



The State of AI in the Church Survey 2025





What's Inside

- Key Findings
- Current State Of AI Utilization
- Perceived Benefits & Applications
- Challenges & Concerns
- Policies & Training
- Demographics
- Next Steps

About The Survey

In 2025, Exponential conducted a national survey titled “*The State of AI in the Church*” by the [AI NEXT](#) & [ChurchTechToday.com](#) teams. The survey drew input from a wide spectrum of church leaders that are associated with ministries across 20+ denominations as well as non-denominational churches. AI NEXT collaborated with additional organizations to increase the reach of the national survey including [AIforChurchLeaders.com](#) and [ChatGPTforChurches.com](#). The aim is to serve the thousands of churches that are exploring and adopting artificial intelligence in their ministry work today.

We welcome your feedback and comments!

Email Barbara Martinez at barbara@exponential.org

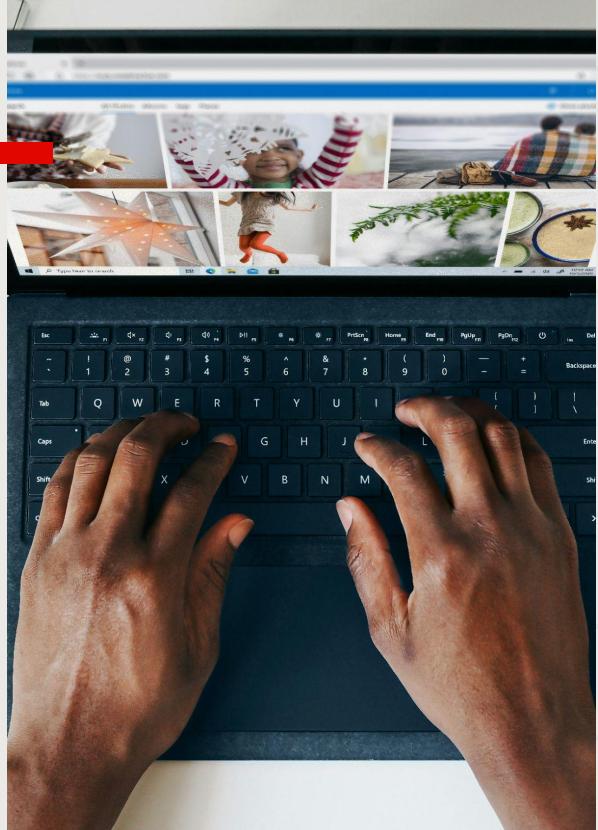
Image for twelve years came up behind him and touched the fringe of his garment; ²¹for she said to herself, "If I only touch his garment, I shall be made well." ²²Jesus turned, and seeing her he said, "Take heart, daughter; your faith has made well." And instantly the woman was made well.

²³And when Jesus came to the ruler's house, and saw the flute players, and the crowd making a tumult, ²⁴he said, "Depart; for the girl is not dead but sleeping." And they laughed at him.

These Twelve Jesus sent out, charging them to go nowhere among the Gentiles, and enter no town of the Samaritans, ²⁵but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. ²⁶And preach to you go, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.' ²⁷Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, cast out demons. You received without pay, give without pay. ²⁸"Take no gold, nor silver, nor copper in your belts, ²⁹no bag for your journey,

The State Of AI In The Church Overview

The responses to this survey demonstrate a growing interest among church leaders in integrating AI into various aspects of ministry. However, there's a balanced mix of excitement and caution, reflecting the nascent stage of AI's adoption in religious contexts. The enthusiasm for AI's potential in enhancing ministry effectiveness contrasts with concerns about ethical implications and the need to preserve the human touch.



Key Findings

SECTION 1

Key Findings

91%

of respondents said they are **FOR** the use of AI in ministry to some degree. *Only 9% are fully against it.*



Key Findings

46%

are optimistic and learning to use AI tools for ministry purposes. **25% are using AI tools daily.**





Key Findings

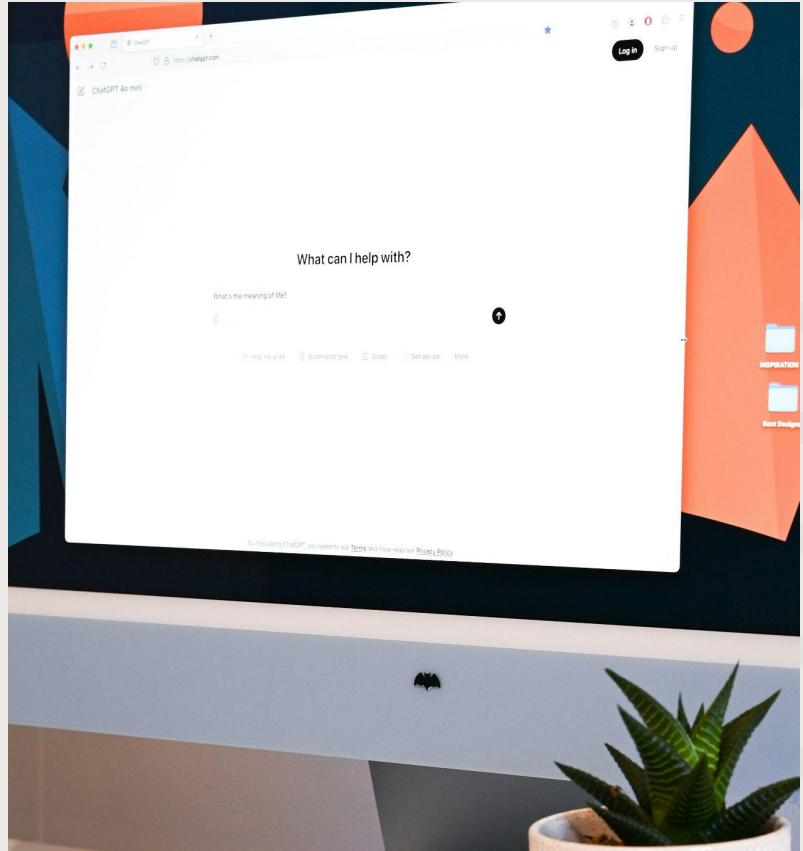
The top ways AI is being used include —

- Content Creation (36%)
- Research (26%)
- Admin Work (16%)
- Image Generation (10%)

Key Findings

The most popular AI tools being used are —

- ChatGPT (26%)
- Grammarly (11%)
- Microsoft Co-Pilot (9%)
- Google Gemini (8%)

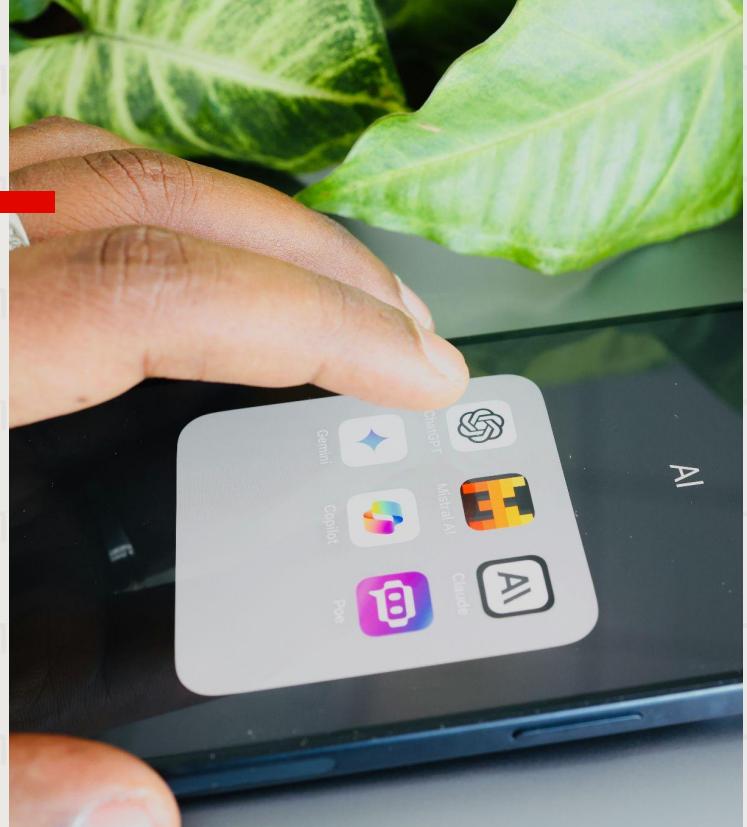


SECTION 2

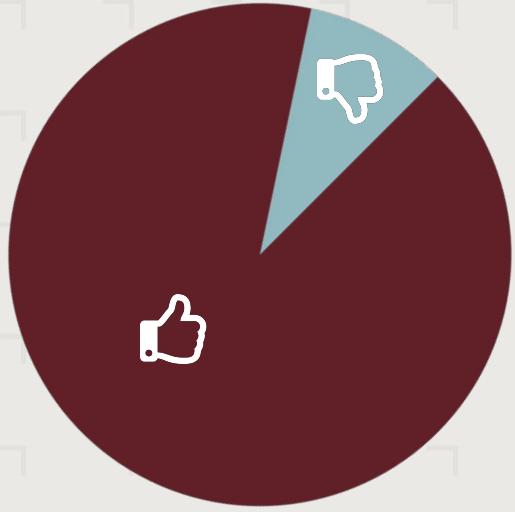
How the Church Uses AI

AI Utilization

The variety in AI tool usage underscores the technology's versatility in supporting church operations and spiritual activities. Yet, it also highlights the necessity for targeted training and resources to maximize AI's benefits while navigating ethical considerations.



Are you **FOR** or
AGAINST the use of
AI in ministry work?



