

Pastors' Views on Economic Impact

A SURVEY OF AMERICANS PROTESTANT PASTORS

Lifeway research

Methodology

- The phone survey of 1,000 Protestant pastors was conducted September 1-29, 2021
- 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 completed by the senior or sole pastor or a minister at the church
- Responses were weighted by region and church size 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 $\pm 3.2\%$ This margin of error accounts for the effect of weighting
- Margins of error are higher in sub-groups

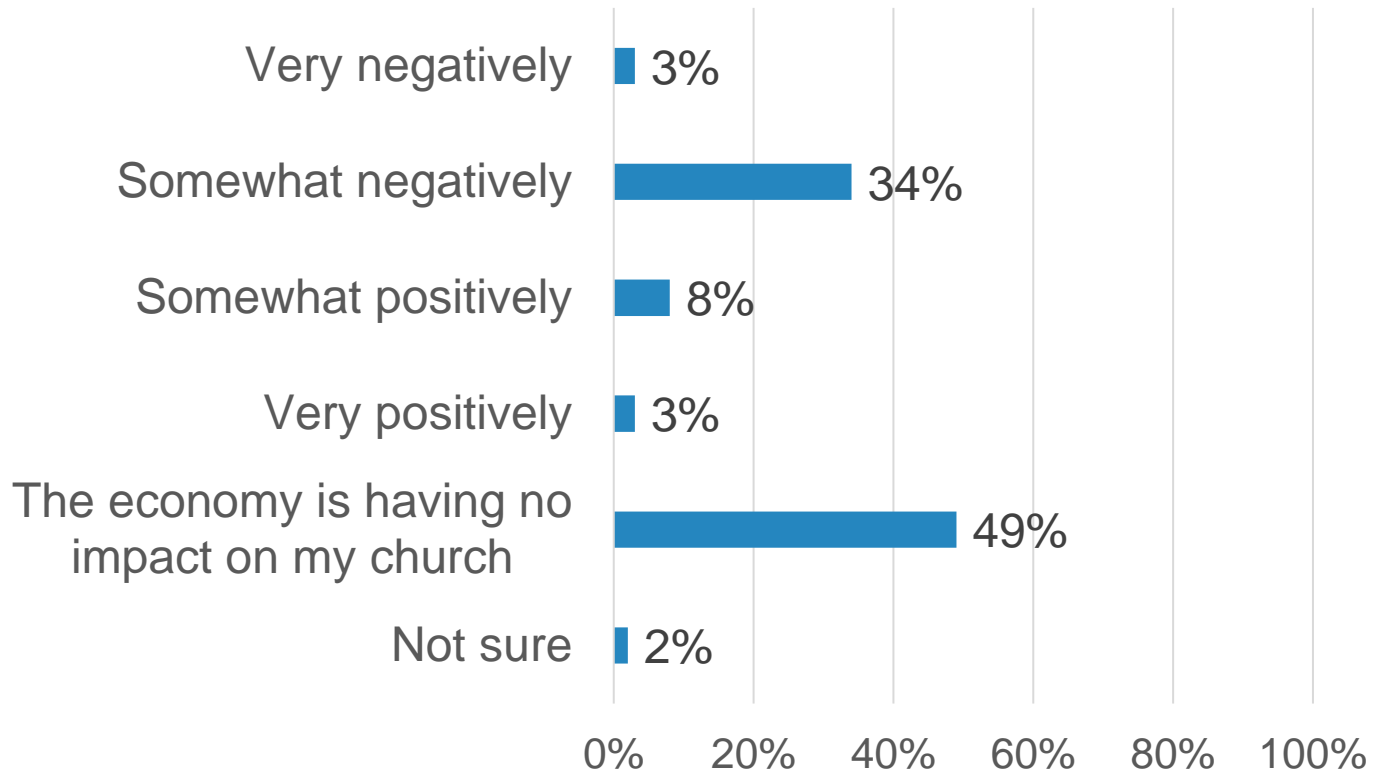
Methodology

- Comparisons are also made to the following telephone surveys using probability sampling:
 - 1,002 pastors conducted November 5-12, 2009
 - 1,000 pastors conducted March 1-9, 2010
 - 1,000 pastors conducted October 7-14, 2010
 - 1,002 pastors conducted January 17-27, 2011
 - 1,000 pastors conducted May 18-25, 2011
 - 1,000 pastors conducted May 23-31, 2012
 - 1,000 pastors conducted September 11-18, 2014
 - 1,000 pastors conducted January 8-22, 2016
 - 1,000 pastors conducted August 29 – September 11, 2018
 - 1,000 pastors conducted August 30 – September 24, 2019
 - 1,007 pastors conducted September 2 – October 2, 2020*

