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# Review of Welcoming Diversity Inventory

Sayville Congregational Church

*Presented by Dr. Mariana Torres  
on behalf of the Search Committee*



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“The overwhelming majority of  
comments were welcoming,  
open-minded, and open-hearted.”

–**Rev. Gary Ferner**

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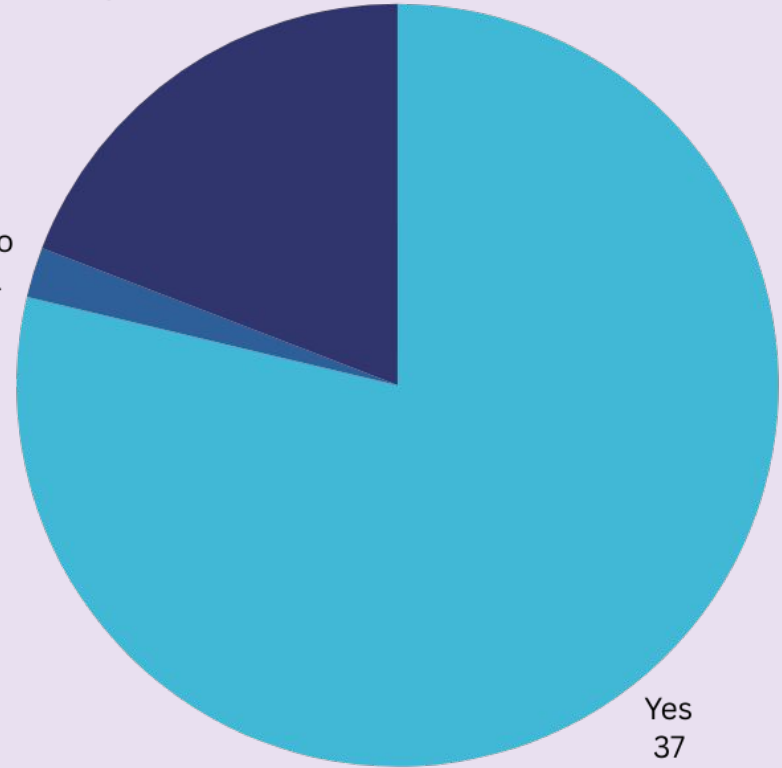
**It is important to me that my pastor preaches and communicates about race and racism in a way that connects to my faith and spiritual formation.  
(47 responses)**