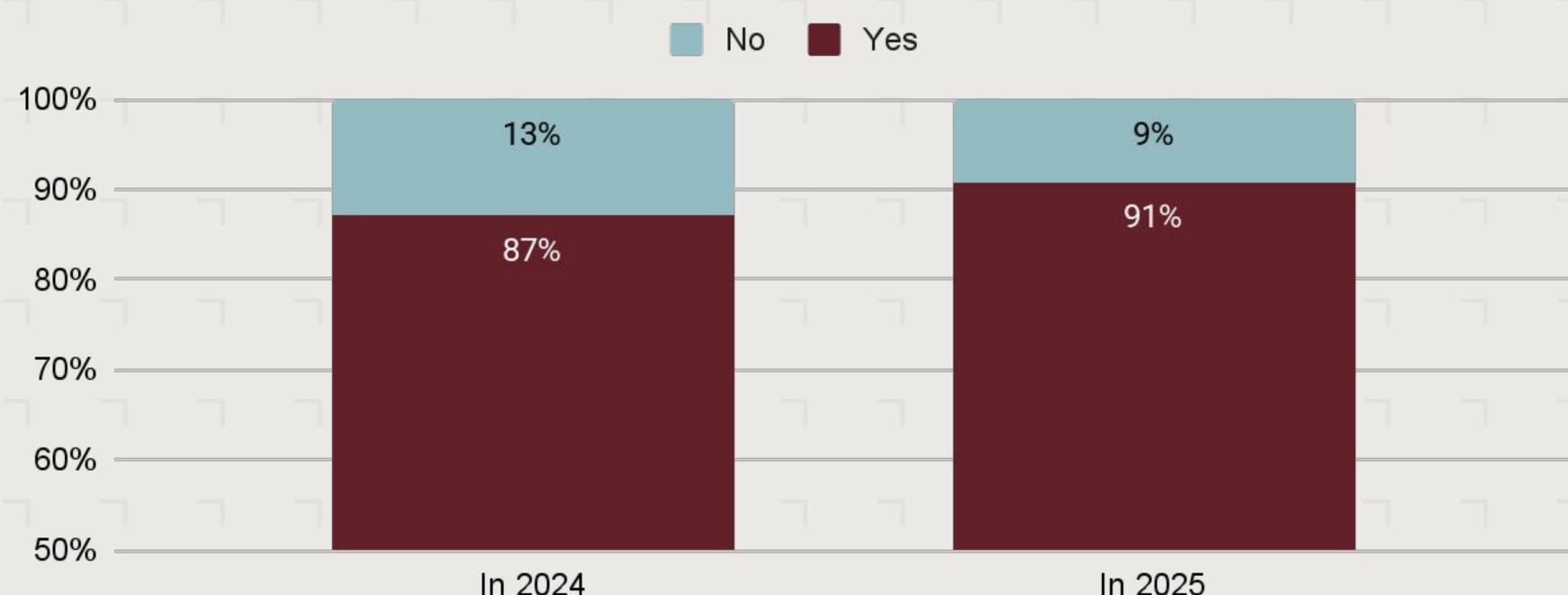
91%

FOR

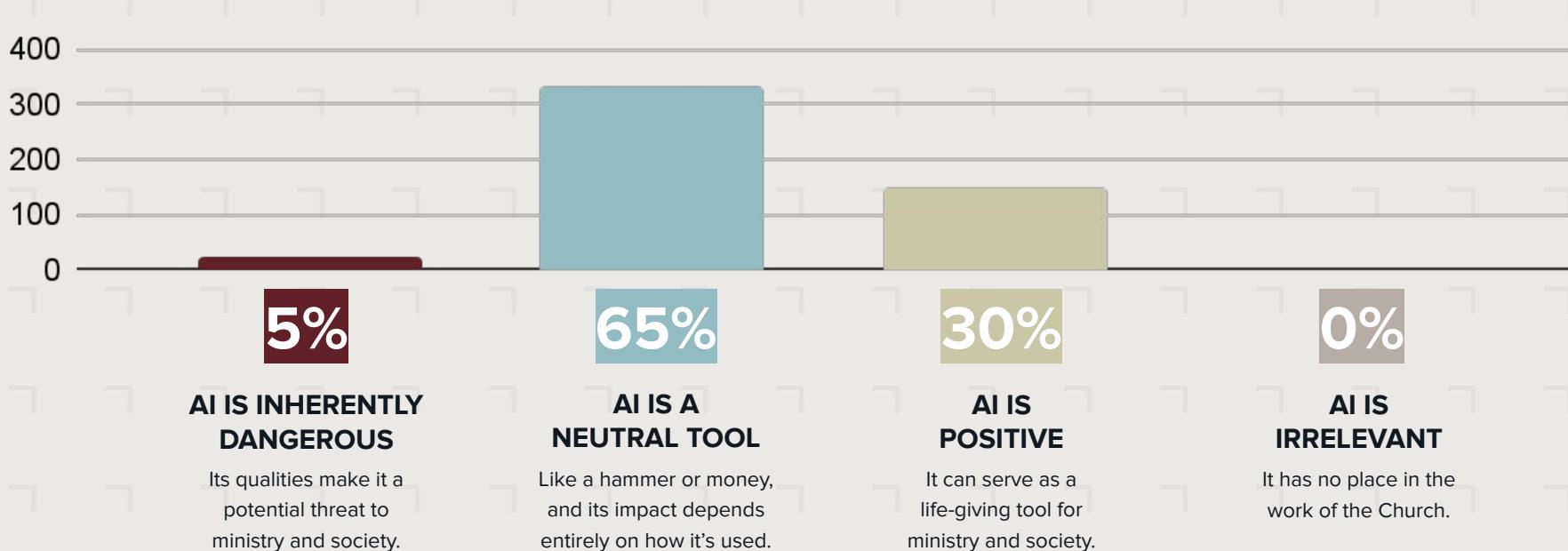
9%

AGAINST

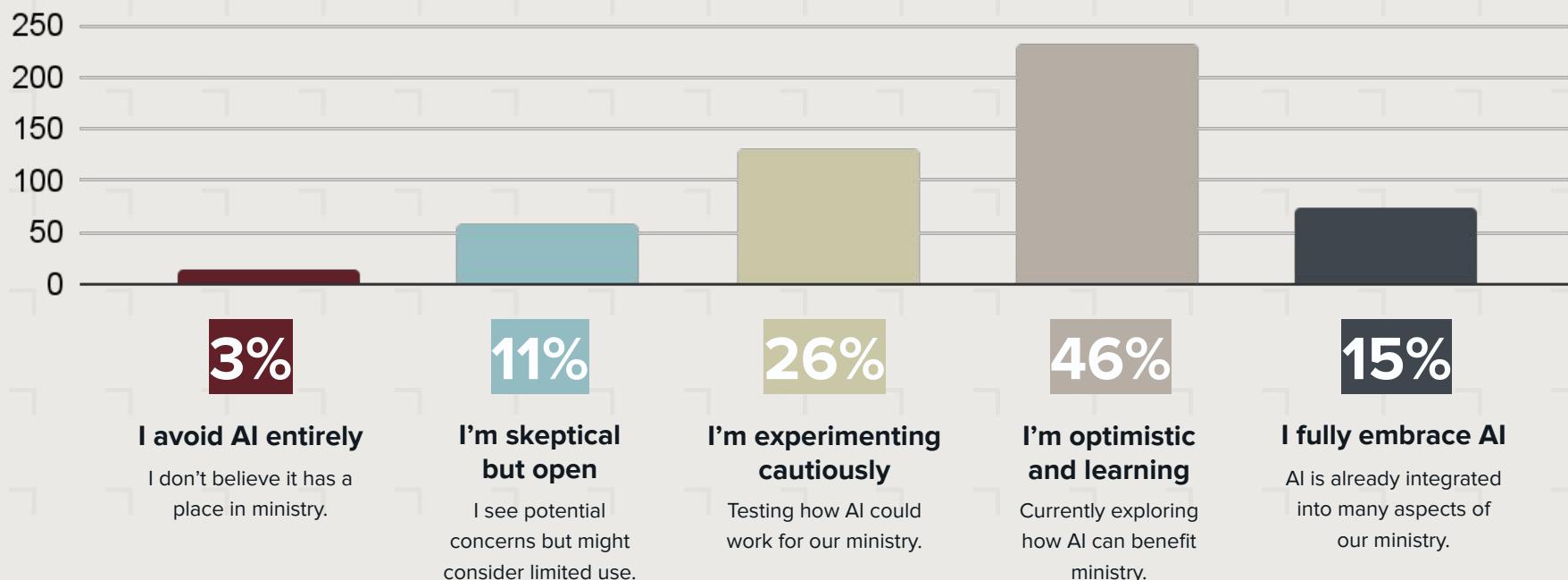
2024 vs 2025: More church leaders are now FOR the use of AI



Which best describes your perspective on AI as it relates to ministry?



Which of the following best describes your approach as a church leader?