*Mixed-mode telephone and online

37% say that the current economy is having a negative impact on their church

Among Protestant Pastors



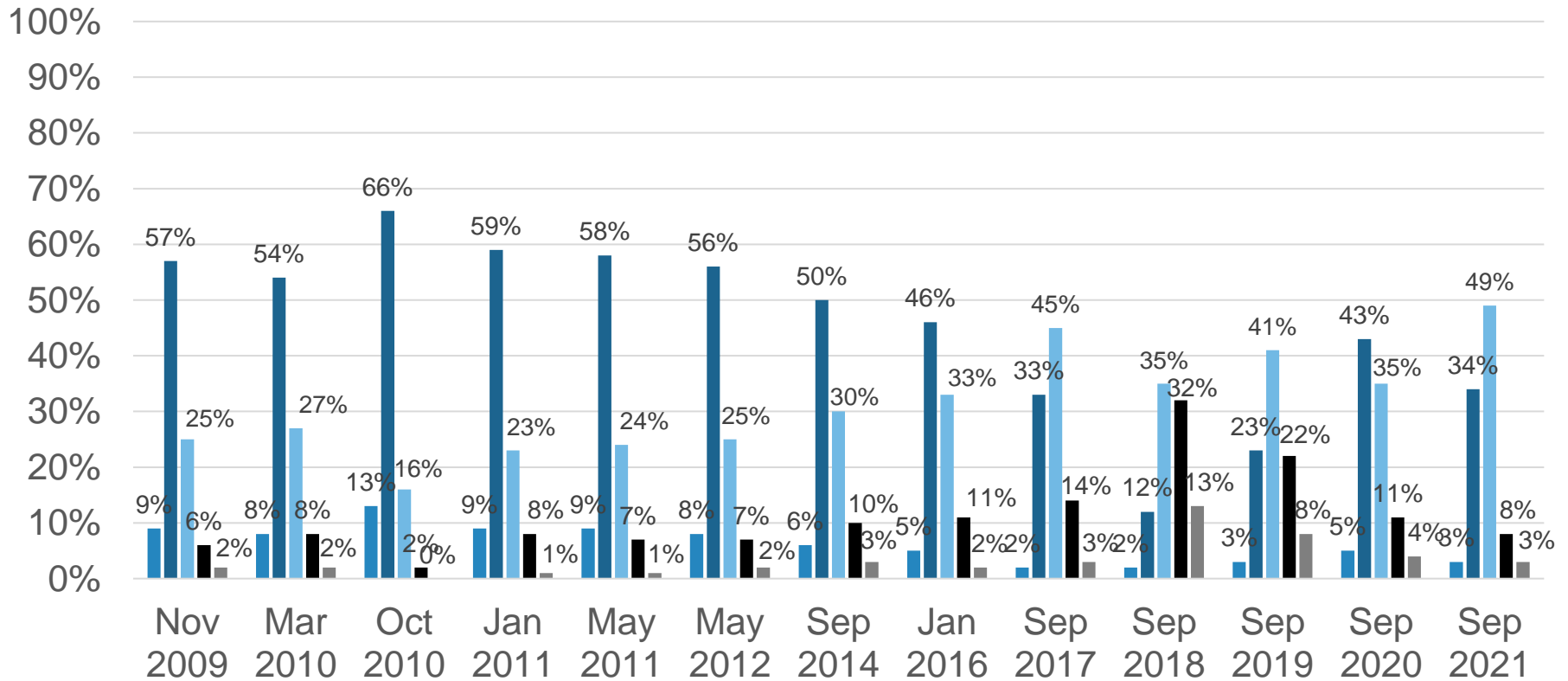
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Q: "How is the current economy impacting your church?" n=1,000

