



RACE AND ETHNICITY FINDINGS FROM THE AUGUST 2013 SURVEY

The Presbyterian Panel consists of three nationally representative samples of groups affiliated with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.): members, ruling elders serving on session, and teaching elders (ministers). For most analyses, teaching elders are split into two groups based on current call: *pastors*, serving congregations, and *specialized ministers*, serving elsewhere. New samples are drawn every three years. These pages summarize major findings from the seventh survey completed by the 2012-2014 panel, sampled in the summer of 2011.

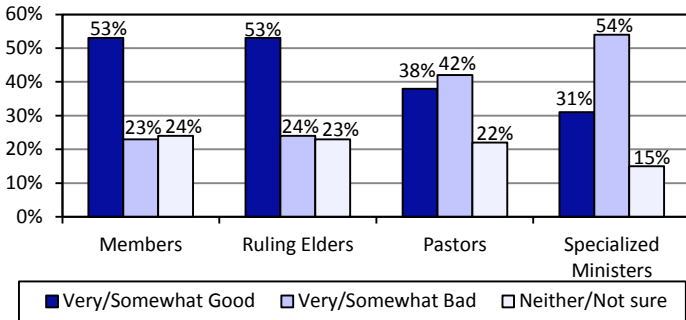
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RACIAL AND ETHNIC RELATIONS

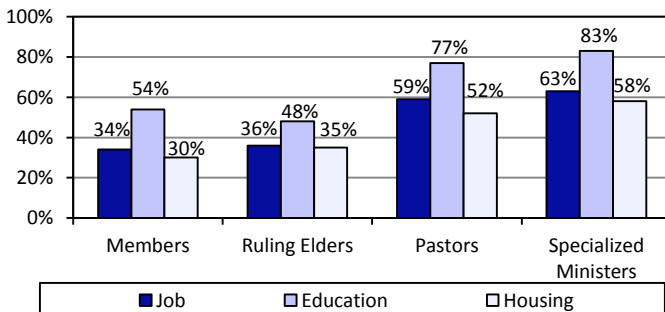
Members and ruling elders are more optimistic than pastors and specialized ministers about the state of relations between white people and people of color in the United States today. (See Figure 1.)

Figure 1. Panelists' Perceptions of the State of Relations between White People and People of Color in the United States These Days



Panelists were asked whether people of color have “a greater chance,” “similar chances,” or “a smaller chance” than white people of getting a job for which they qualify, a good education, or any housing they can afford. More panelists in each group believe that people of color have “a smaller chance” of getting a good education than they do of getting a job or housing. (See Figure 2.)

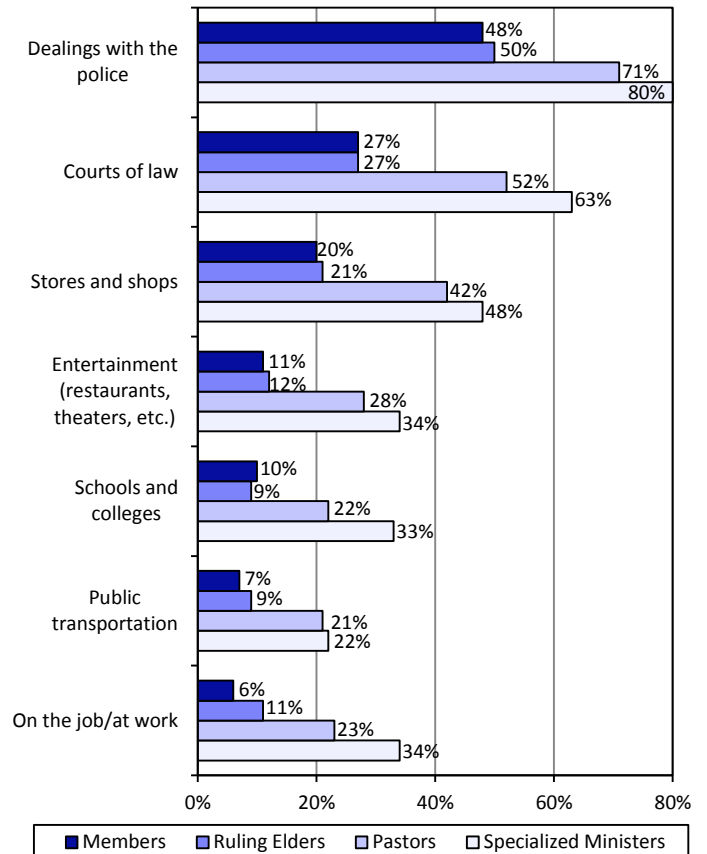
Figure 2. Percentages of Panelists who Feel that People of Color have a Smaller Chance than White People in Three Areas of Life



In each of seven different situations, more specialized ministers and pastors than members and ruling elders think that people of color in their local community are “treated worse than white people.” (See Figure 3.)

