



2016 *State of the Ministry* Research Study Executive Summary

Introduction

The Center for Church Leadership is committed to being a leading source of relevant and credible research on Restoration Movement churches. A wide range of research projects will be conducted with special focus being placed on an annual nation-wide study that investigates a specific aspect of ministry or church leadership each year. The 2016 *State of the Ministry* study was designed to shed light on how and why serving in vocational ministry is impacting ministers and their families. Special attention was given to economic concerns, ministry challenges, staff and elder interactions, and attitudes toward persistence.

The *State of the Ministry* study was conducted in the fall of 2016 and was distributed via email to 2,307 ministers serving Restoration Movement congregations across the United States. The response rate was 25%, made up by 577 ministers from 40 states. Participants represented a broad range of congregation sizes and contexts.

This summary report prioritizes responses by calculating the percentage of participants who selected a particular range of answers. This is one of several possible approaches and, as such, it presents a different order in some cases than would appear if the data were evaluated by weighted average. The highest priority items are further broken down according to the size of the participant's church. For the purpose of this study, small churches are those that have an average weekly attendance of less than 250. Medium sized churches average 250-750 in weekly attendance. The average weekly attendance of a large church exceeds 750.

Our prayer is that this information will be a source of encouragement, perspective, and guidance for you and your congregation – resulting in healthy and effective ministers who lead Advancing Churches that have a dramatic impact on the world for Christ. Find further insights about the *State of the Ministry* study at www.centerforchurchleadership.org or by emailing me specific questions at jeffrey@centerforchurchleadership.org.

Blessings,

Jeffrey Derico, PhD
Center for Church Leadership

The Impact of Ministry on Ministers and the Family

Yes, I feel serving in ministry is a risk to my family.

- Overall: 30 percent
- Small Churches: 33 percent
- Medium Churches: 33 percent
- Large Churches: 15 percent

Yes, I am able to spend enough time with my spouse.

- Overall: 59 percent
- Small Churches: 58 percent
- Medium Churches: 56 percent
- Large Churches: 67 percent

Yes, I am able to spend enough time with my children who still live with me.

- Overall: 56 percent
- Small Churches: 56 percent
- Medium Churches: 55 percent
- Large Churches: 62 percent

Yes, I am happy to be serving in located church ministry.

- Overall: 89 percent
- Small Churches: 88 percent
- Medium Churches: 88 percent
- Large Churches: 95 percent

The Minister's Perspective of Ministry

Yes, I feel adequately prepared for ministry.

- Overall: 63 percent
- Small Churches: 64 percent
- Medium Churches: 57 percent
- Large Churches: 73 percent

Yes, I can fulfill my ministry responsibilities.

- Overall: 79 percent
- Small Churches: 79 percent
- Medium Churches: 75 percent
- Large Churches: 86 percent

Yes, I always face unrealistic expectations.

- Overall: 28 percent
- Small Churches: 26 percent
- Medium Churches: 31 percent
- Large Churches: 29 percent

Yes, I have difficulty creating culturally-relevant ministry.

- Overall: 71 percent
- Small Churches: 69 percent
- Medium Churches: 78 percent
- Large Churches: 64 percent

The Top 3 Personal Challenges Ministers Face

Overall

- Stress: 85 percent
- Work/Life Balance: 80 percent
- Feeling Successful: 76 percent

Ministers of Small Churches

- Stress: 82 percent
- Work/Life Balance: 78 percent
- Feeling Successful: 78 percent

Ministers of Medium Churches

- Stress: 92 percent
- Work/Life Balance: 81 percent
- Feeling Successful: 79 percent

Ministers of Large Churches

- Stress: 84 percent
- Work/Life Balance: 84 percent
- Faith/Spiritual Growth: 84 percent

The Top 3 Ministry Challenges Ministers Face

Overall

- Mobilizing Members to Serve: 92 percent
- Evangelism: 83 percent
- Communication to the Community: 82 percent

Ministers of Small Churches

- Mobilizing Members to Serve: 92 percent
- Evangelism: 85 percent
- Communication to the Community: 82 percent

Ministers of Medium Churches

- Mobilizing Members to Serve: 93 percent
- Communication to the Community: 85 percent
- Evangelism: 84 percent

Ministers of Large Churches

- Mobilizing Members to Serve: 87 percent
- Communication to the Community: 75 percent
- Evangelism: 73 percent