Pastors perceive less negative impact from the economy than in 2020

Among Protestant Pastors

Very negatively Somewhat negatively No impact Somewhat positively Very positively

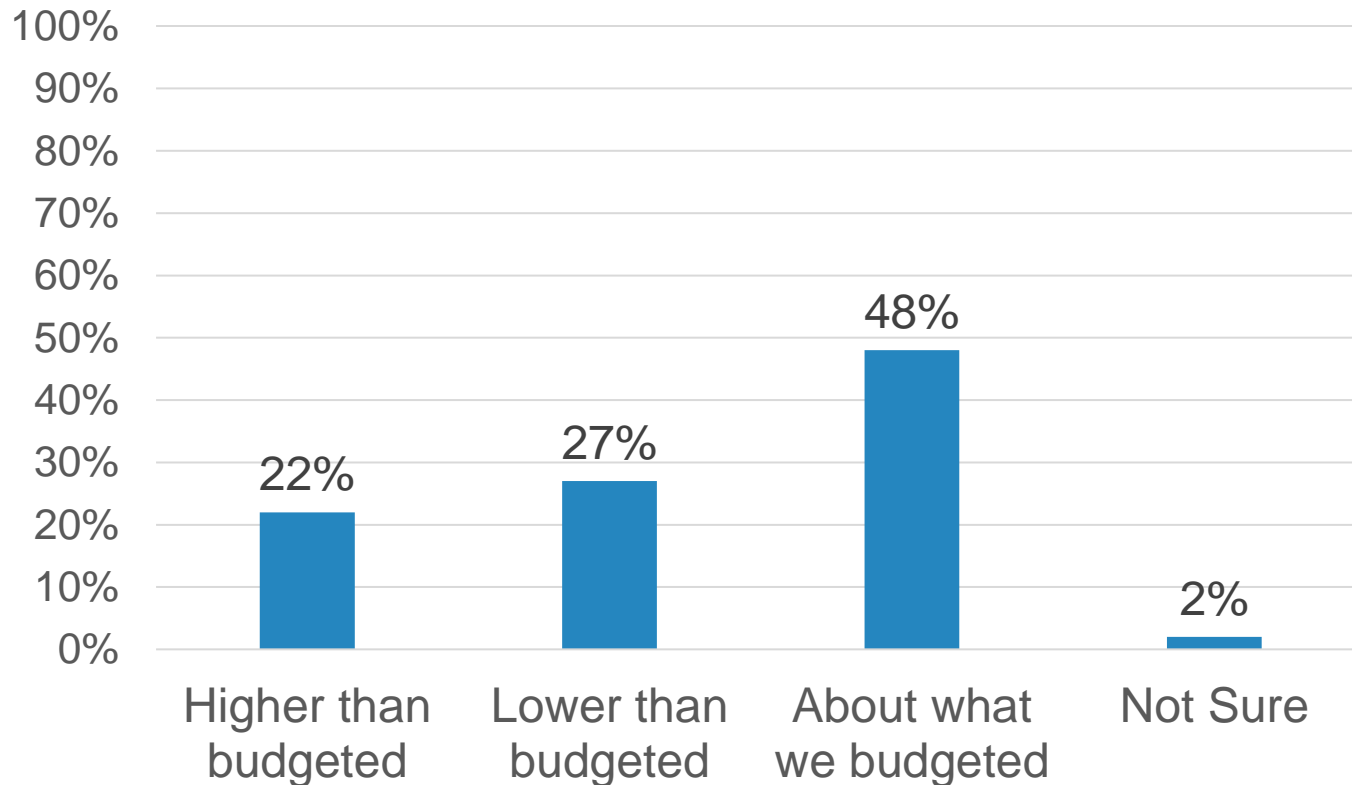


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Q: "How is the current economy impacting your church?"

