



Executive Summary

The New Faces of Church Planting and Multisiting

*Insights from Over
2,700 Church Planters and
Campus Pastors*

By Warren Bird, Ph.D.



Historic Research

North America's largest-ever survey of its kind.

2,702 Participants:

- 2,315 church planters/founding pastors
- 387 multisite directors or campus pastors

50+ Denominations/Networks:

- Most responses: Southern Baptists
- Second most responses: ARC (Association of Related Churches)
- U.S. (92%) and Canada (8%)

In 2022, ECFA (Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability) launched a survey titled “The New Faces of Church Planting and Multisiting” under the leadership of Warren Bird, Ph.D., ECFA's Senior Vice President of Research and Equipping. The survey was over a year in development. Its preparation involved focus groups, numerous reviewers from a diverse community of church leaders, and comparison against major surveys conducted in recent years.*

ECFA sponsored the survey in an effort to serve hundreds of ECFA members that are involved in church planting or multisite campuses. ECFA is also eager to help a larger number of new churches and campuses lay the right foundation for leadership, board, and financial integrity.

This Executive Summary serves as an overview of the study and select findings. The following graphics summarize the scope of the survey and the reports to come. See also a free webinar titled “The New Faces of Church Planting and Multisiting,” available at [ECFA.org/events](https://ecfa.org/events).

5 Full Reports Are Coming (see [ECFA.org/surveys](https://ecfa.org/surveys))...



Funding: What Does It Cost to Launch a New Church or Campus?



Ethnicity/Race: What Trends Are We Seeing with New Churches that Are Multiracial?



Pandemic: Did the Pandemic Change the Trajectory of Church Plants or Multisite Campuses?



Multiplication/Replication: What Are the Best Predictors of a Church's Ability to Multiply Itself?



Church Plant vs Multisite: Church Planting vs. Multisite Campus Launching: How Do They Differ?

* The survey launched February 22, 2022 via targeted emails and widespread social media. It closed May 30, 2022, with a total 3,286 participants, a number that was narrowed to 2,702 after data cleanup that included removal of duplicate entries from the same church, of survey takers outside of North America, of non-Protestant participants, and of survey responses with too few questions answered. The survey design used extensive skip logic such that each participant received 15 minutes' of relevant questions, tailored to their circumstances. Thus no survey taker responded to every question in the survey.

The following graphics are excerpted from the five upcoming reports listed at the bottom of the previous page. Each follows a format of a headline to show the main idea, a visualization of the research data, and at bottom the actual survey question(s). The N statements (bottom right) show the number of survey participants for the questions behind that particular graphic. When possible, medians are featured rather than averages, because medians are less susceptible to distortion by outliers.

Big Multiplication Vision Pairs with High Conversion Growth

When asked how many times their church will “multiply” in the next 5 years, church planters who reported...






	“We’ll multiply ZERO times”	“We’ll multiply 10 or MORE times”
 Conversion and renewal growth	34%	51%
 Annual growth rate since launching	0.3%	10%
 Launch attendance	42	60
 Pastor’s age at launch	37	38
 Median Launch Year	2011	2016

Table 1

N=1333

Question: How many total churches or campuses/sites/locations (including “daughters,” “granddaughters,” and “great-granddaughters”) do you believe God will start through your church across its next 5 years of life?

Question: Estimate the percentage of your congregation today that’s represented by the following. [5 options designed to add up to 100%: Transfer growth (from LOCAL churchgoing Christians), Transfer growth (from NEW-TO-YOUR-AREA churchgoing Christians), Biological growth (from church families having/adopting children), Renewal growth (from de-churched Christians), Conversion growth (from new Christians)]