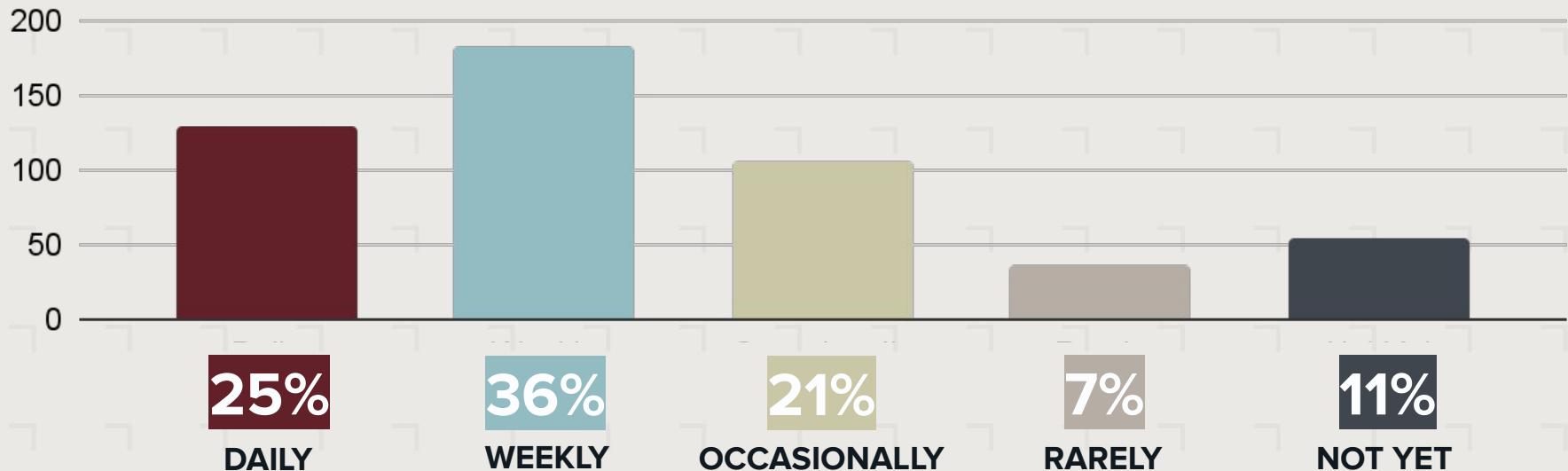
Key Findings

61%

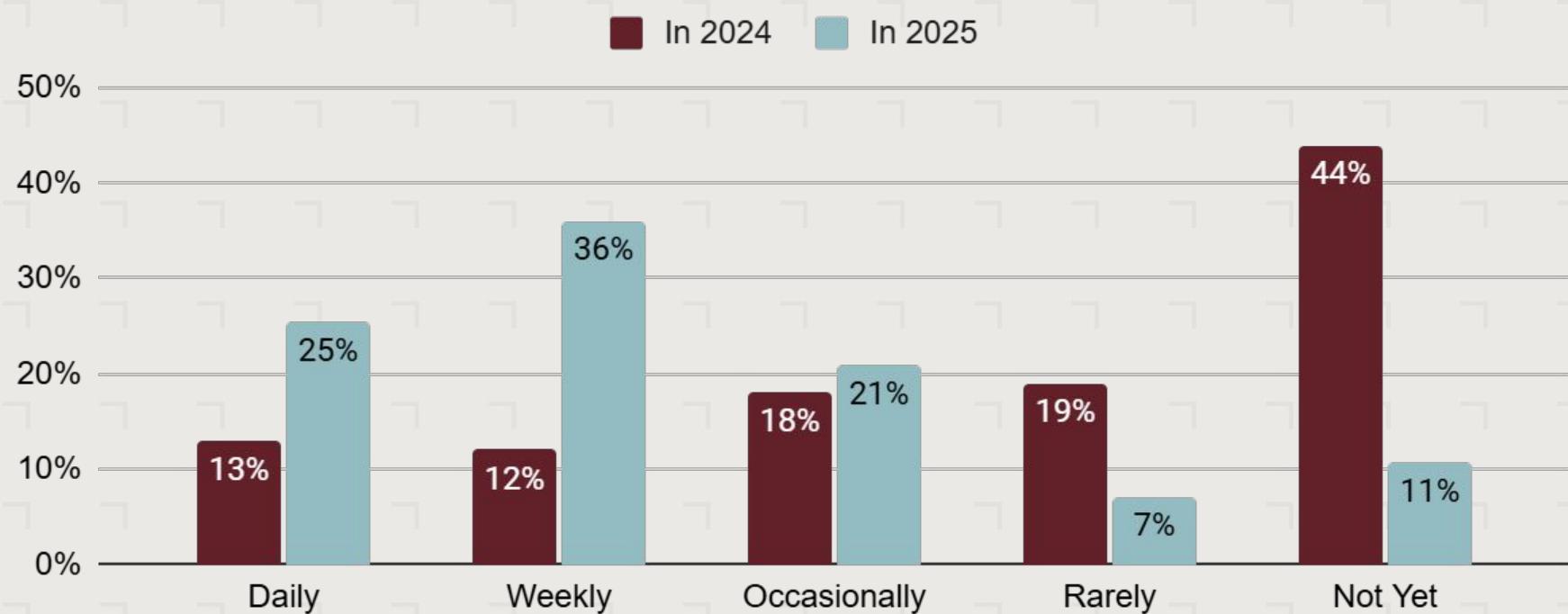
use AI tools frequently (i.e. weekly or daily), compared to only 43% in 2024.



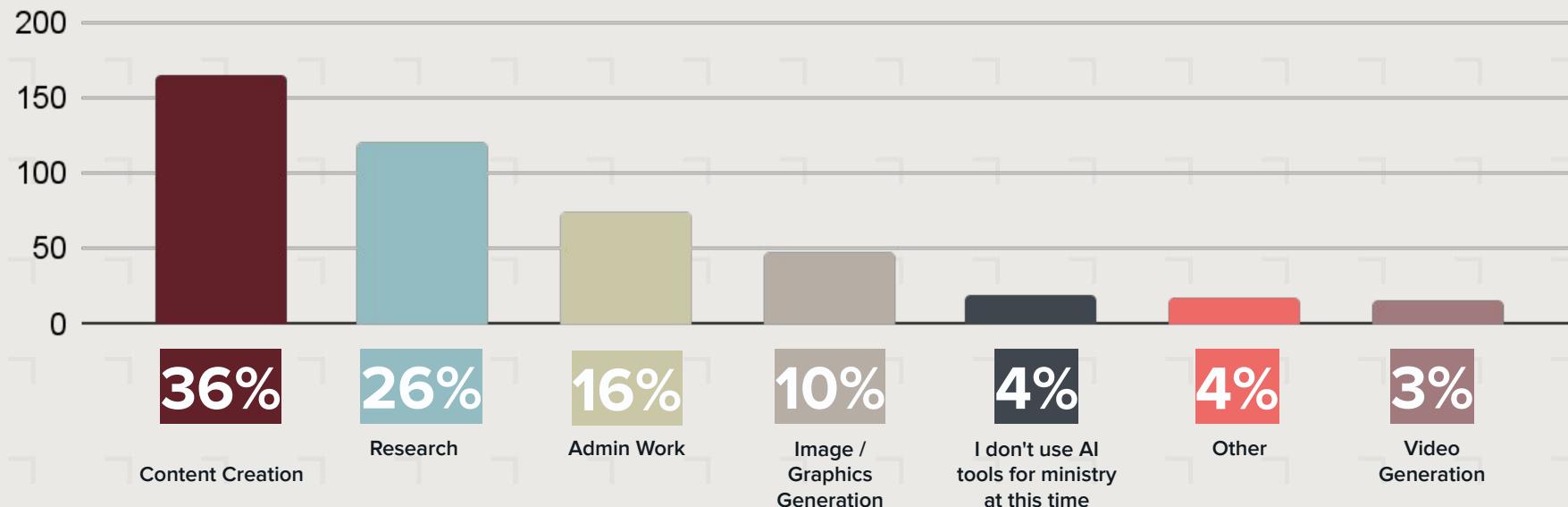
How frequently do you use AI in your ministry work?



2024 vs 2025: AI is being used more frequently



What is the PRIMARY way you use AI tools in ministry?



Which AI tools have you used in the last 6 months?

26%  ChatGPT

6%  Claude.ai

2%  Grok

11%  Grammarly

5%  Perplexity

2%  Church.tech

9%  Microsoft Co-Pilot

4%  Dall-E

2%  MidJourney

8%  Google Gemini

4%  Google Notebook LM

1%  SermonShots

8%  Canva Magic Studio

3%  Bing Copilot

4% Other

Other AI tools surveyed: ElevenLabs (2%), Ideogram (1%), Pulpit AI (1%), HeyGen (1%), Synthesia (0%), RunwayML (0%)

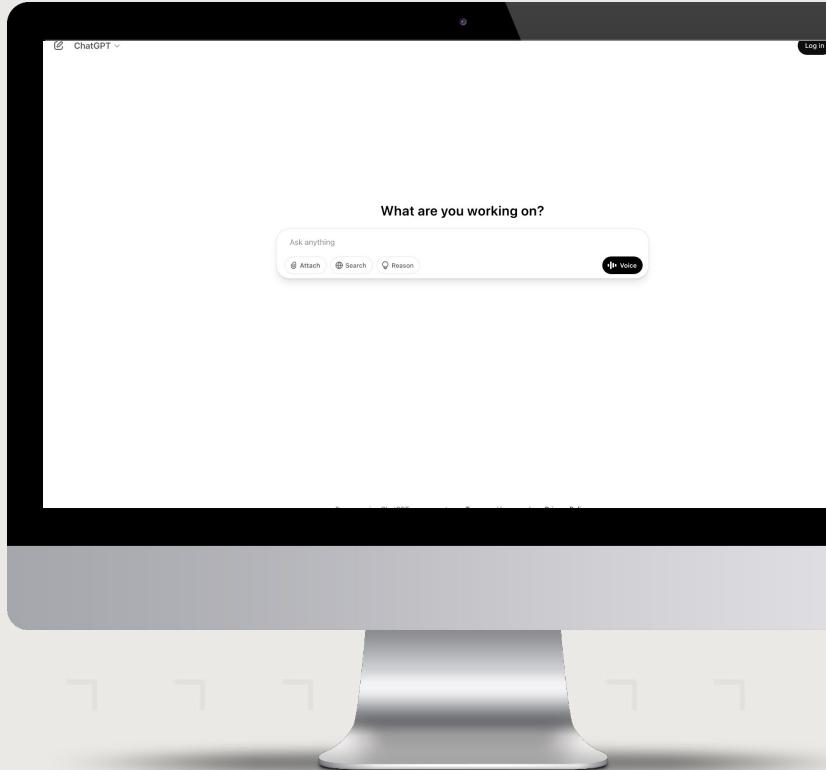


A Closer Look At The Top 5 Utilized Tools

ChatGPT, Grammarly, Canva Magic, Google Gemini, Bing

ChatGPT

ChatGPT is the most visible generative AI tool that can engage in human-like conversations and assist with a wide range of tasks, from answering questions to generating content. As the most popular AI tool among church leaders (26%), ChatGPT is being used for applications such as sermon preparation, research, and crafting church communications. Its versatility and ease of use make it a powerful asset for streamlining ministry work and sparking creative ideas.



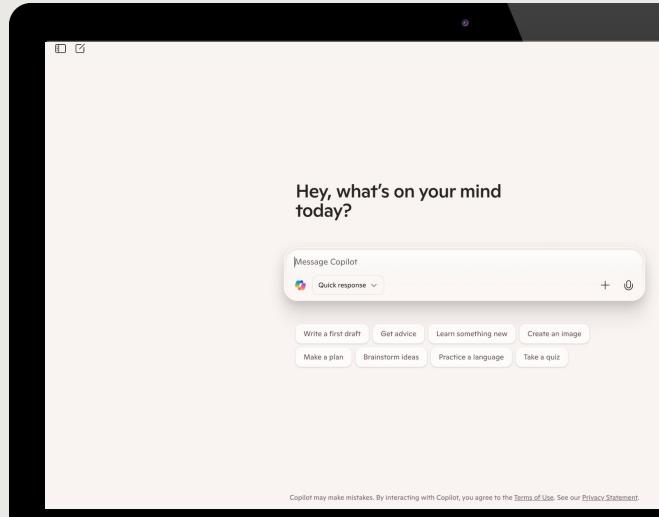
Grammarly

Grammarly is an AI-powered writing assistant that helps users improve the clarity, concision, and correctness of their written content. 11% of church leaders reported using Grammarly, likely for tasks such as polishing emails, newsletters, blog posts, and other church communications. By catching errors and suggesting improvements, Grammarly can help church staff produce high-quality written materials more efficiently.

The screenshot shows the Grammarly homepage. At the top, there's a navigation bar with links for Product, Work, Education, Pricing, and Resources. On the right side of the header are Contact Sales, Log In, and a Get Grammarly button. The main headline reads "Responsible AI that ensures your writing and reputation shine". Below it, a sub-headline says "Work with an AI writing partner that helps you find the words you need—to write that tricky email, to get your point across, to keep your work moving." There are two sign-up buttons: "Sign up It's free" and "Sign up with Google". A note below them states: "By signing up, you agree to the Terms and Conditions and Privacy Policy. California residents, see our CA Notice at Collection." At the bottom, a section titled "Trusted by 50,000 organizations and 40 million people" lists logos for various clients including dotloop, ATLASIAN, align, Washington University in St. Louis, EVERLANE, BlackRock, ZOOM, INDIANAPOLIS UNIVERSITY, zapier, Penn, ASU Arizona State University, Expensify, hackerone, AFFINITY X, salesforce, and Upwork.