The Top 3 Challenges Churches Face

Overall

- Change: 80 percent
- Ministry Evaluation/Planning: 79 percent
- Strategic Planning: 79 percent

Small Churches

- Change: 82 percent
- Strategic Planning: 79 percent
- Ministry Evaluation/Planning: 75 percent

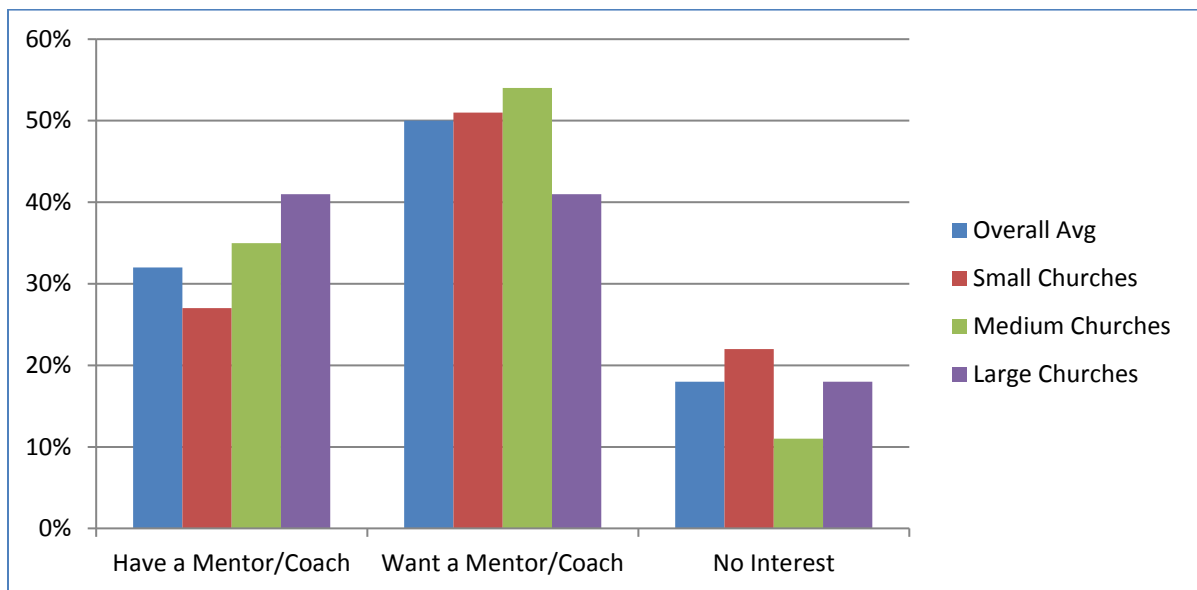
Medium Churches

- Ministry Evaluation/Planning: 85 percent
- Staff Training and Development: 83 percent
- Strategic Planning: 82 percent

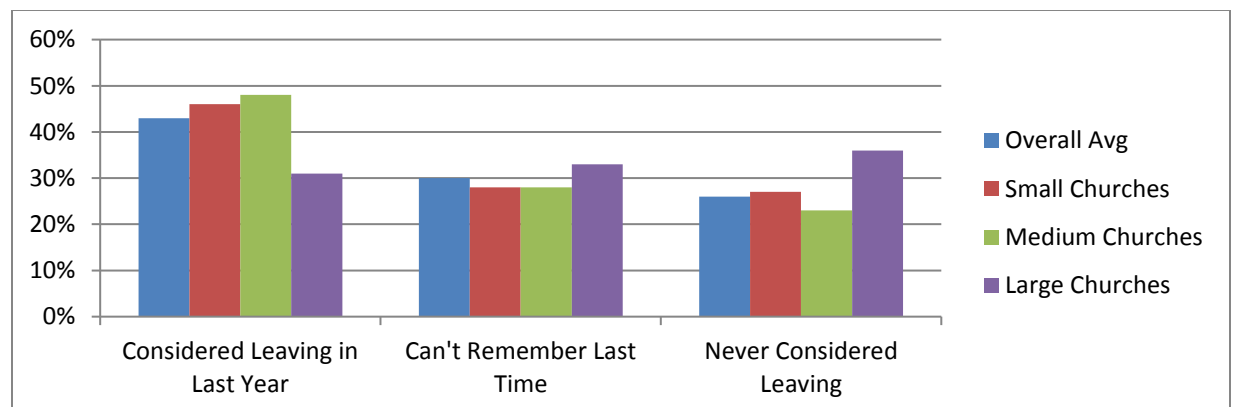
Large Churches

- Staff Hiring and Firing: 89 percent
- Church Budgeting/Finances: 83 percent
- Staff Training and Development: 82 percent

Which of the following best describes your pursuit of mentoring or coaching?