New Church Pre-Launch Funding Draws from a Combination of Sources

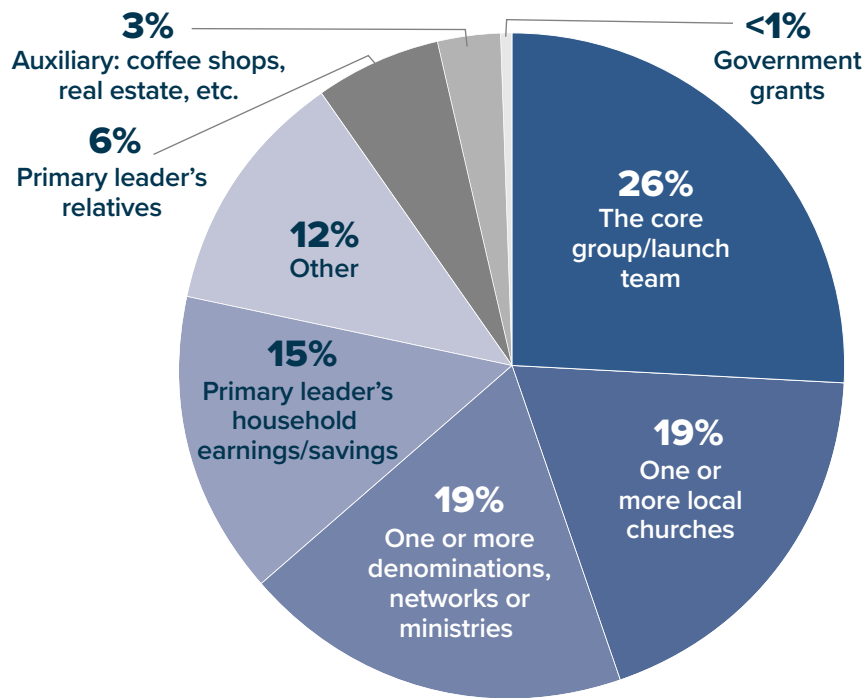


Table 2

N=1144

Question: Estimate the percentages of prelaunch funding that came from: [8 options offered]

The Pandemic Caused Only a Temporary Dip in the Ability for New Churches to Launch Large