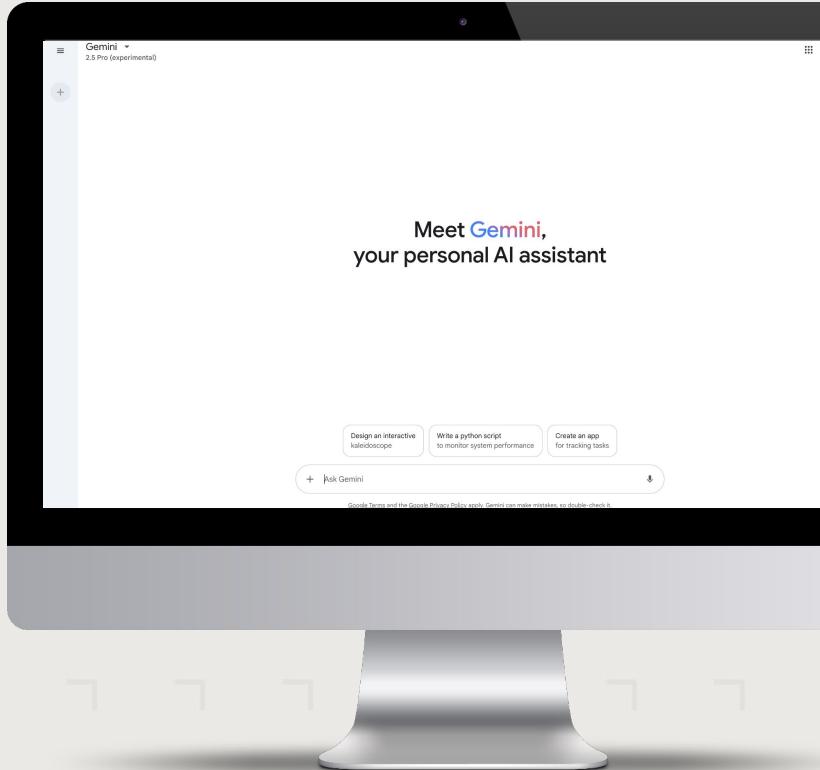
Microsoft Co-Pilot

Microsoft Co-Pilot is an AI search engine developed by Microsoft that now incorporates the same underlying AI technology as Open AI's ChatGPT to provide intelligent and conversational search results. 9% of church leaders indicated they use Co-Pilot, for tasks such as research, finding relevant resources, and getting quick answers to questions, and image generation. By leveraging Microsoft's AI-enhanced chatbot capabilities, church staff can access information and insights more quickly and easily.



Google Gemini

Google Gemini is an AI chatbot and language model developed by Google, similar in functionality to ChatGPT. 8% of church leaders reported using Google Gemini, likely for purposes such as research, content generation, and answering questions. As a powerful AI assistant, Google Gemini can help church staff quickly find information, brainstorm ideas, and complete writing tasks more efficiently.



Canva Magic Studio

Canva Magic Studio is an AI-driven set of design capabilities within the Canva design platform that enables users to quickly create professional-looking graphics and visuals. 8% of church leaders indicated they use Canva Magic Studio features. It can be used for tasks like designing social media posts, event flyers, presentation slides, generative AI fill, and other visual design functions.

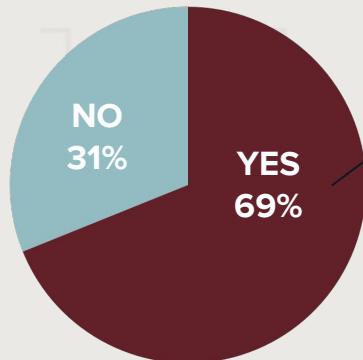




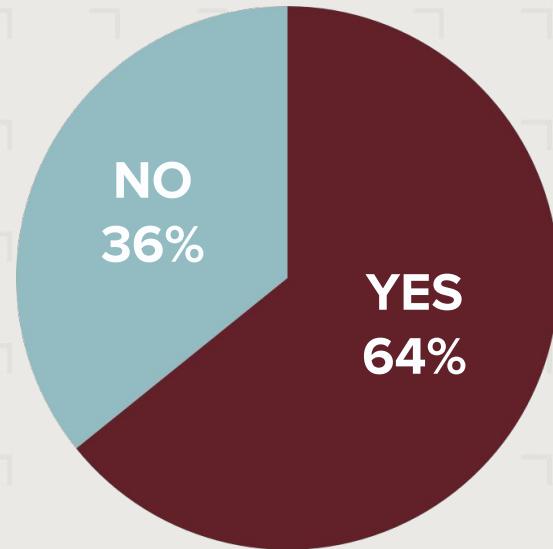
AI For Sermon Prep

The survey reveals that a large segment (64%) of church leaders who prepare sermons are already using AI tools in their sermon writing process. This suggests that **AI** is quickly becoming a key tool for pastors in their weekly message preparation.

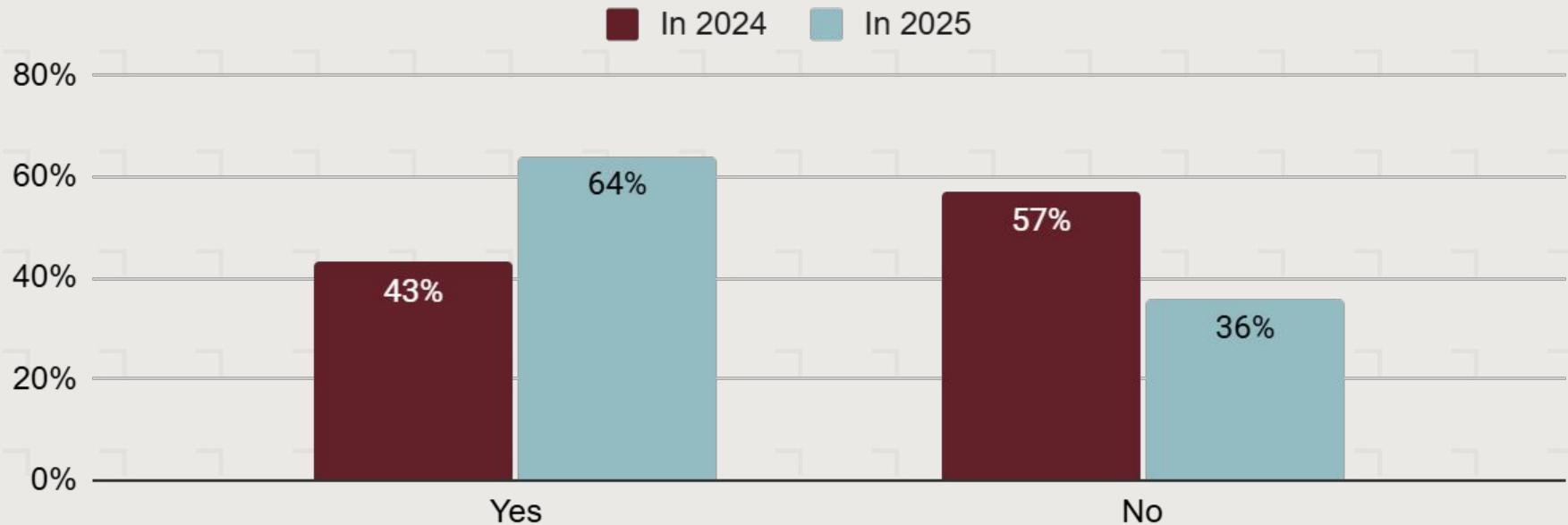
Are you involved in preparing
or writing sermons?



If YES, have you used AI
as part of your sermon
preparation or writing process?



2024 vs 2025: The use of AI for sermon prep and writing is now more acceptable





AI For Sermon Prep

While some may view this as a concerning trend, others likely see it as a way to enhance their research, writing efficiency, and creativity. As AI sermon writing tools continue to improve, it will be important for church leaders to find the right balance between leveraging AI's capabilities and maintaining their unique voice and spiritual insights.

SECTION 3

The Perceived Value of AI



The Potential Of AI

The optimism for AI spans across various areas of church life, from communications and administration to outreach and discipleship. As AI tools become more sophisticated and tailored to ministry use cases, the possibilities for increased efficiency, expanded reach, and data-driven decision making are vast.

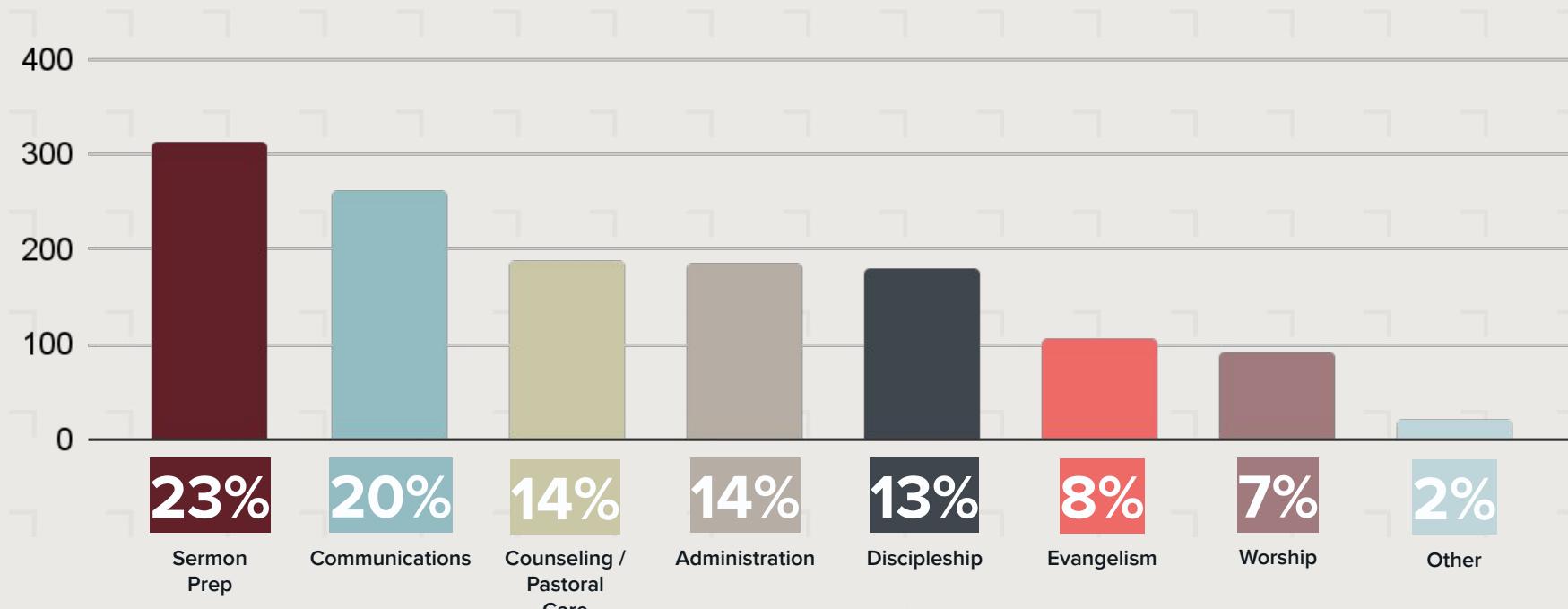
The Perceived Value Of AI

The majority of respondents believe that AI can enhance ministry and also indicated that AI can improve church work. Leaders prioritized operational domains such as —

- Sermon Prep (23%)
- Communications (20%)
- Administration (14%)
- Counseling / Pastoral Care (14%)



What are the top 3 areas of ministry work do you feel AI could disrupt most significantly?



