

Survey: Protestant pastors see increased church diversity

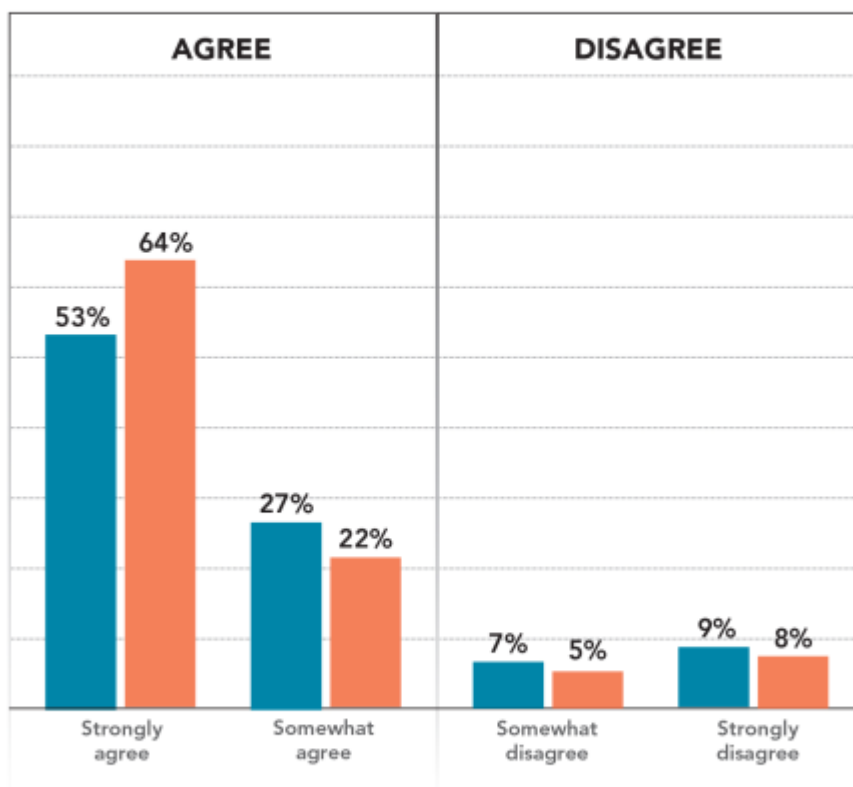
Pastors are more likely to say their churches are made up of multiple racial and ethnic groups than they were four years ago.

News in the [April 25, 2018](#) issue

My church is predominantly one racial or ethnic group

Among Protestant pastors

2017 2013



Notes: 3% not sure in 2017 & 1% not sure in 2013.
May not equal 100% due to rounding.



LifeWayResearch.com

Data from study of Protestant pastors asking about church diversity. Graph from [LifeWay Research](#).

More than four in five Protestant pastors—or 81 percent—say their congregations are predominantly made up of one racial or ethnic group.

That figure is high, but not as high as it was four years ago, according to a study published recently by LifeWay Research. It was 86 percent in a similar survey of both mainline and evangelical churches by LifeWay in 2013.

“Protestant churches are still mostly divided by race, but they’re heading in the right direction,” said Scott McConnell, LifeWay Research executive director, in a statement.

Pastors of churches with 250 or more congregants were less likely (74 percent) to say their churches are mostly one racial or ethnic group.

Denominationally, Pentecostal pastors were least likely (68 percent) to say their churches are made up of predominantly one race or ethnicity. Lutheran pastors were most likely (89 percent) to report a lack of diversity.

The LifeWay data does not include the actual racial and ethnic makeup of churches, only how pastors responded to the statement “My church is predominantly one racial or ethnic group.”

LifeWay’s survey of 1,000 Protestant pastors was conducted by phone in August and September 2017. It had an overall margin of error of plus or minus 3.2 percentage points. —Religion News Service

A version of this article, which was edited on April 23, appears in the print edition under the title “Survey: church diversity rises among Protestants.”