When was the last time you seriously considered leaving the paid ministry for a secular career?



The Top 3 Factors That Prompted You to Consider Leaving the Paid Ministry

Overall

- Conflicts with other staff members or church leaders: 53 percent
- Personal financial struggles—Needed to make more money: 44 percent
- Conflicts with church members: 33 percent

Small Churches

- Personal financial struggles—Needed to make more money: 53 percent
- Conflicts with other staff members or church leaders: 51 percent
- Conflicts with church members: 38 percent

Medium Churches

- Conflicts with other staff members or church leaders: 51 percent
- Personal financial struggles—Needed to make more money: 37 percent
- Conflicts with church members: 33 percent

Large Churches

- Conflicts with other staff members or church leaders: 64 percent
- Personal financial struggles—Needed to make more money: 32 percent
- No longer felt called to ministry: 16 percent

The Top 3 Systems Used to Execute Your Ministry

Small Churches

- Email
- Websites
- Facebook

Medium Churches

- Email
- Websites
- Text Messaging

Large Churches

- Email
- Websites
- Facebook

To what degree do you believe that the church is meeting your family's needs related to the following compensation items?

Overall

	Not Offered		Barely Meets Needs		Greatly Exceeds Needs
Salary	1%	5%	22%	65%	7%
Paid Vacation Time	3%	3%	14%	60%	19%
Health/Medical Insurance	47%	5%	13%	28%	7%
Retirement	54%	11%	14%	18%	3%
Professional Expense Account	32%	14%	14%	34%	7%
Cost of Living Increases	27%	15%	22%	32%	4%
Performance-based Raises	49%	14%	15%	20%	3%
Housing	32%	4%	9%	44%	11%
Professional Development	13%	16%	19%	43%	10%
Sabbaticals	66%	9%	5%	16%	4%

Small Churches

	Not Offered		Barely Meets Needs		Greatly Exceeds Needs
Salary	1%	6%	29%	60%	4%
Paid Vacation Time	5%	5%	18%	57%	15%
Health/Medical Insurance	61%	4%	12%	19%	3%
Retirement	68%	9%	10%	12%	1%
Professional Expense Account	42%	15%	13%	29%	2%
Cost of Living Increases	38%	15%	20%	26%	1%
Performance-based Raises	60%	12%	12%	15%	1%
Housing	34%	3%	9%	44%	10%
Professional Development	20%	20%	17%	37%	6%
Sabbaticals	78%	7%	5%	9%	1%

Medium Churches

	Not Offered		Barely Meets Needs		Greatly Exceeds Needs
Salary	1%	4%	18%	71%	7%
Paid Vacation Time	2%	2%	11%	64%	21%
Health/Medical Insurance	40%	6%	17%	30%	7%
Retirement	48%	16%	16%	18%	2%
Professional Expense Account	21%	14%	16%	38%	10%
Cost of Living Increases	19%	14%	27%	36%	4%
Performance-based Raises	41%	14%	18%	23%	3%
Housing	34%	4%	9%	43%	9%
Professional Development	5%	12%	21%	49%	13%
Sabbaticals	59%	11%	6%	20%	4%

Large Churches

	Not Offered		Barely Meets Needs		Greatly Exceeds Needs
Salary	3%	1%	7%	72%	17%
Paid Vacation Time	3%	1%	8%	63%	25%
Health/Medical Insurance	9%	8%	7%	57%	19%
Retirement	12%	9%	21%	44%	13%
Professional Expense Account	19%	9%	16%	39%	17%
Cost of Living Increases	7%	15%	20%	47%	12%
Performance-based Raises	25%	16%	19%	32%	8%
Housing	25%	3%	5%	52%	15%
Professional Development	3%	9%	21%	49%	17%
Sabbaticals	37%	15%	8%	29%	11%