48% say that giving for 2021 is about what was budgeted; 27% say it is lower than budgeted

Among Protestant Pastors

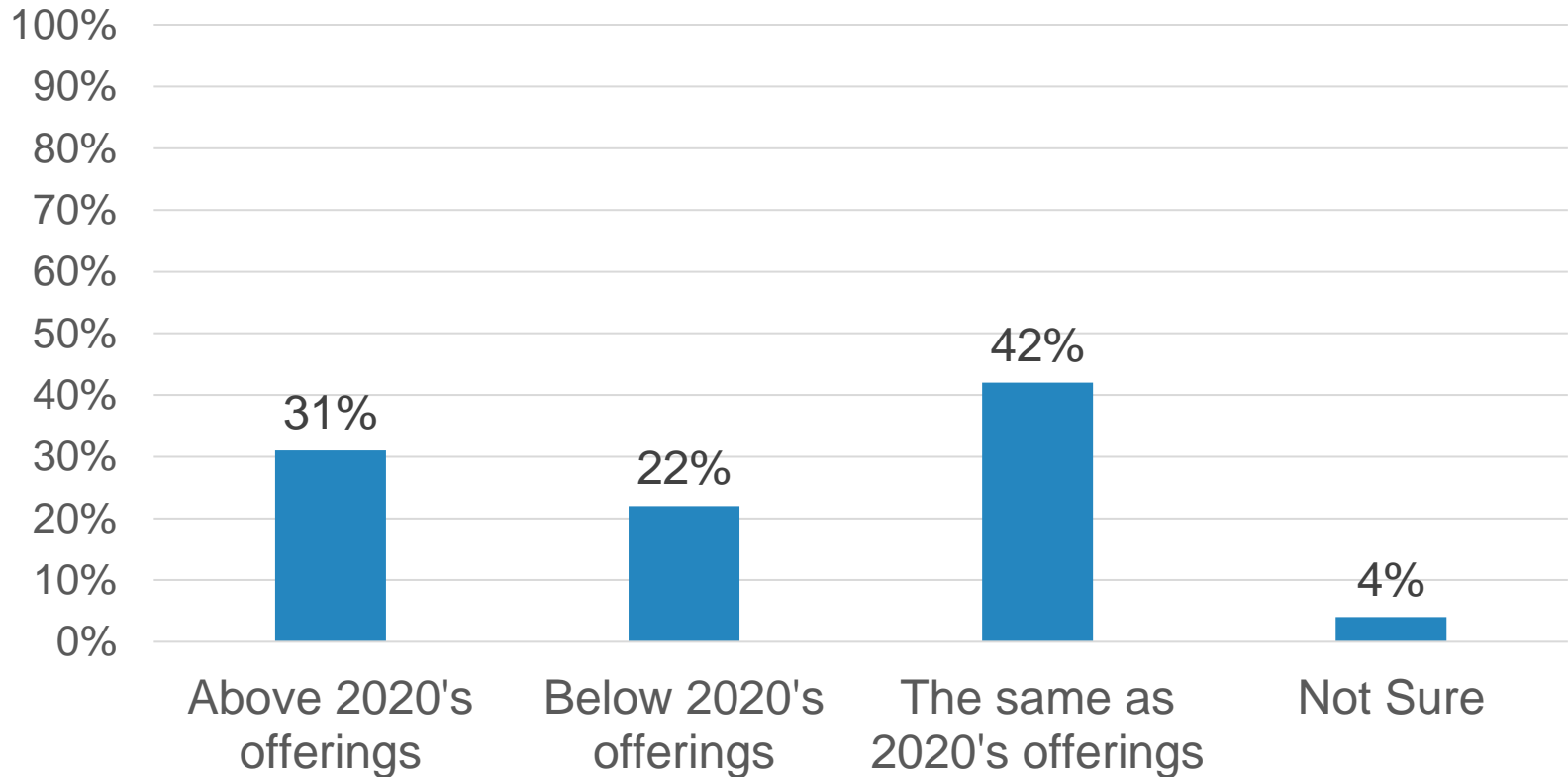


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Q: "Since the beginning of 2021, have your offerings been ..." n=1,000