I've never thought about it

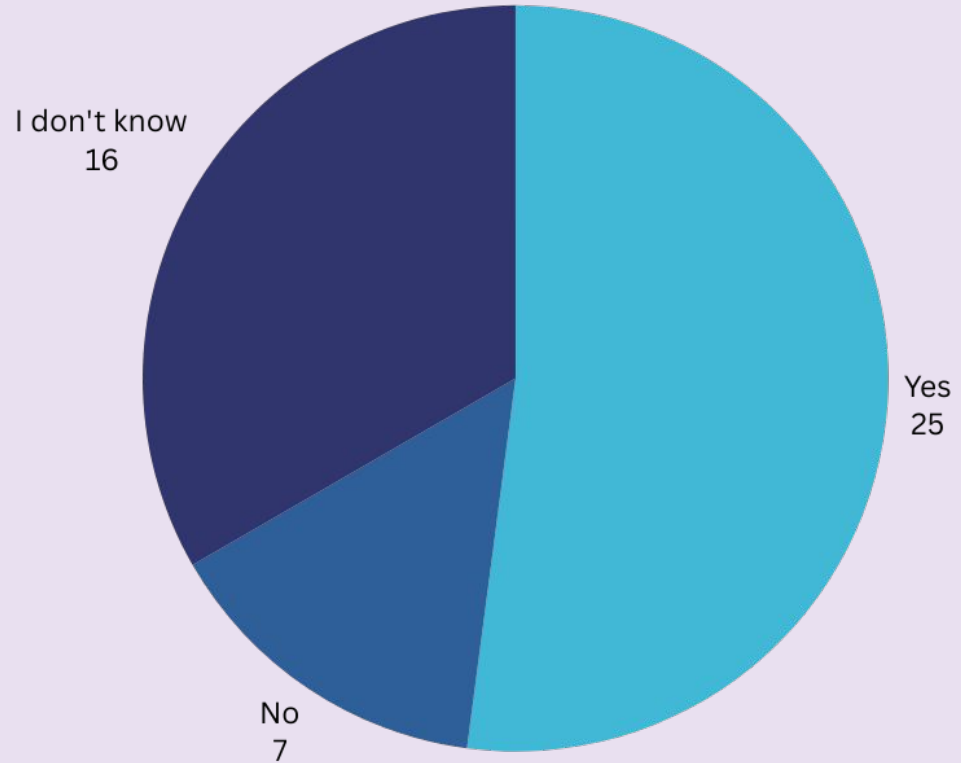
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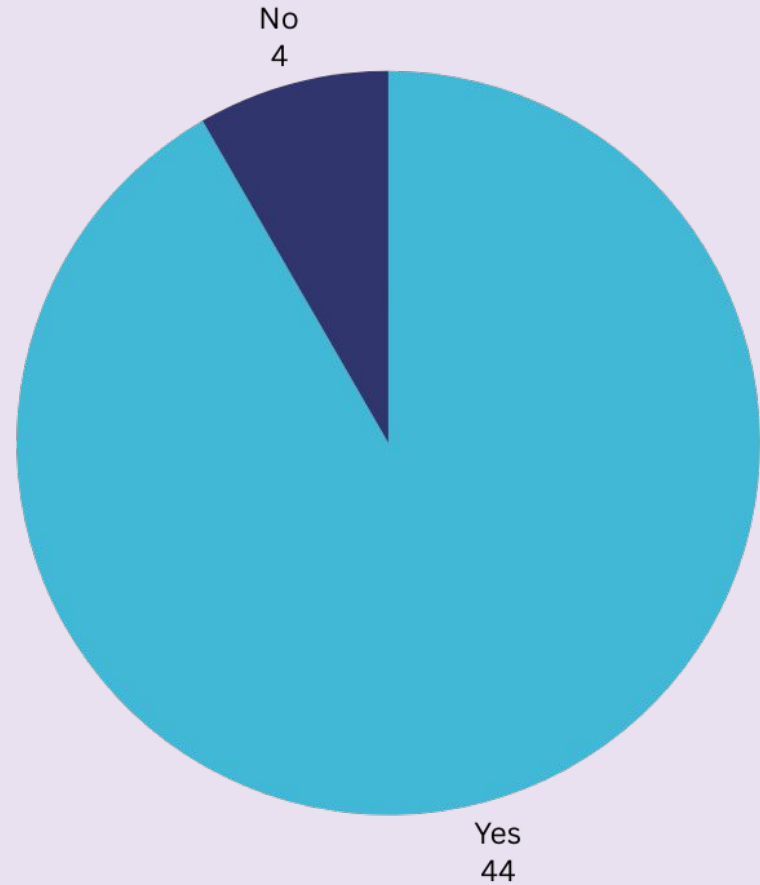
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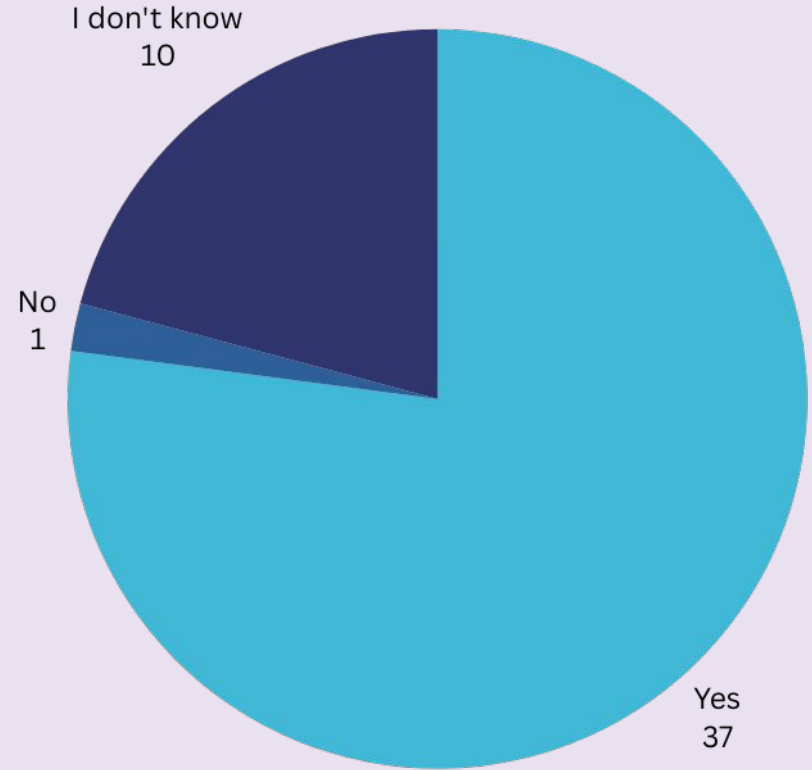
**Our congregation has engaged  
in open conversations and/or  
training regarding race, racism,  
and white privilege.  
(48 responses)**