The Perceived Value Of AI

Traditional ministry areas like discipleship (13%), evangelism (8%), and worship (7%) were seen as less promising, possibly reflecting hesitancy about AI's role in relational and spiritual contexts.

As AI advances, however, new opportunities may emerge to apply it in these areas for enhanced ministry outcomes. Church leaders should strategically explore and experiment with AI across all aspects of ministry.

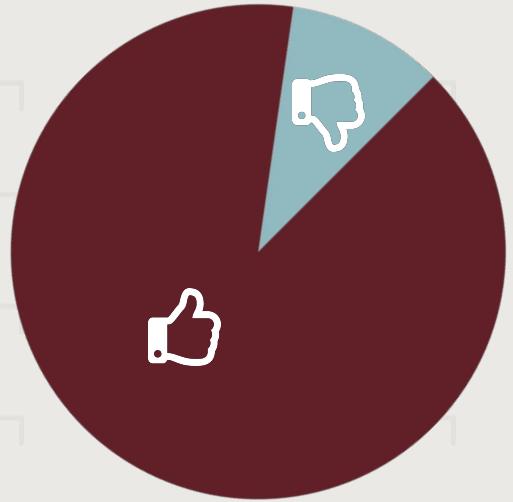




AI & Discipleship

While some pastors remain cautious about AI's role in core spiritual tasks, a significant number—90% are already utilizing it for Discipleship activities. This includes (but is not limited to) syndicating content from Sunday's sermons and years of sermon archives into discussion guides, small group studies, children's sermons, daily devotionals and other items for continuous engagement and teaching throughout the week.

Do you see value in using AI tools for discipleship activities?



90%

YES

10%

NO

How would you use AI tools for pastoral care or counseling?

26%

Help pastors prepare with research, insights, or suggested approaches before meetings

19%

Answer FAQs and recommend resources to congregants
(e.g., books, articles, or support groups)

15%

Help pastors simulate role-play scenarios
(e.g., practicing difficult conversations or unfamiliar topics with AI personas)

13%

Enhance accessibility during in-person or remote meetings
(e.g., AI live captioning for improved understanding for hearing impaired and translation for non-native speakers)

9%

Help pastors with sentiment analysis of congregant messaging to identify urgent needs or emotional tone

7%

Provide spiritual guidance on specific topics
(e.g., assisting congregants with pre-trained Bible-based advice)

4%

Provide 24/7 crisis response support
(e.g., chatbots directing congregants to resources or hotlines)

1%

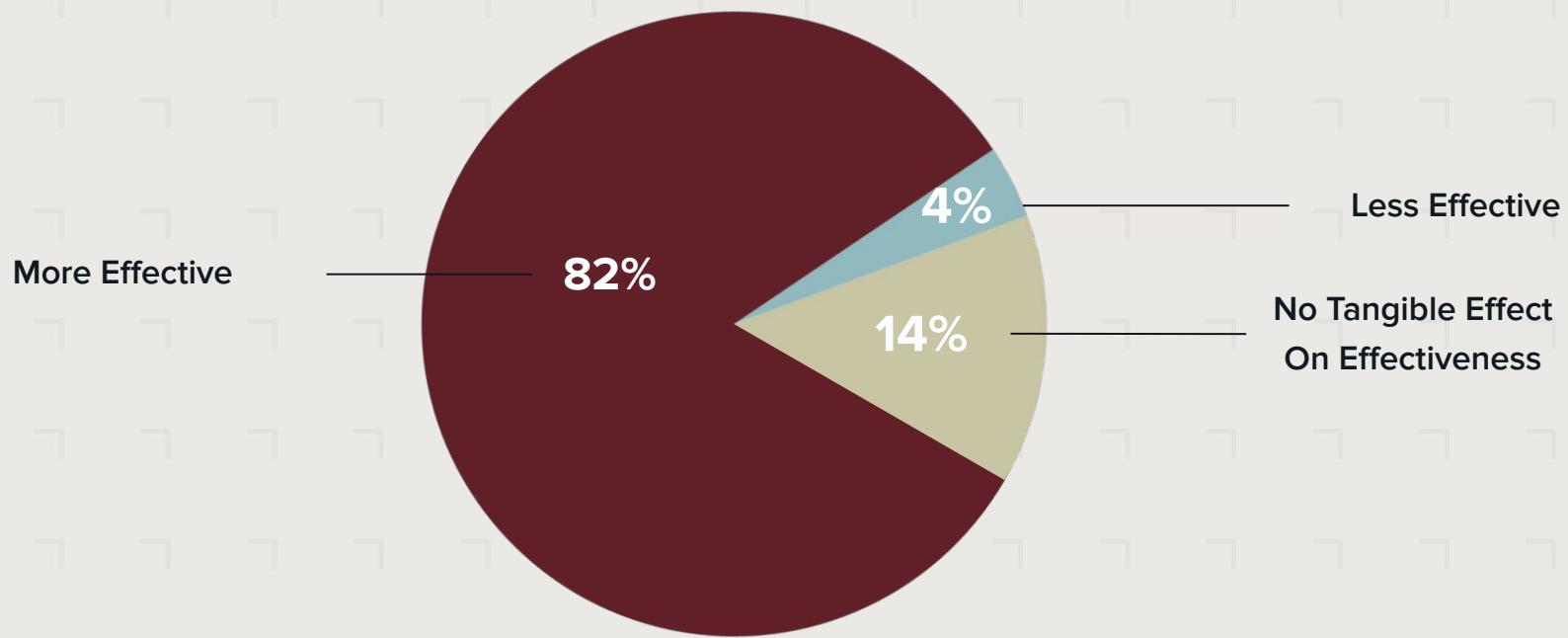
Other - Please specify

The Perceived Value Of AI

As AI advances, new opportunities may emerge to apply it in these areas for enhanced ministry outcomes. Church leaders should strategically explore and experiment with AI across all aspects of ministry.



How do you think AI will impact your church's effectiveness in the next five years?



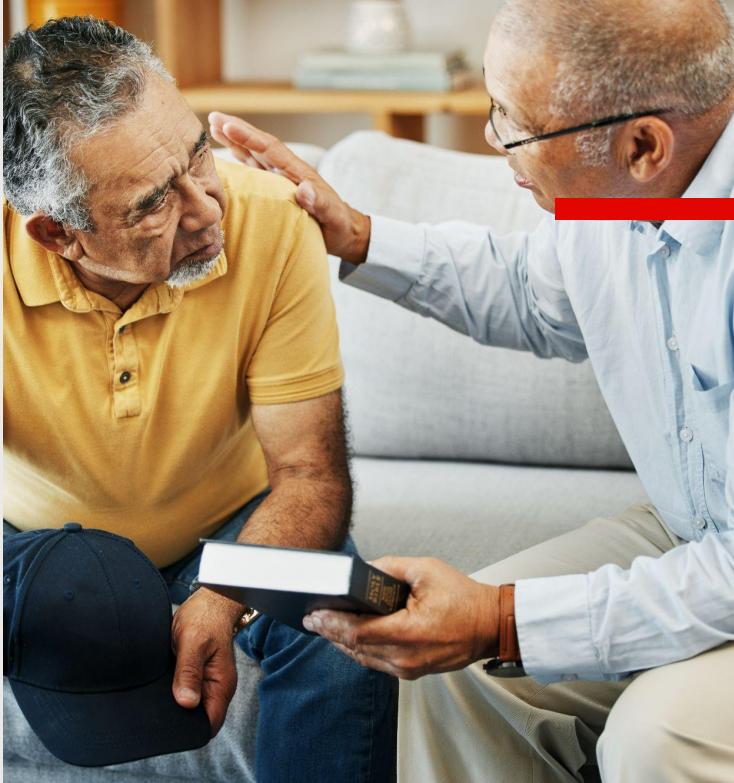


The Potential Of AI

Realizing the potential of AI will require not just technological adoption, but also a willingness to rethink and adapt long-standing ministry strategies and practices. Churches that can successfully navigate this transformation could unlock new levels of impact and growth.

SECTION 4

Ethical Challenges & Concerns



Ethical Concerns Around AI

Ethical concerns significantly influence the church's cautious approach towards AI integration. The focus on specific AI tool training, communications, and content creation reflects a practical outlook towards AI adoption, emphasizing the need for clear guidelines and ethical frameworks to ensure responsible use.

Top Concerns

Theological Misalignment

Concerns about misinformation and the theological accuracy or alignment of AI-generated content remain top of mind for many pastors.



Top Concerns

Replacement Of Human Interactions

Worry about AI replacing or diminishing personal, spiritual guidance, and the quality of human relationships within the church community.



Top Concerns

Privacy And Data Security

How personal data is used
including collection, storage, and
protection of data from the
congregation that is processed
by AI.