Top 3 Systems Used to Execute Your Ministry

Small Churches

- Email
- Websites
- Facebook

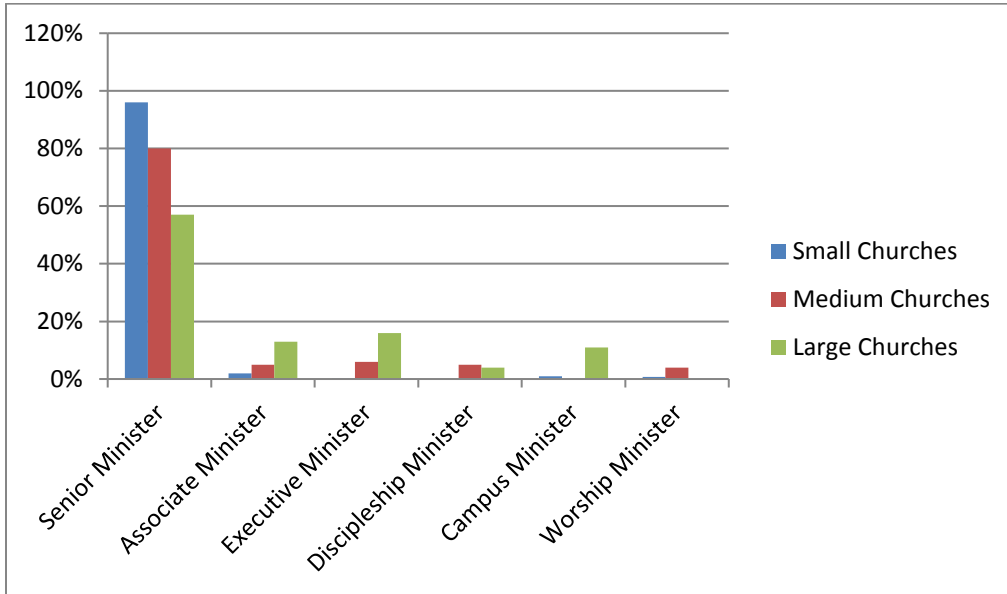
Medium Churches

- Email
- Websites
- Text Messaging

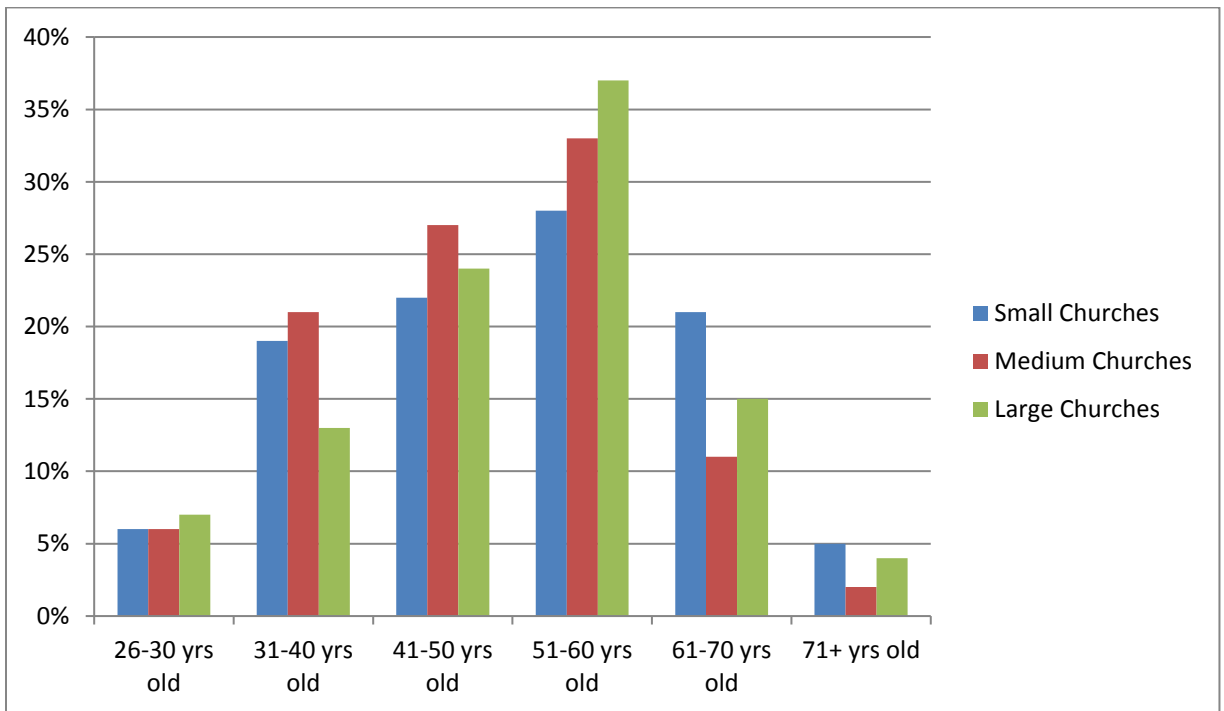
Large Churches

- Email
- Websites