**I am comfortable with diverse  
styles of preaching and worship.  
(48 responses)**



**If our congregation has had any past attitudes/actions of prejudice and discrimination, I believe they have been addressed forthrightly and the work of healing has taken place around these issues.  
(48 responses)**



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**Describe ways your congregation might assist a pastor whose race doesn't match the majority of your members in connecting with your surrounding community. (41 responses)**

**Welcoming & Supportive  
Attitudes/Actions**

Personal Welcoming  
Congregational Reputation  
Visible Support  
Listening and Learning

**Community Integration**  
Community Introductions  
Participation in Local Events

**Open Communication &  
Dialogue**

Open Conversations  
Feedback and Discussions

**Education & Awareness**  
Awareness Training  
DEI-Focused Activities

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**Would a Pastor whose race doesn't match the majority of your members be welcomed within the community? Why or Why not? (44 responses)**

**General Openness & Acceptance**

Historical Inclusivity  
Mission Statement  
ONA (Open and Affirming)

**Concerns about Broader Community**

Church vs. Community  
Political Climate

**Need for Awareness & Training**

Sensitivity Training  
Learning Opportunity

**Individual Uncertainty**

Mixed Views  
Hopeful Optimism

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**What additional work, training or conversations might need to take place within your church before you could call a pastor whose race doesn't match the majority of your members? (39 responses)**

**Open Conversations**

Dialogue and Communication  
Personal Reflection and  
Improvement  
Openness to Suggestions

**Acknowledging Historical  
Context & Progress**

Historical Commitment to Civil Rights  
Learning from Past Experiences  
Belief in Current Openness

**Guest Speakers and Training  
Opportunities**

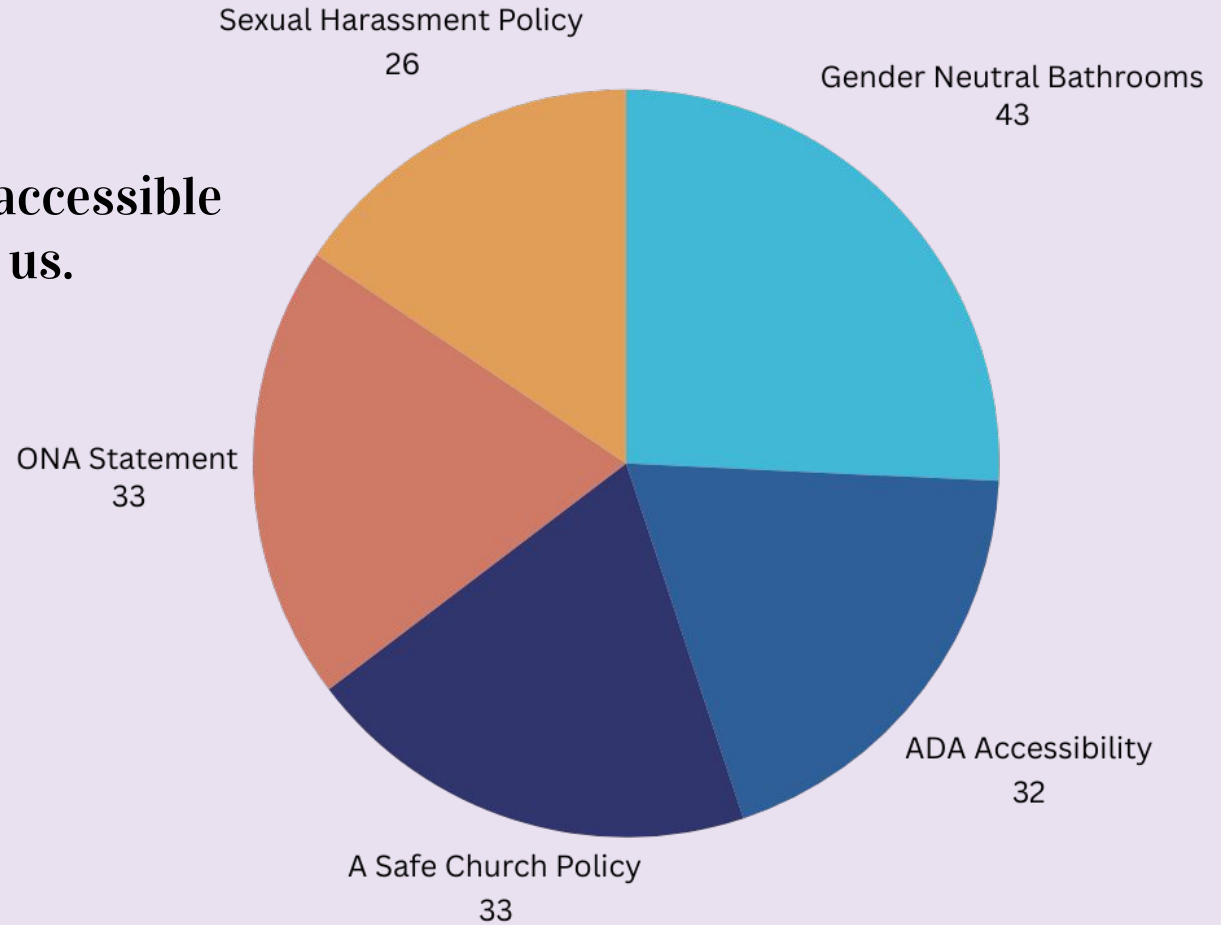
Guest Preachers  
Workshops and Training  
Sessions