- ✓ Among these seven situations, “dealings with the police” is chosen most frequently by each group of panelists as a situation in which people of color are treated worse than white people.

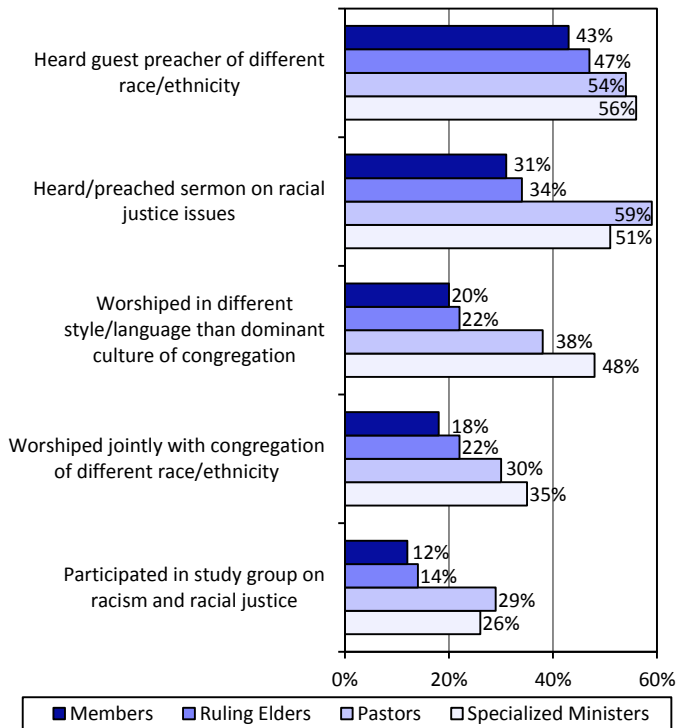
Figure 3. Percentages of Panelists Who Think People of Color are Treated Worse than White People in Seven Situations



When asked if they have participated in any of five congregational activities related to race and ethnicity in the past two years, more pastors and specialized ministers than members and ruling elders report participating in each. (See Figure 4.)

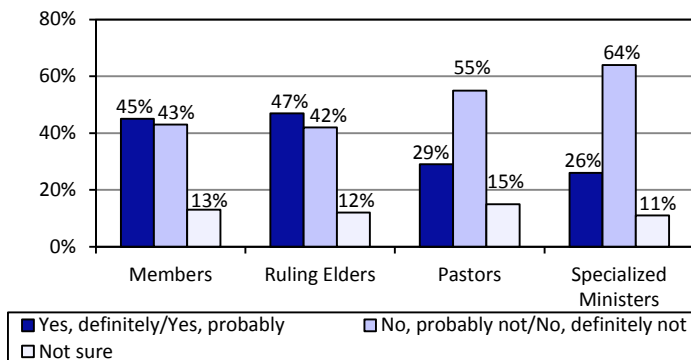
- ✓ Members, ruling elders, and specialized ministers most often report hearing a sermon from a guest preacher of a different racial/ethnic background than most of the congregation.
- ✓ Pastors most often report hearing or preaching a sermon on racial justice issues.

Figure 4. Percentages of Panelists Who Have Participated in Five Congregational Activities Related to Race and Ethnicity



A majority of pastors and specialized clergy would *not* prefer to worship in a congregation where most of the members are of their own racial or ethnic background, while members and ruling elders are more varied in their preferences. (See Figure 5.)

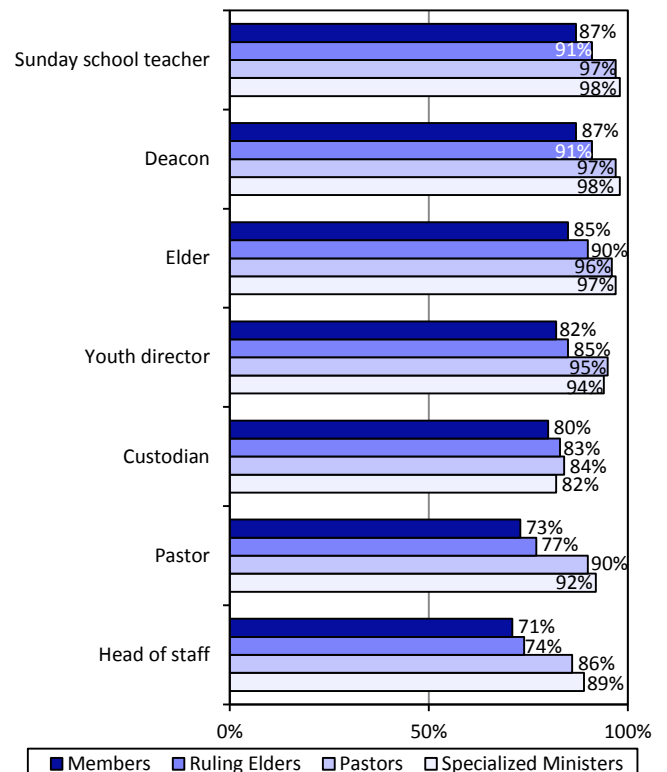
Figure 5. Would You Prefer to Worship in a Congregation Where the Majority of Members Are of Your Own Race/Ethnicity?