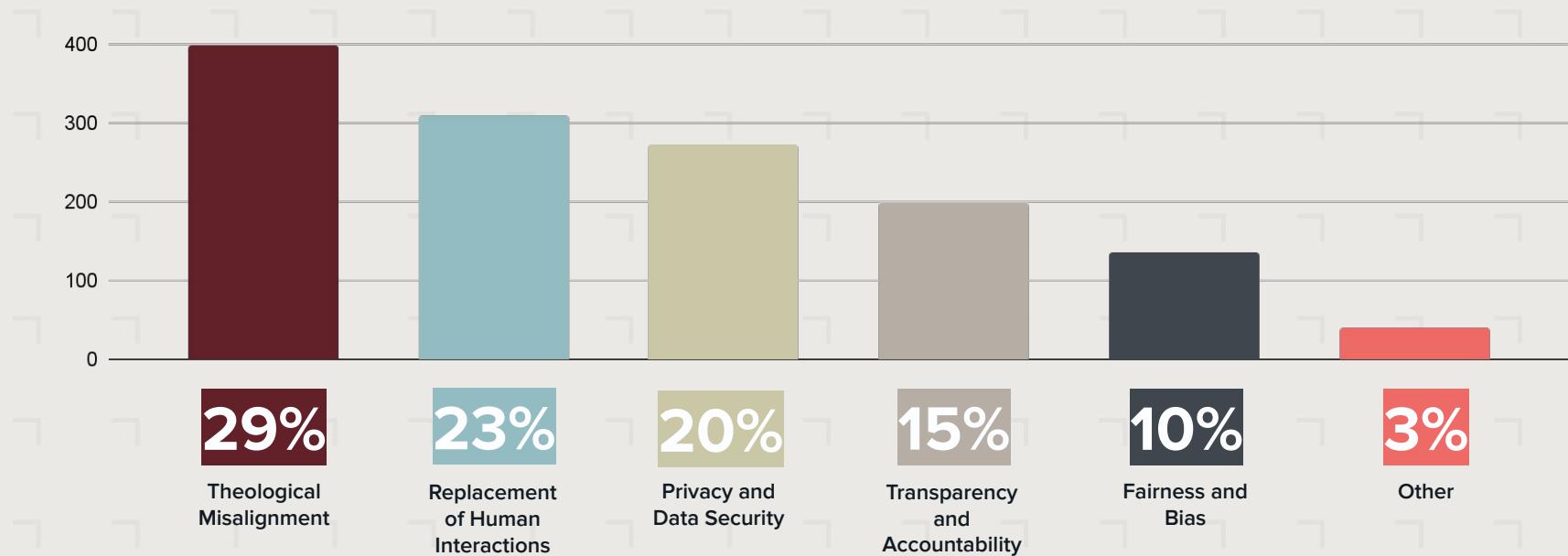
Top Concerns

Transparency and Accountability

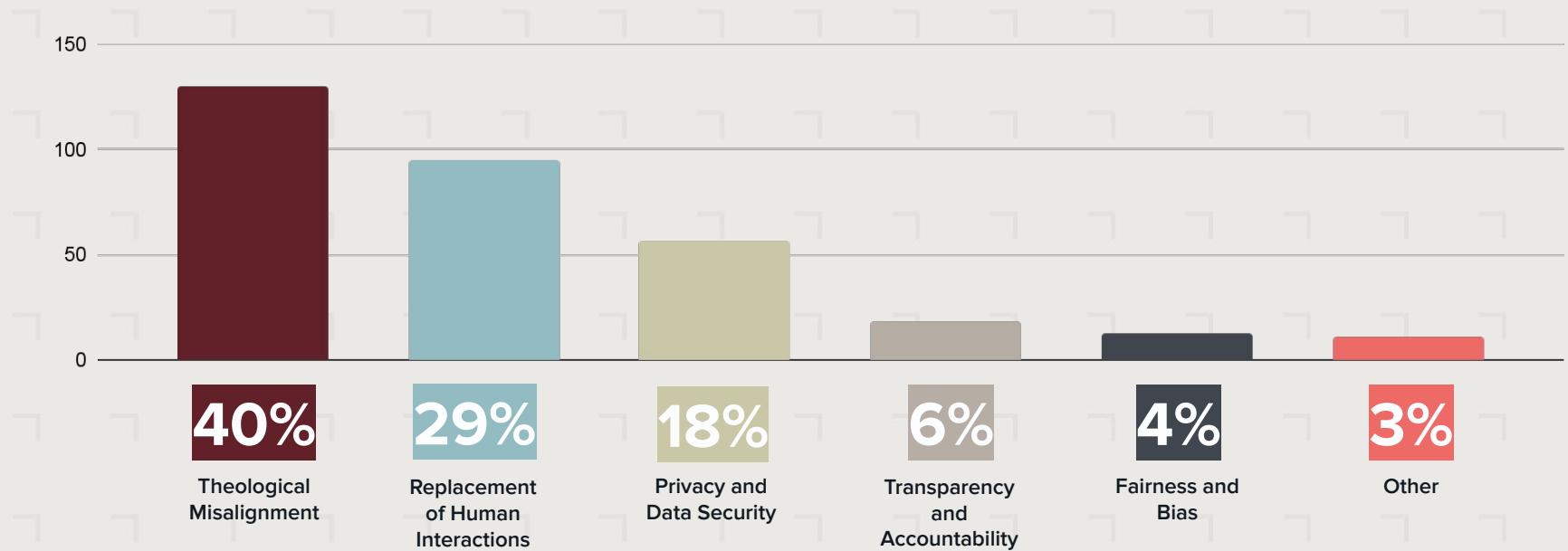
Concerns of transparency and accountability remain top of mind, especially for generative AI. Pastors want clarity around authorship, spiritual integrity, and how content is being shaped behind the scenes.



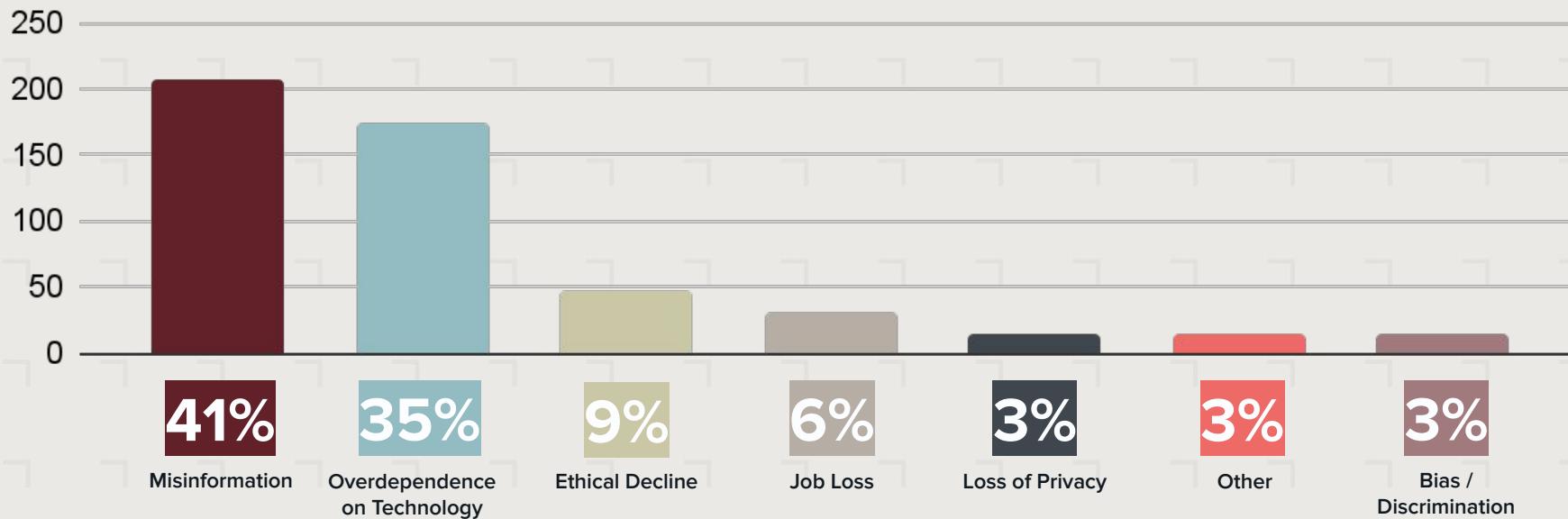
What are the 3 most important ethical concerns you have about AI in church settings?



Of the concerns you selected, which is your top priority?



Which do you think is the most significant risk that AI poses to your congregation and community?



SECTION 5

AI Policies & Training



AI Policies & Training

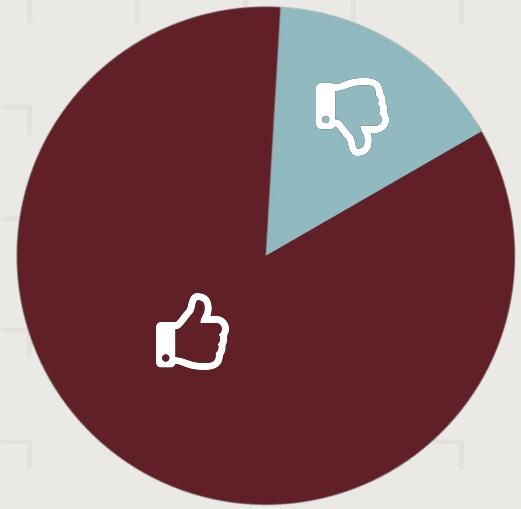
To overcome known hurdles, church leaders will need to prioritize AI education and training for themselves and their staff. This could include attending workshops, partnering with AI experts, and investing in ministry-specific AI resources.



AI Policies & Training

Proactively addressing ethical considerations through the development of robust AI policies and frameworks will be critical to building trust and buy-in from congregations. By taking these steps, churches can position themselves to reap the benefits of AI while mitigating potential risks.