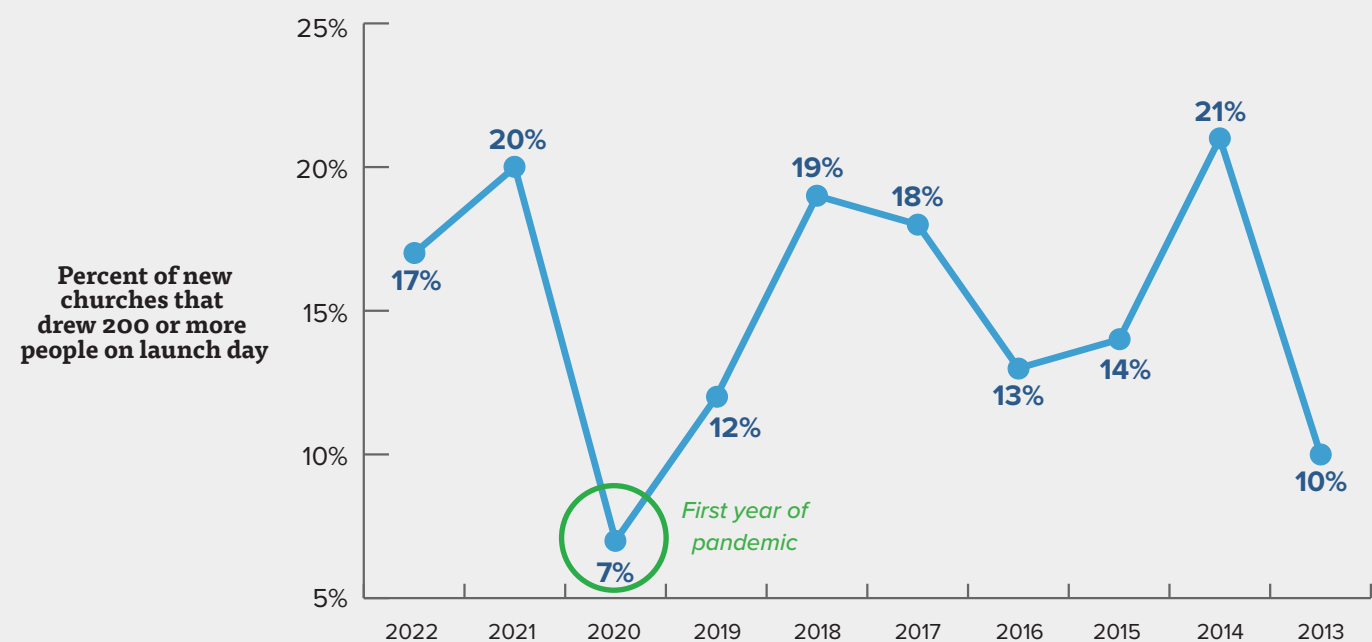


Table 3

N=1710

Multiracial Churches Are Led by All Races, with Black Pastors Leading the Way

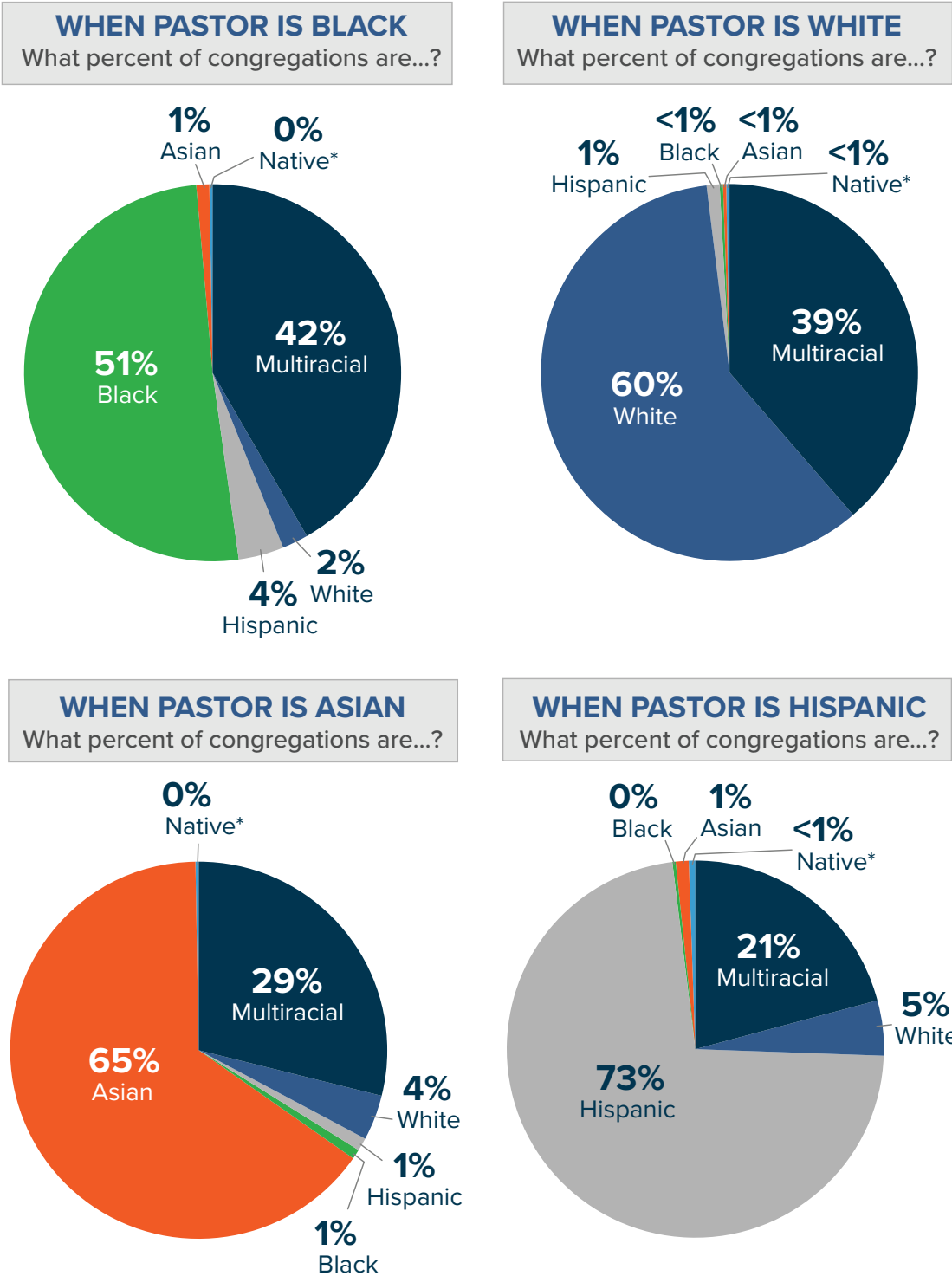


Table 4

N=1644

* Includes American Indian, Native Alaskan, and Native Hawaiian
Question: What is the primary ethnicity of the lead pastor?
Question? What percentages from the following categories would you estimate for the ethnicity of your congregation?