- Facebook

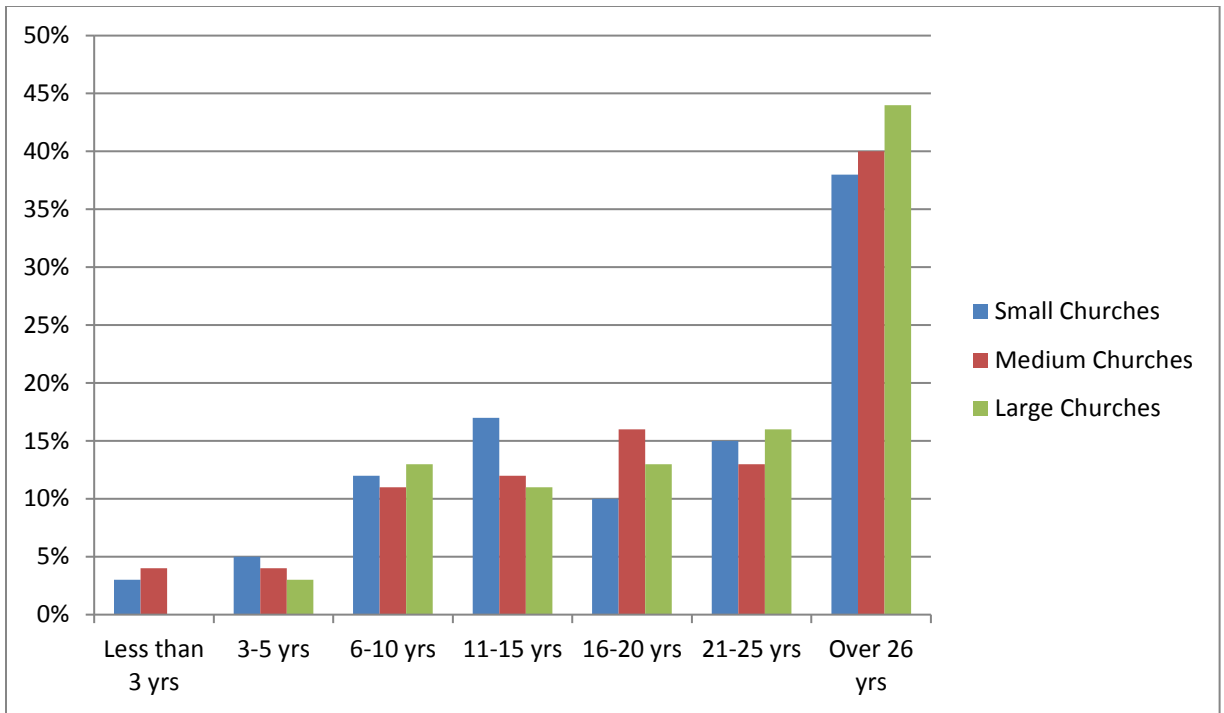
Ministry Role that Best Describes You



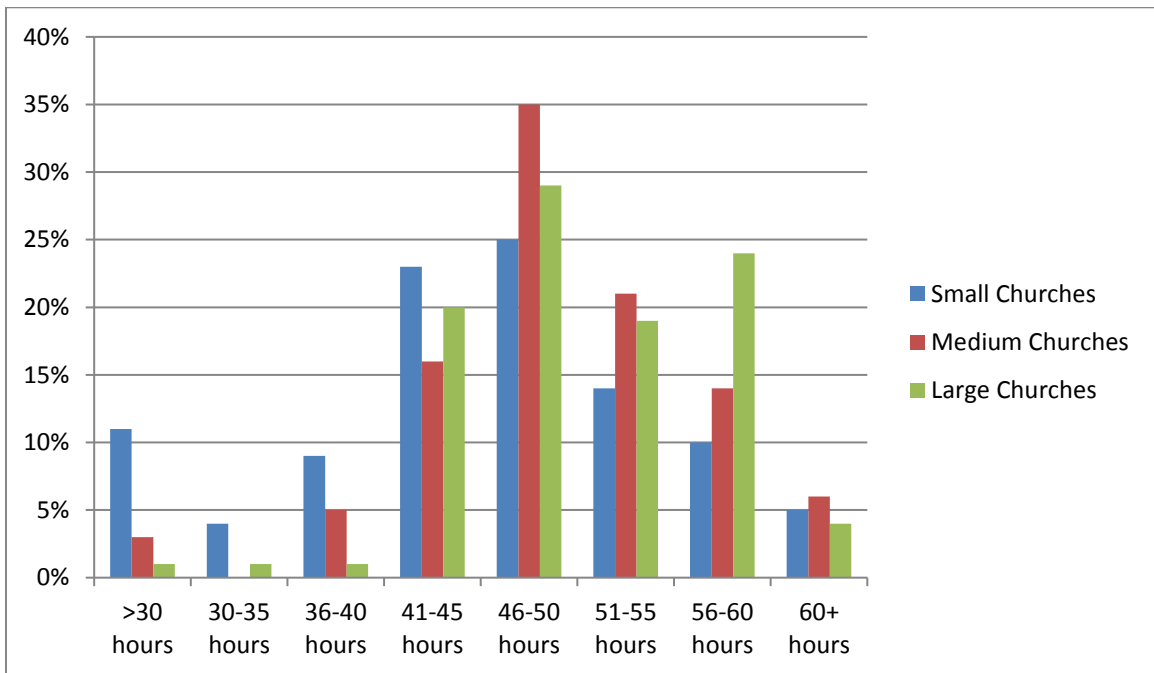
Age Breakdown of Respondents by Church Size



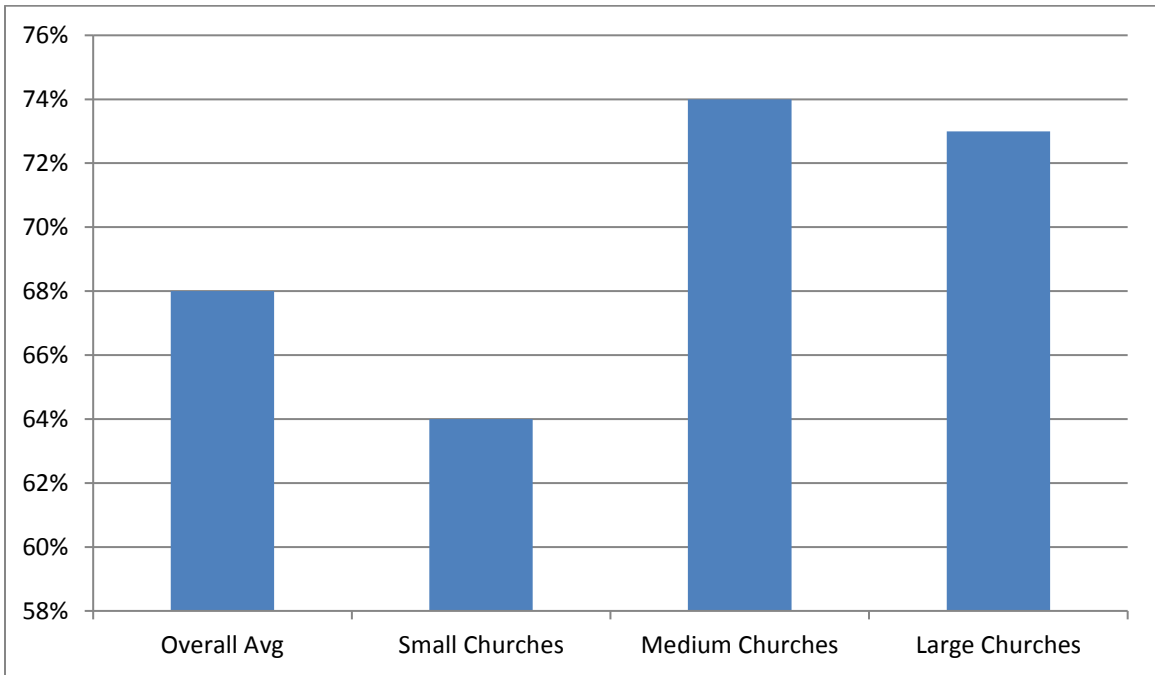
How Many Years Have You Served in Paid Ministry?



How Many Hours Do You Work in Your Ministry Role in an Average Week?



What percentage of respondents did not have an additional job outside of their ministry role?



Which of the following best describes your primary ministry location?