**Are you willing to invest
in AI education/training
for yourself and/or your
staff?**



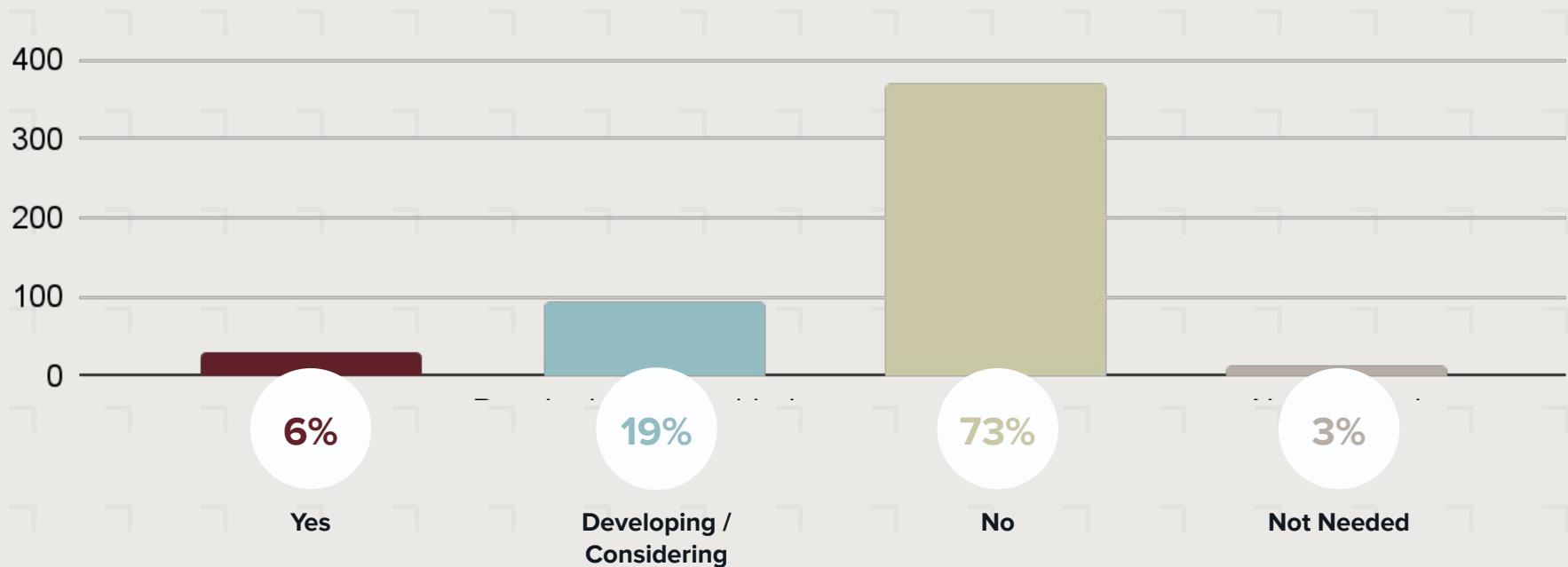
87%

YES

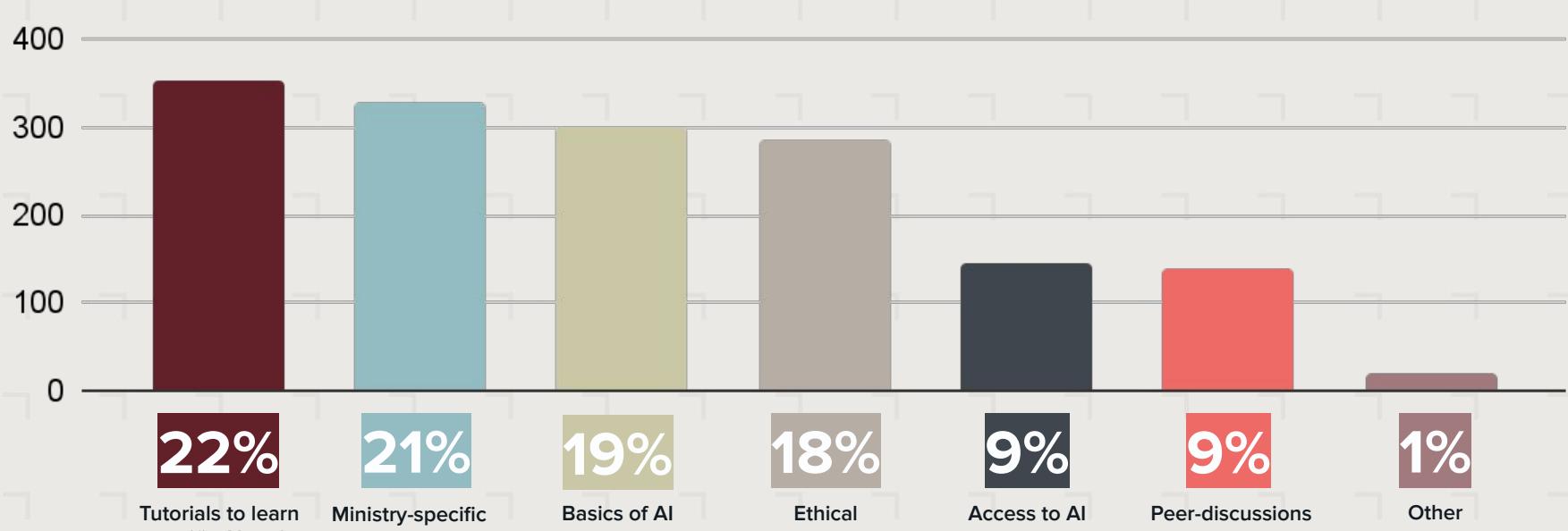
13%

NO

Does your ministry have an AI policy in place?



Which resources would help your church staff and teams adopt AI more effectively?



SECTION 5

Survey Demographics

A black and white photograph showing a group of people from behind, their hands raised in a gesture of worship or praise. The lighting is dramatic, with strong highlights on the hands and faces.

594

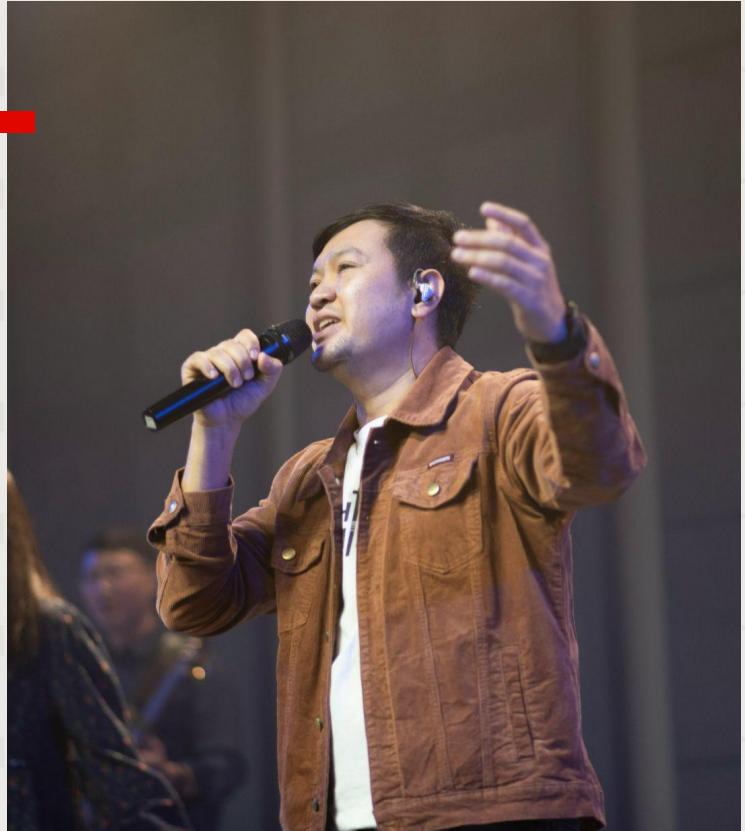
Respondents

Survey responses were collected from a total of 594 pastors and church staff members across a variety of denominations, church sizes, and geographic regions. This sample size exceeds the minimum required for **statistical confidence at a 95% level with a ±5% margin of error.**

Survey Demographics

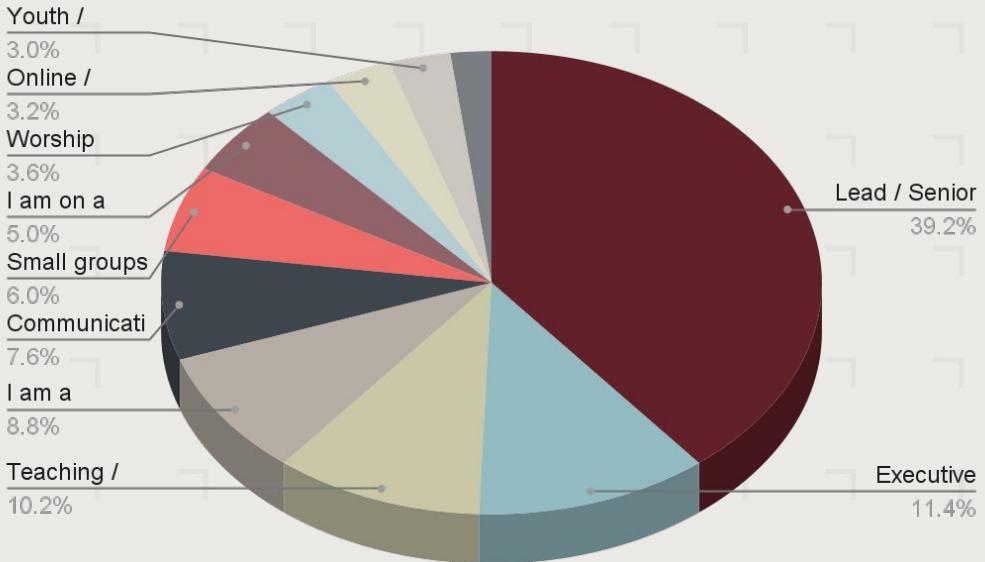
The demographics reveal a broad interest in AI across different leadership roles within the church, **with a notable representation from Gen X and Millennials.**

This diversity suggests a wide acknowledgment of AI's relevance but also indicates the potential for generational divides in technology acceptance and usage.



What is your primary role?

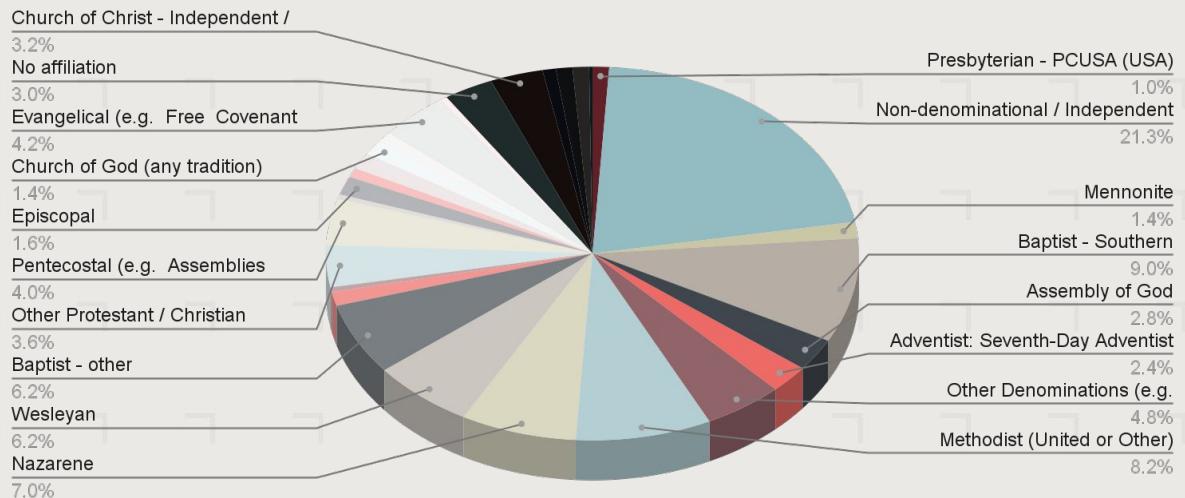
- 39% Lead/Senior Pastor
- 11% Executive Pastor/Director
- 10% Teaching/Associate Pastor
- 9% I am a member at a church / volunteer / attendee but NOT on staff
- 8% Communications/Media
- 6% Small groups/Discipleship
- 5% I am on a church staff in another ministry area
- 4% Worship Experience/Programming
- 3% Online/Digital Pastor
- 3% Youth / Young Adult Ministry
- 2% Children's Ministry



