than pastors in the Northeast (36%) and Midwest (35%)
- Pentecostals (65%) and Holiness (55%) are more likely to select “Will increase” than Baptists (39%), Lutherans (25%), Presbyterian/Reformed (34%), and Christian/Church of Christ (35%)
- Pastors of churches with attendance of 100-249 (47%) and 250+ (53%) are more likely to select “Will increase” than those with attendance of 0-49 (35%) and 50-99 (37%)

“For each of the following please indicate if you think it will increase, decrease or stay the same at your church over the next 5 years?”

Attendance of 18-29 year olds

- African-American pastors are the most likely to select “Will increase” (89%)
- Pastors with no college degree (85%) or a Bachelor’s degree (82%) are more likely to select “Will increase” than those with a Master’s degree (66%) or a Doctoral degree (70%)
- Evangelical pastors (79%) are more likely to select “Will increase” than Mainline pastors (64%)
- Pastors in the South (78%) are more likely to select “Will increase” than pastors in the Northeast (61%) and Midwest (66%)
- Baptists (84%), Pentecostals (92%), and Holiness (82%) are more likely to select “Will increase” than Lutherans (49%), Methodists (65%), Presbyterian/Reformed (57%), and Christian/Church of Christ (66%)
- Pastors of churches with attendance of 250+ are the most likely to select “Will increase” (85%)

“For each of the following please indicate if you think it will increase, decrease or stay the same at your church over the next 5 years?”

Attendance of LGBT individuals

- White pastors are the most likely to select “Will stay the same” (60%)
- Mainline pastors (45%) are more likely to select “Will increase” than Evangelical pastors (33%)
- Pastors in the West (47%) are more likely to select “Will increase” than pastors in the Midwest (33%)
- Methodists (50%), Presbyterian/Reformed (51%), and Holiness (48%) are more likely to select “Will increase” than Baptists (28%) and Lutherans (27%)

Facts & Trends

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