When asked how comfortable they are or would be with a white woman, woman of color, white man, or man of color in each of seven specific roles within their congregation, over 70% in each group are “very comfortable” with each type of person in every role. Even so, there are subtle variations in panelists’ opinions. (Figure 6 shows the survey results for the questions about *women of color*, since panelists’ responses to these questions were most varied.)

- ✓ *White women*: Fewer members (81%), ruling elders (84%), and pastors (89%) are “very comfortable” with a white woman serving as *head of staff* than in any other congregational role; fewer specialized ministers (88%) are “very comfortable” with a white woman serving as *custodian* than in any other role.
- ✓ *Women of color* (see Figure 6): Fewer members (71%) and ruling elders (74%) are “very comfortable” with a woman of color serving as *head of staff* than in any other congregational role; fewer pastors (84%) and specialized ministers (82%) are “very comfortable” with a woman of color serving as a *custodian* than in any other role.
- ✓ *White men*: More than 90% of respondents in each group are “very comfortable” with a white man being in each role.
- ✓ *Men of color*: Fewer members (77%) and ruling elders (83%) are “very comfortable” with a man of color serving as *head of staff* than in any other congregational role; fewer pastors (89%) and specialized ministers (86%) are “very comfortable” with a man of color serving as *custodian* than in any other role.

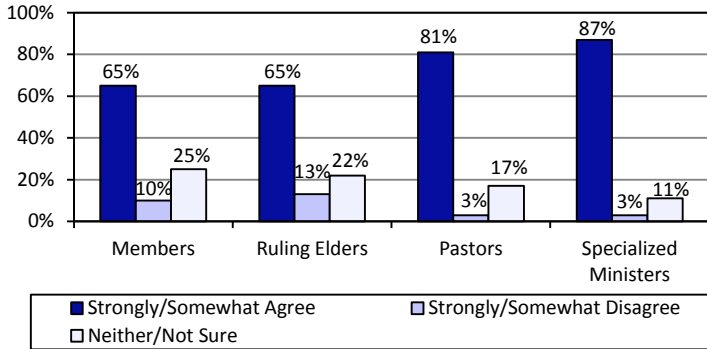
Figure 6. Percentages of Panelists Who Are/Would Be Very Comfortable with a Woman of Color in Seven Specific Congregational Roles



PERSONAL EXPERIENCES AND OPINIONS

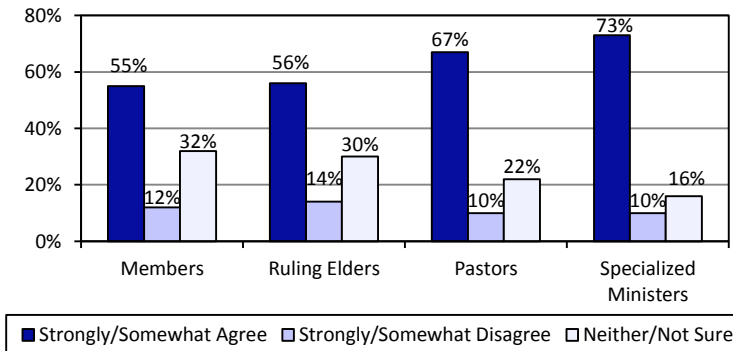
Although majorities of members and ruling elders believe that the increasing racial and ethnic diversity is good for the country, this opinion is supported even more by pastors and specialized ministers. (See Figure 7.)