31% say that giving for 2021 is higher than 2020

Among Protestant Pastors

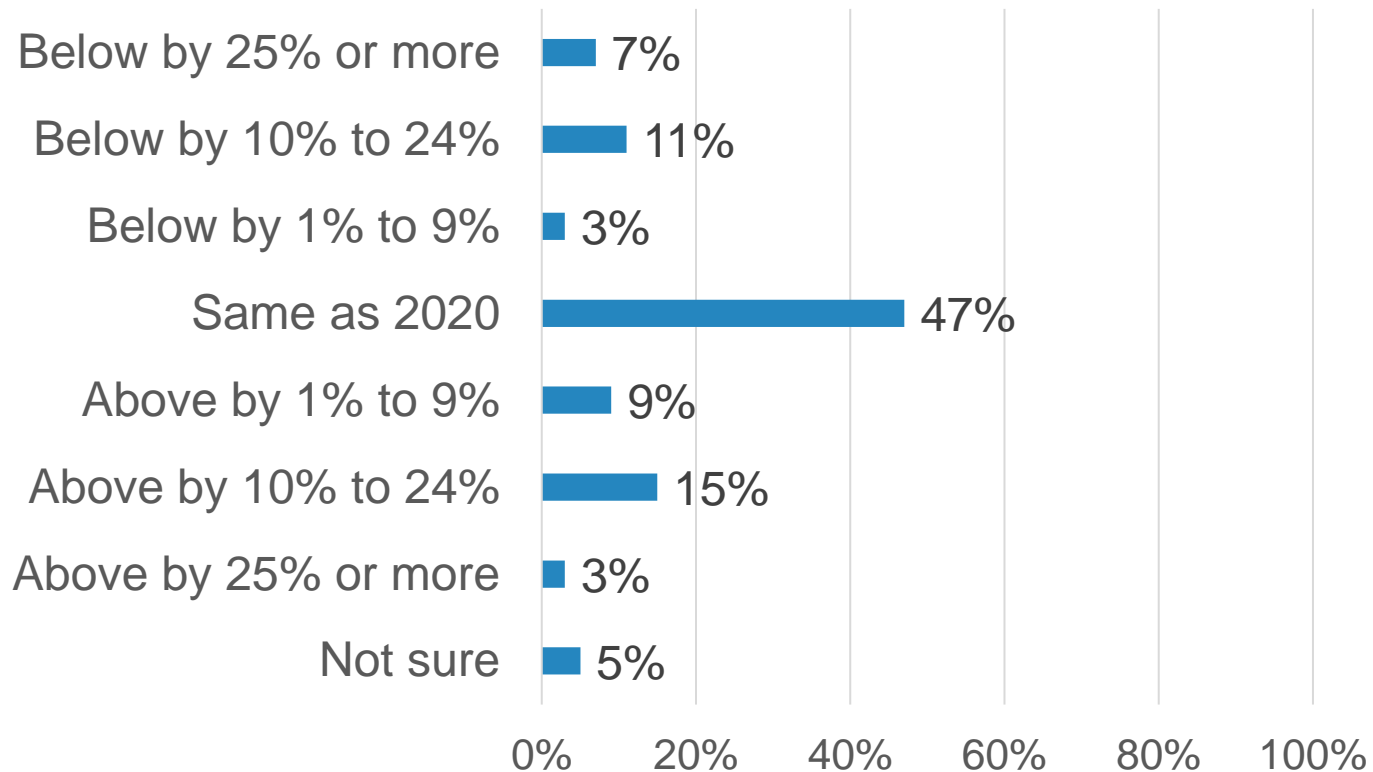


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Q: "Compared to your calendar year 2020 offerings, have your total offerings so far for 2021 been ..." n=1,000

Percentage offerings are below or above 2020

Among Protestant Pastors



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Q: "Approximately what percentage are your calendar year 2021 offerings above 2020's offerings?"
Q: "Approximately what percentage are your calendar year 2021 offerings below 2020's offerings?" n=901

Significant Differences

Pastor

Ethnicity

Age

Gender

Education Level

Self-identified Evangelical/Mainline

Church

Region

Denomination

Average Attendance

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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		Hispanic	Graduate Degree	
65+		Other Ethnicities	Doctoral Degree	

Significant Statistical Differences

Comparisons were made to determine if there are any significant statistical differences among the church's region, denomination group, and attendance.