Multisite Churches Fuel Church Planting, and Vice Versa

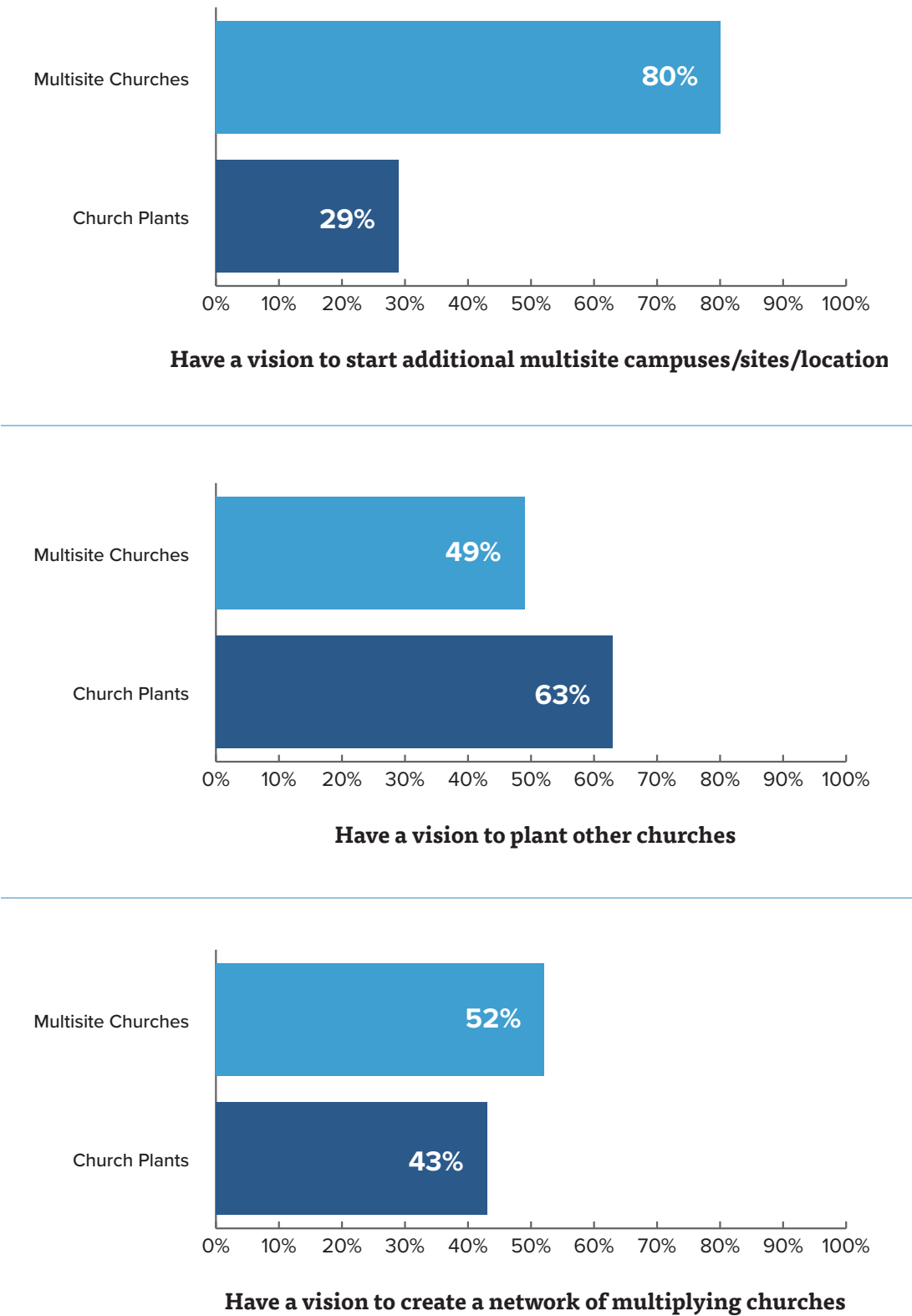


Table 5

N=429

Question: Which [of the following] are part of the vision today? [Three levels of response were offered: Not at all, somewhat, and very much. Responses above are for “very much” only.]

The Higher the Launch Funding, the Larger the Attendance Today

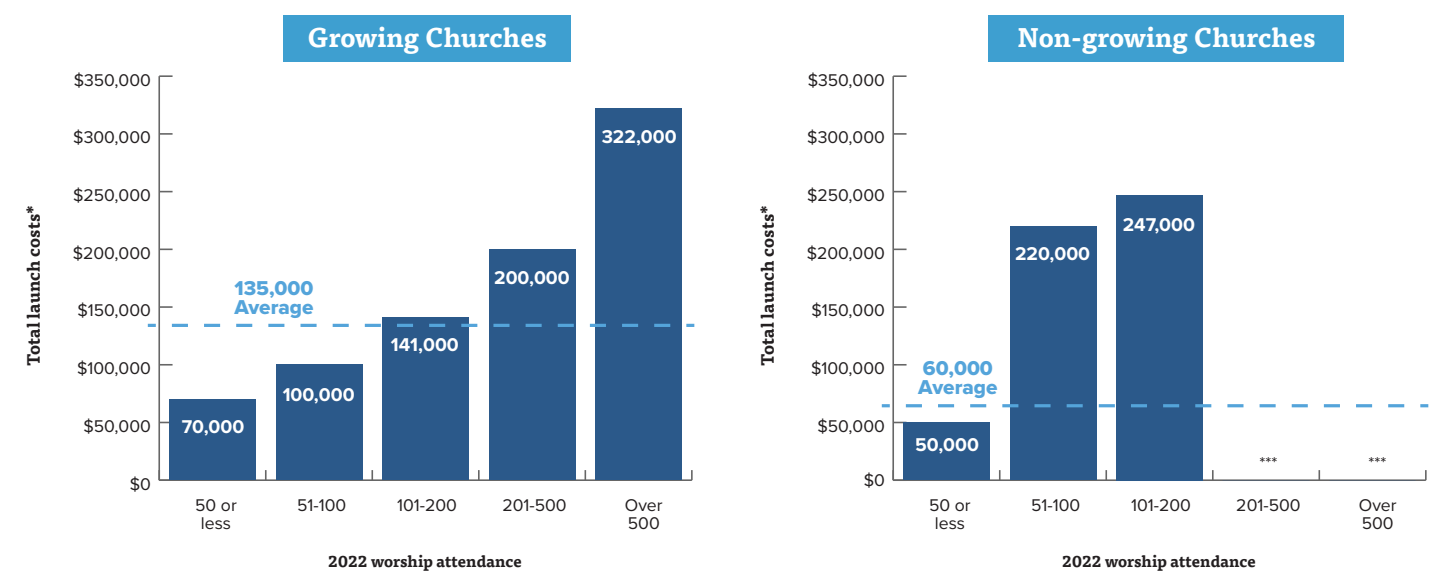


Table 6

N=861

* All costs are stated as medians. Total launch costs were calculated as a combination of start-up costs and first-year costs, each defined below.

** We defined a growing church as one where average annual attendance growth was 5% or more between launch and 2020, and then held even or grew during 2020-2022.

*** Data on larger churches is unavailable. Fewer than 20 survey participants serve non-growing churches that with current worship attendances great than 200.

Question: Start-up costs: What were your total start-up costs “NOT including salaries” through your public launch day?

Question: First year costs: What were the total operation costs for the first 12 months, including salaries?