Figure 7. It's Beneficial for the U.S. that the Population is Becoming More Racially and Ethnically Diverse



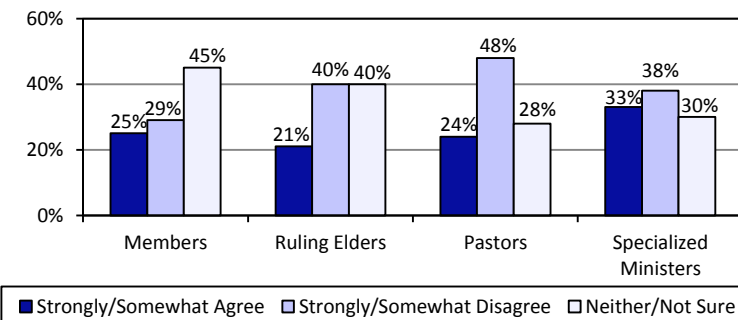
Similarly, although a majority of respondents in all groups believe that the PC(USA) needs to attract more people of color to stem its long-term membership decline, this opinion is most prevalent among pastors and specialized ministers. About a third of members and ruling elders and about a fifth of pastors and specialized ministers do not have a defined opinion. (See Figure 8.)

Figure 8. Attracting More People of Color Is Essential for the PC(USA) to Stem Its Long-Term Membership Decline



Only one-third or fewer from each group report that their congregation has made it a priority to become more racially and ethnically diverse. (See Figure 9.)

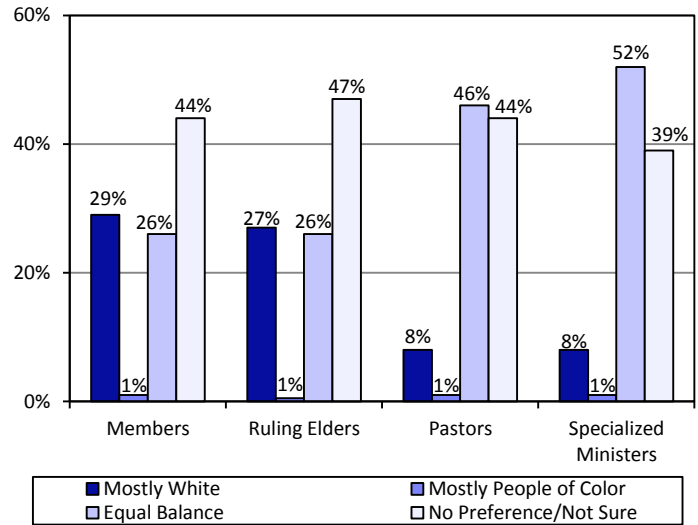
Figure 9. Congregation Has Made it a Priority to Become More Diverse



When asked about their preference for the racial make-up of their neighborhood:

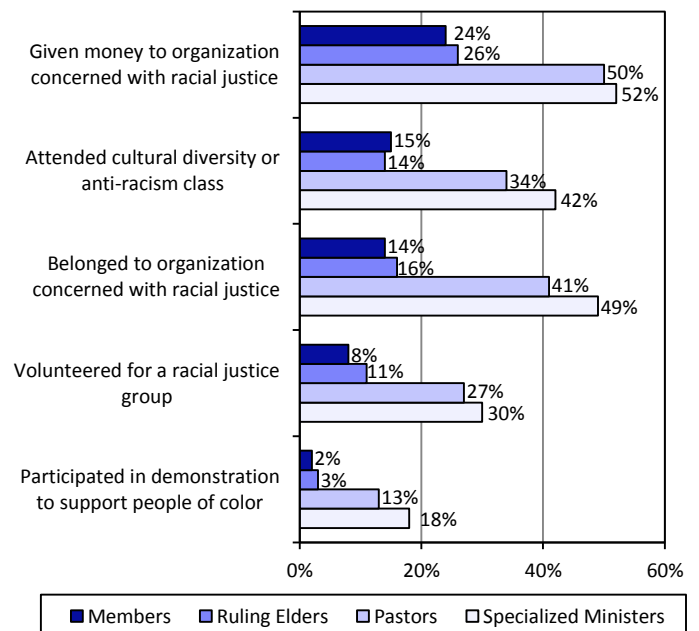
- ✓ The highest percentages of members and ruling elders say they either have “no preference” or are “not sure,” while the highest percentages of pastors and specialized ministers say they prefer “an equal balance of white people and people of color.” (See Figure 10.)
- ✓ Although over one-quarter of members and ruling elders would prefer a neighborhood with “mostly white residents,” few pastors and specialized ministers do.

Figure 10. Panelists' Preference for Racial Diversity in Their Neighborhood



When asked if they have participated in any of five specific racial justice activities in the past two years, more participants in each group report giving money “to an organization concerned with racial justice” than participating in any of the other activities. (See Figure 11.)