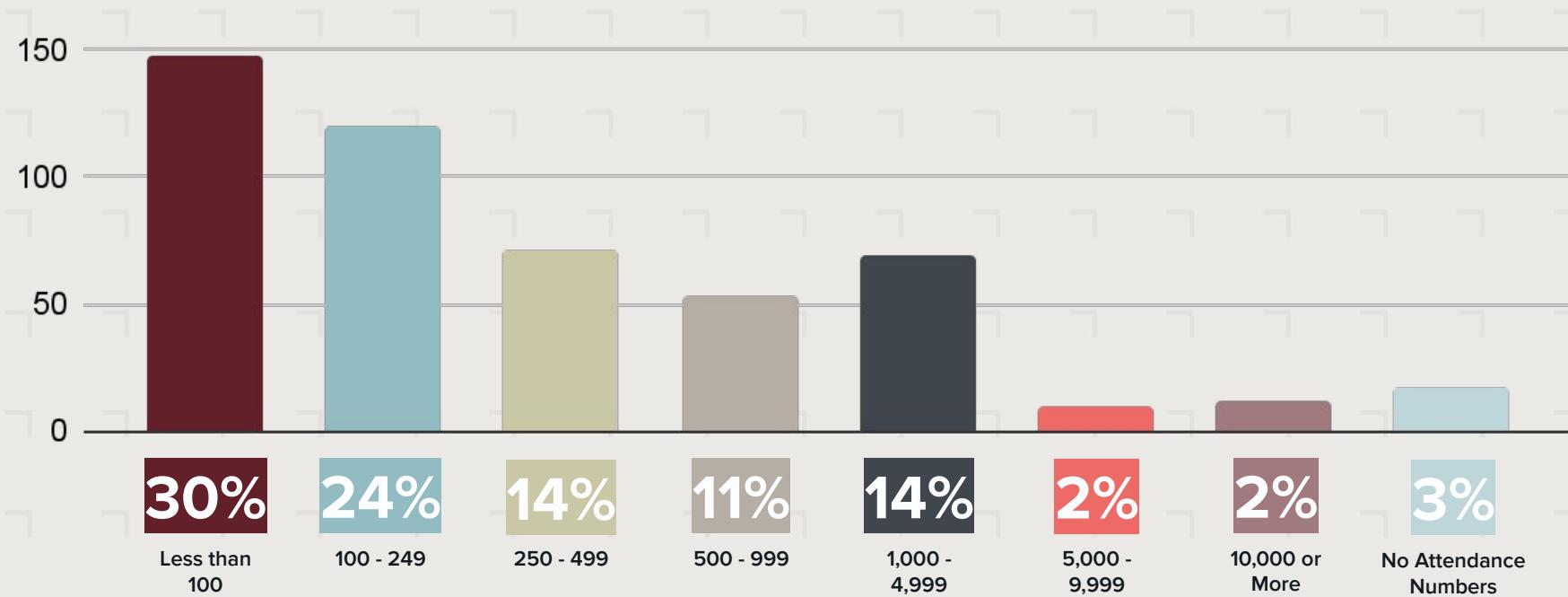
Indicate your denomination.

Top 10 Denominations (71% of total survey respondents)

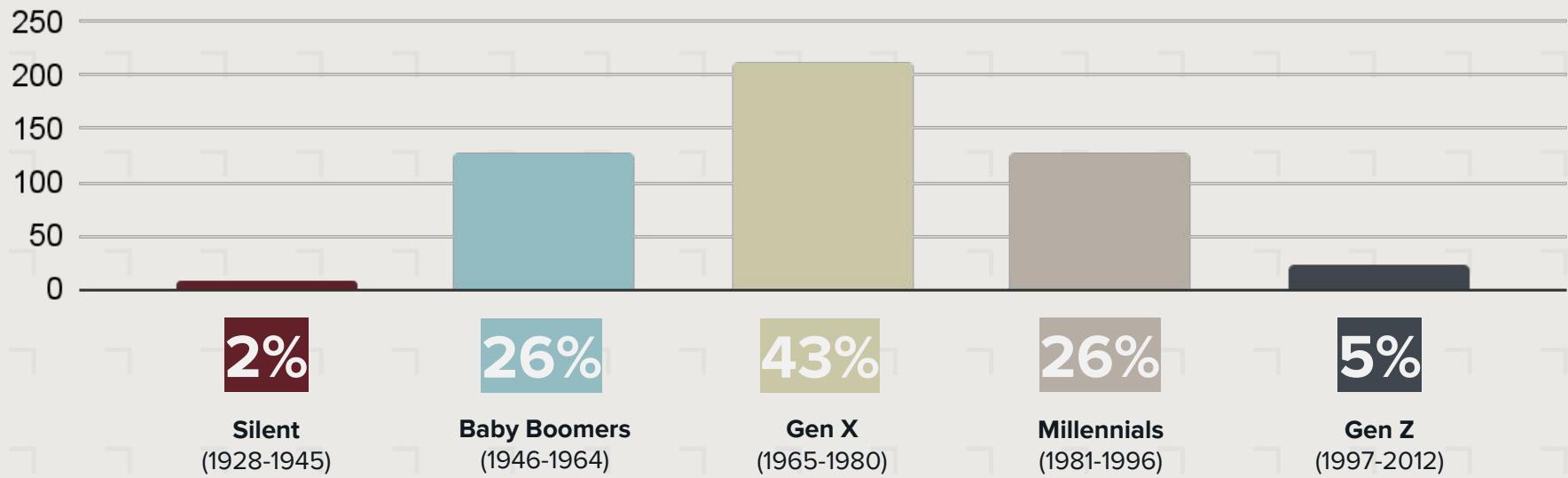
- 21%** Non-denominational /independent
- 9%** Baptist - Southern
- 8%** Methodist (United or Other)
- 7%** Nazarene
- 7%** Wesleyan
- 6%** Baptist - other
- 5%** Other Denominations (e.g. Salvation Army, Charismatic)
- 4%** Evangelical (e.g. Free Covenant, Foursquare)
- 4%** Pentecostal (e.g. Assemblies, Charismatic)
- 3%** Assembly of God



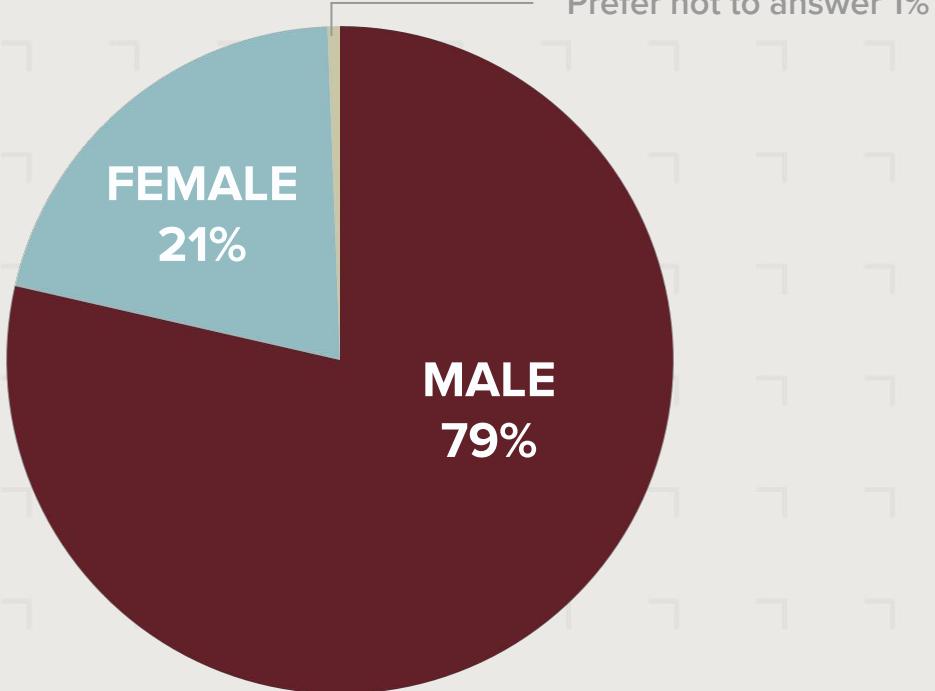
What is the average attendance of your ministry/church?



Which generation do you belong to?

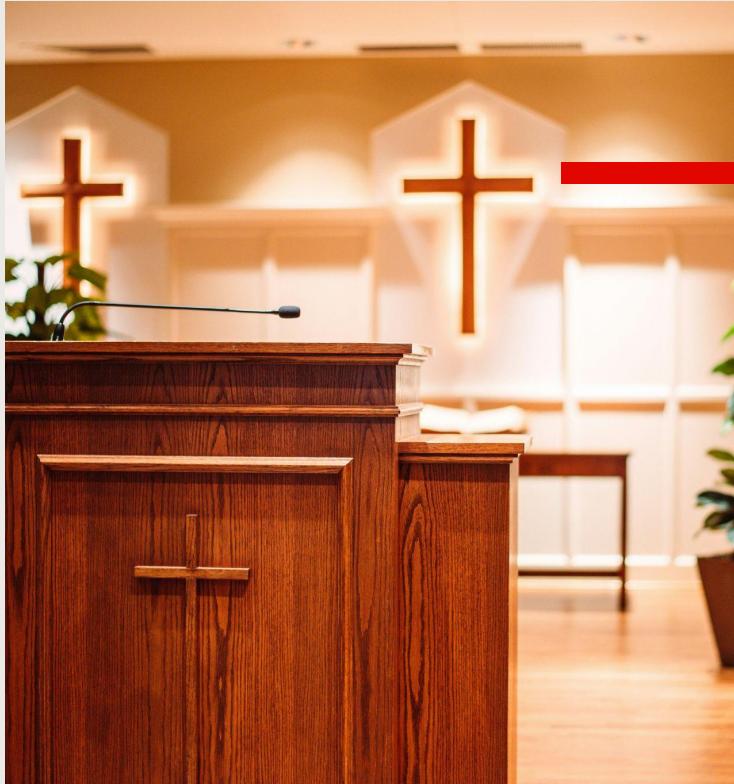


Please indicate your gender



Next Steps

SECTION 6



What's Next For AI In The Church?

As churches continue to navigate the rapidly evolving landscape of AI, the path forward will require:

- Ongoing education
- Experimentation
- Ethical discussions
- Discernment



Conclusions

Overall, the survey depicts a church that is **increasingly open to the ministry possibilities of artificial intelligence**, while still grappling with the weighty ethical and practical considerations involved. Most churches seem to believe that **AI can be beneficial if used as a tool**, but not a replacement for human connection and spiritual discernment.



Conclusions

Pastors & church staff are already actively using a variety of AI tools - excited by the potential, cautious about the pitfalls, and committed to using technology in a way that ultimately serves their congregations and their core mission. More training & education is needed for all pastors and staff.

What exactly will the future of an AI-enabled ministry will look like is still unfolding.

What's NEXT For Your AI Journey?



AI NEXT Podcast

Listen to the AI NEXT Interview series on the Exponential NEXT Podcast anywhere you listen to audio.

exponential.org/nextpodcast



Education Resources

Learn more about how you can integrate AI into your ministry through AI NEXT articles & videos

exponential.org/ai-next



Peer Learning

Join 7,000+ members inside the **AI For Church Leaders** Facebook Group.

AlforChurchLeaders.com/group

What's NEXT For Your AI Journey?



AI 101 Training

The #1 course on the basics of AI and how to use ChatGPT for church and ministry work.

ChatGPTforChurches.com



Deeper Training

Get up to speed with a live monthly workshops and video training library for pastors and church staff.

[AI For Church Leaders.com/next](https://AIForChurchLeaders.com/next)



EX West & Central

Learn in-person via pre-conference workshops and teaching sessions this fall in October & November.

Exponential.org/events

You can obtain a
FREE download of the results
of the survey today.

Visit **exponential.org/AI2025**
to download your copy.



2025 National Conferences

WEST

October 28-30

3 Crosses Church
Castro Valley, CA

CENTRAL

November 18-20

Community Christian Church
Naperville, IL

Use promo code **AI2025** to receive **\$19 OFF!**

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