**Addressing External  
Challenges**

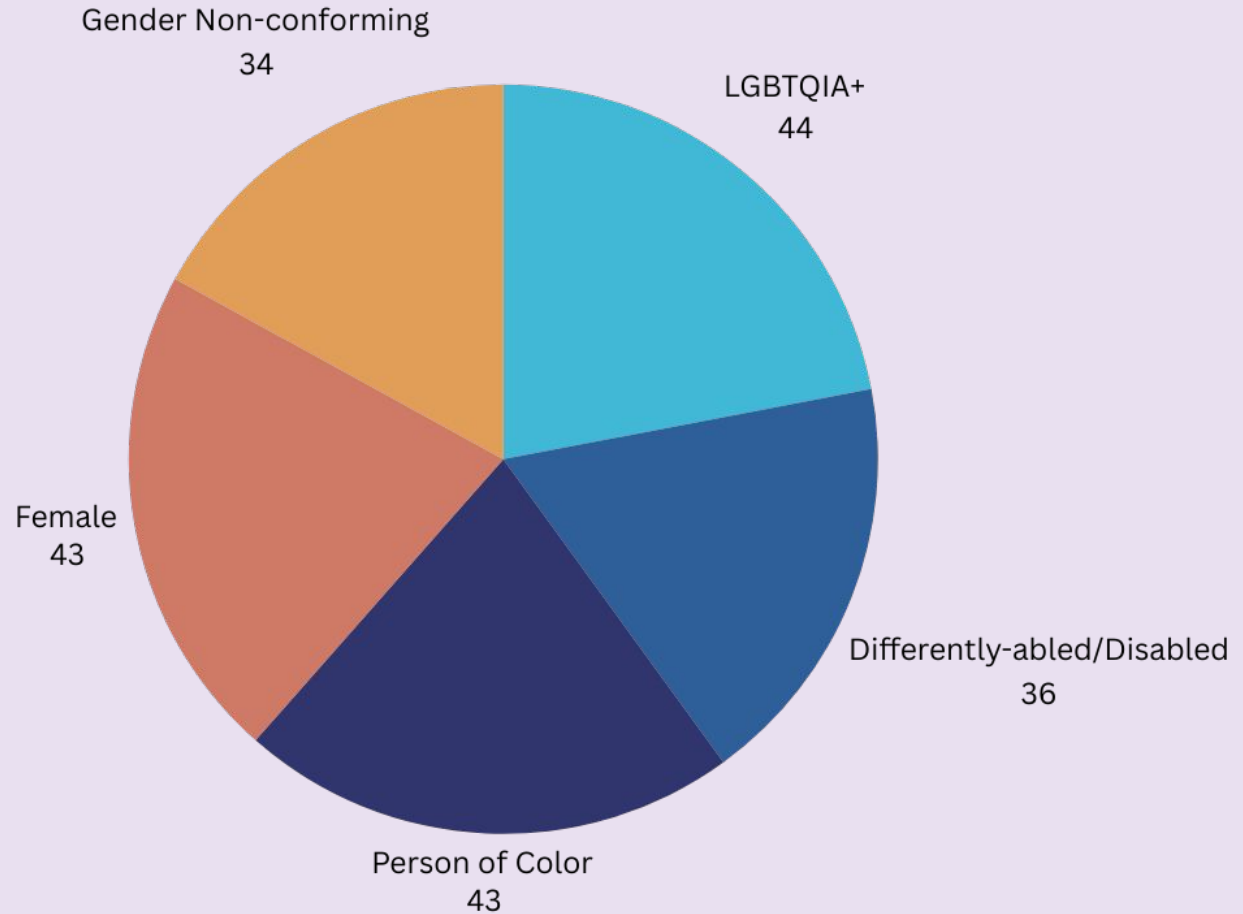
Community Prejudices  
Political Climate