REGION	DENOMINATION GROUP	ATTENDANCE
Northeast	Baptist	0-49
South	Lutheran	50-99
Midwest	Methodist	100-249
West	Pentecostal	250+
	Presbyterian/Reformed	
	Christian/Church of Christ	
	Non-Denominational	

Note: Region is defined by the US Census locations

“How is the current economy impacting your church?”

- Pastors age 45-54 (43%) are more likely to select “Very or somewhat negatively” than pastors age 65+ (32%)
- Male pastors are more likely to select “The economy is having no impact on my church” than females (52% v. 43%)
- White pastors (51%) are more likely to select “The economy is having no impact on my church” than African American pastors (39%)
- Pastors with a Master’s degree (38%) are more likely to select “Very or somewhat negatively” than pastors with a Doctoral degree (29%)
- Pastors in the Northeast (17%) are more likely to select “Very or somewhat positively” than those in the South (10%)
- Baptists (50%), Lutherans (54%), Pentecostals (54%), and Non-Denominational (59%) are more likely to select “The economy is having no impact on my church” than Methodists (40%)

“Since the beginning of 2021, have your offerings been ...”

- Pastors age 55-64 (31%) are more likely to select “Lower than budgeted” than pastors age 65+ (22%)
- Female pastors are more likely to select “Lower than budgeted” than males (33% v. 25%)
- African American pastors (43%) are more likely to select “Lower than budgeted” than White pastors (25%)
- Pastors with a Doctoral degree are most likely to select “Higher than budgeted” (35%)
- Mainline pastors are more likely to select “Lower than budgeted” than Evangelical pastors (32% v. 24%)
- Methodists are the most likely to select “Lower than budgeted” (43%)
- Pastors of churches with attendance of 0-49 (54%) are more likely to select “About what we budgeted” than those with attendance of 250+ (41%)

“Compared to your calendar year 2020 offerings, have your total offerings so far for 2021 been ...”

- Pastors age 45-54 (27%) are more likely to select “Below 2020’s offerings” than pastors age 18-44 (19%)
- Male pastors are more likely to select “Above 2020’s offerings” than females (34% v. 24%)
- Pastors with a Doctoral degree (41%) are more likely to select “Above 2020’s offerings” than pastors with no college degree (27%) or a Master’s degree (29%)
- Mainline pastors are more likely to select “Below 2020’s offerings” than Evangelical pastors (26% v. 20%)
- Pastors in the Midwest (47%) are more likely to select “The same as 2020’s offerings” than those in the Northeast (35%)
- Pentecostals (47%) are more likely to select “Above 2020’s offerings” than Baptists (32%), Lutherans (25%), Methodists (23%), and Presbyterian/Reformed (28%)
- Pastors of churches with attendance of 100-249 (35%) are more likely to select “Above 2020’s offerings” than those with attendance of 50-99 (27%)

“Approximately what percentage are your calendar year 2021 offerings below 2020’s offerings?”

- Male pastors are more likely to answer “Above by 10% to 24%” than females (18% v. 9%)
- African Americans pastors (21%) are more likely to answer “Below by 25% or more” than White pastors (6%)
- Pastors with a Doctoral degree (15%) are more likely to answer “Above by 1% to 9%” than pastors with no college degree (6%) or a Master’s degree (8%)
- Pastors with no college degree are the most likely to answer “Below by 25% or more” (17%)
- Pastors in the Midwest (51%) are more likely to answer “Same as 2020” than those in the Northeast (40%)

“Approximately what percentage are your calendar year 2021 offerings below 2020’s offerings?”

- Baptists (49%), Lutherans (52%), and Presbyterian/Reformed (50%) are more likely to answer “Same as 2020” than Pentecostals (35%)
- Pentecostals (30%) are more likely to answer “Above by 10-24%” than Baptists (15%), Lutherans (12%), Methodists (9%), and Presbyterian/Reformed (14%)
- Methodists (14%) are more likely to select “Below by 25% or more” than Baptists (5%), Lutherans (4%), Presbyterian/Reformed (6%), Nondenominational (2%)
- Pastors of churches with attendance of 100-249 (13%) are more likely to answer “Above by 1% to 9%” than those with attendance of 0-49 (6%) and 50-99 (7%)

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