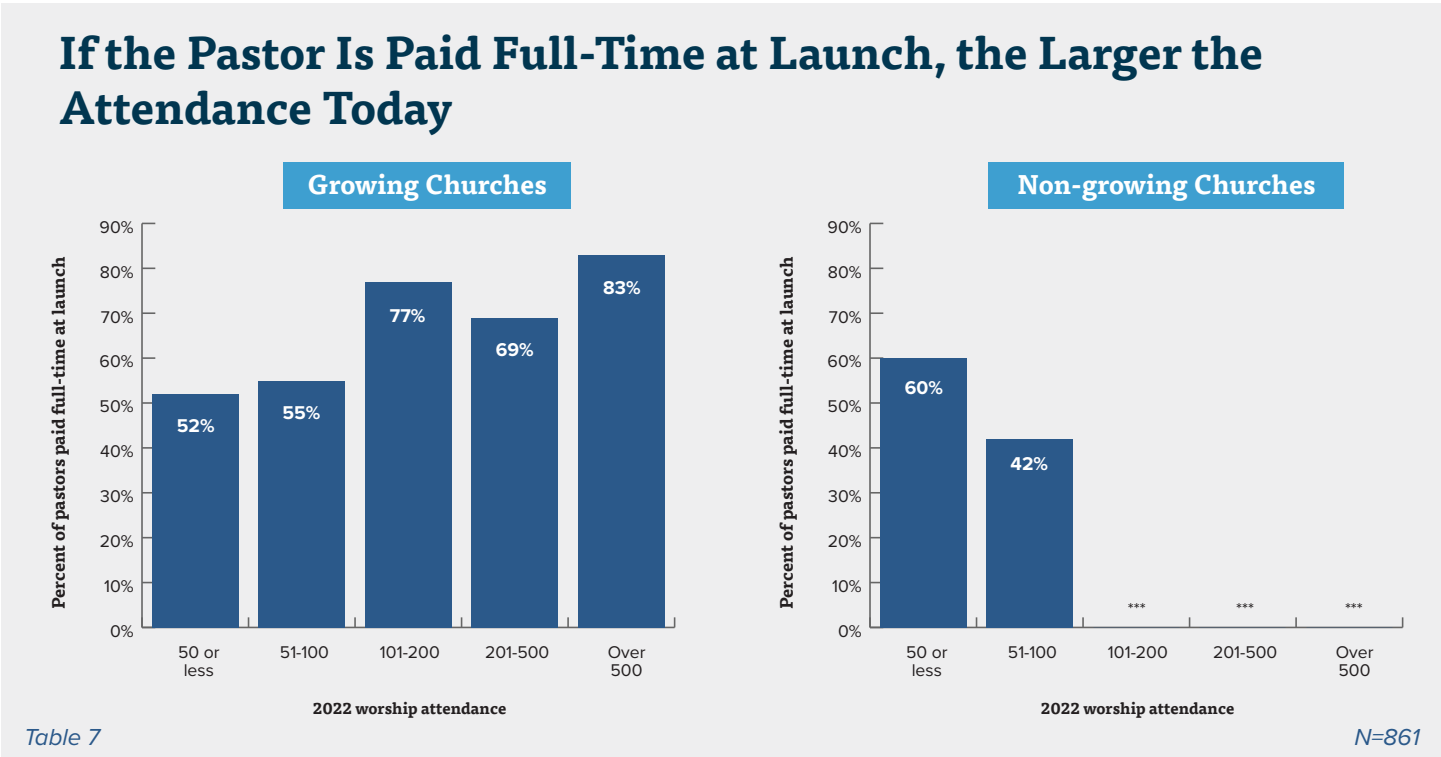


Table 7

N=861

* We defined a growing church as one where average annual attendance growth was 5% or more between launch and 2020, and then held even or grew during 2020-2022.

** Data on larger churches is unavailable. Fewer than 20 survey participants serve non-growing churches that with current worship attendances great than 200.

*** Fewer than 20 churches reported this information, so no average was calculated.

Question: At the time you launched, how many people were paid...? [options included full-time, part-time (10-30 hrs/week), and very part-time (up to 10 hrs/week)]



Enhancing Trust

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