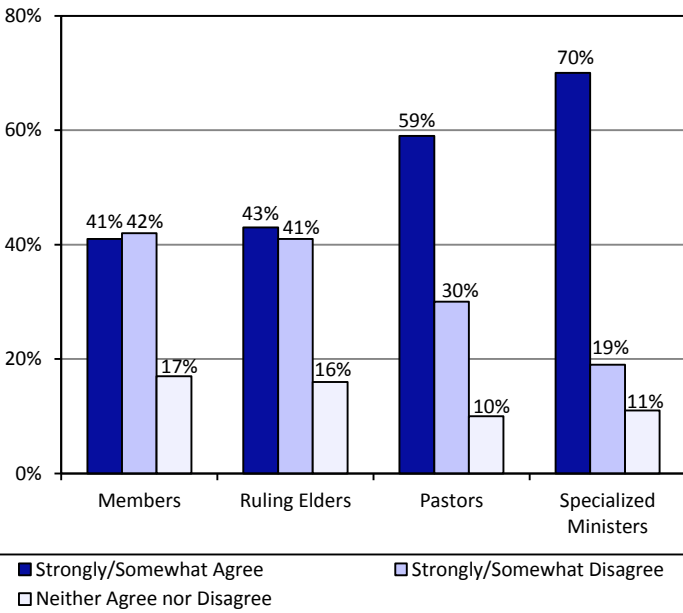
Figure 11. Percentages of Panelists Who Have Participated in Racial Justice Activities



This survey also contained two questions on same-sex marriage, in preparation for possible discussions at the 2014 General Assembly. One question asked whether same-sex couples should be allowed to marry.

- ✓ Members and ruling elders have nearly identical opinions, with around 40% of each believing that same-sex couples should be allowed to marry, and around 40% of each believing the opposite. (See Figure 12.)
- ✓ Most pastors and specialized ministers believe same-sex couples should be allowed to marry.

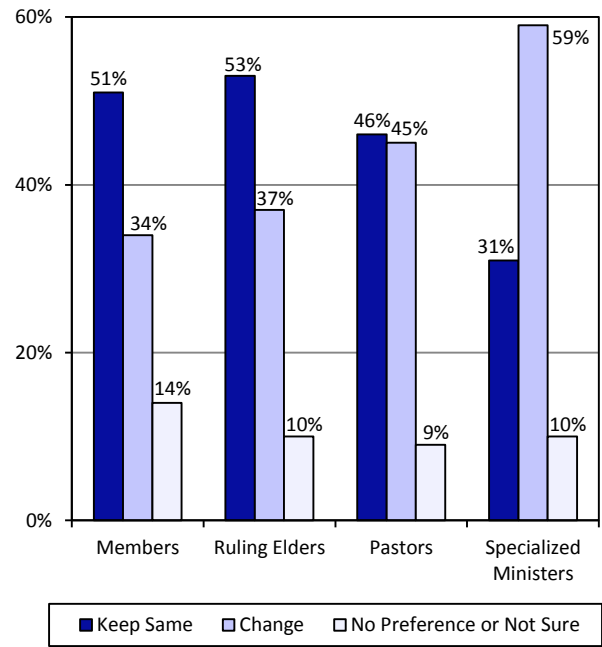
Figure 12. Panelists' Opinions on Whether Same-Sex Couples Should Be Allowed to Marry



When panelists were asked whether they want to see the definition of marriage in the PC(USA) constitution changed:

- ✓ A slight majority of members and ruling elders prefer keeping the definition of marriage as it is now—between “a man and a woman.” (See Figure 13.)
- ✓ Pastors are evenly split about whether to keep the definition of marriage as it is, or to change it to between “two people.”
- ✓ Most specialized ministers would prefer to change the definition of marriage to between “two people.”

Figure 13. Panelists' Opinions on Whether to Change the PC(USA) Definition of Marriage



	Members	Ruling Elders	Teaching Elders
Number of surveys sent	501	818	1,075
Number of ineligible respondents	0	0	1
Number of surveys completed	350	485	646‡
Response rate	69%	59%	60%

‡Of the 646 returned surveys, 465 came from pastors and 181 from specialized ministers.

The survey was distributed on August 30, 2013, with returns accepted through November 21, 2013. Results are subject to sampling and other errors. Small differences should be interpreted cautiously. In general, differences of less than 8% between samples are not statistically meaningful.

For more numbers and interpretation of these results, a report will be available for free downloading on the web or (for \$15 for a paper copy) from Presbyterian Distribution Service (800-524-2612; order PDS# 20056-14321). It will include tables with percentage responses to each survey question.

For more information about the Racial Ethnic & Women’s Ministry, the entity that sponsored this survey, visit: <http://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/racial-ethnic-womens-ministries/>.

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