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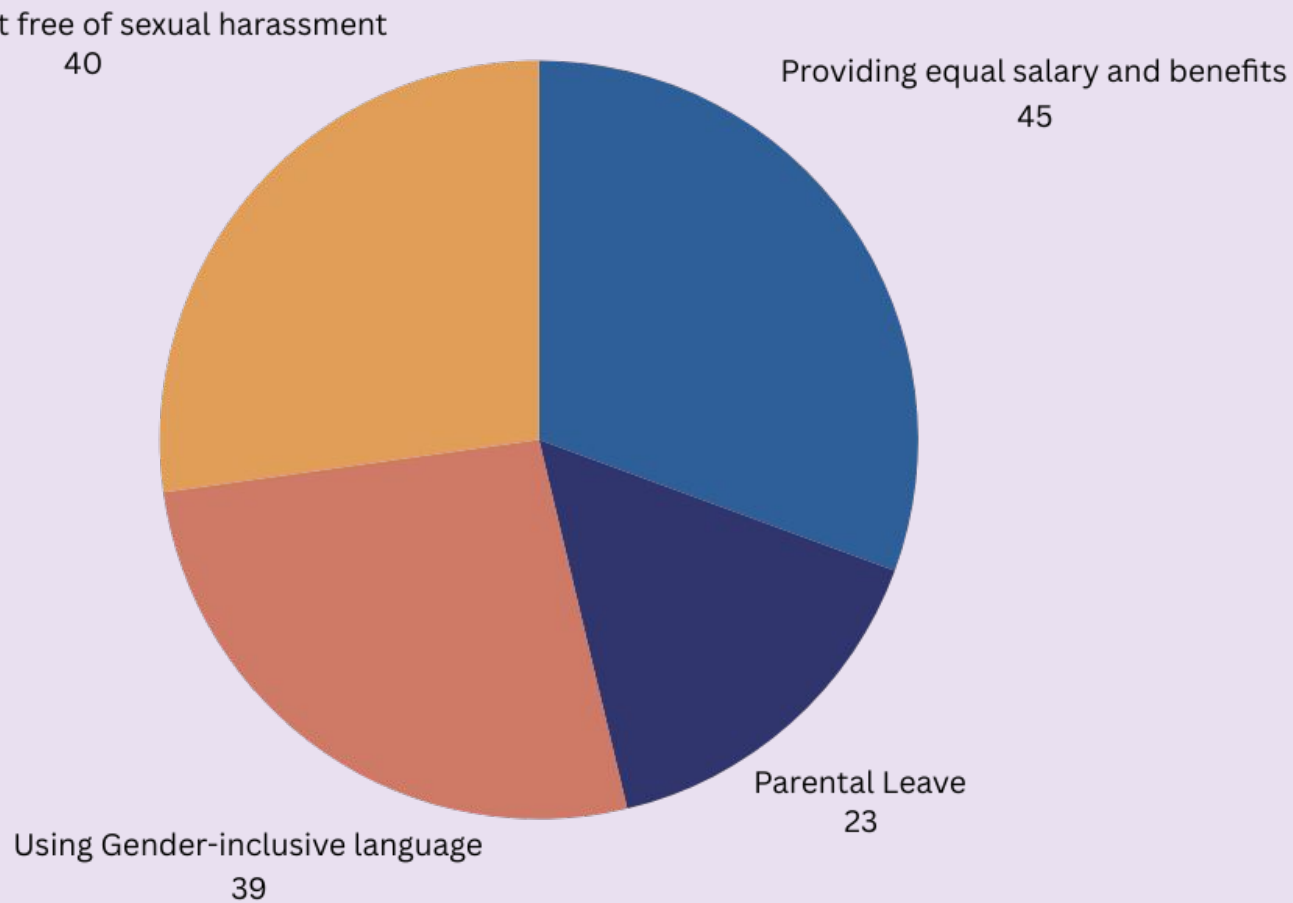
**Creating an inclusive, accessible  
facility is important to us.  
Our congregation has:**



**I personally am  
open to calling  
as our minister a  
person who is:**



**Our congregation  
is committed to:**



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**What additional work, training or conversations, if any, might need to take place within your church before you could call a female pastor? (42 responses)**

**Established Acceptance of  
Female Pastors**  
Previous Experience

**Potential Areas for  
Improvement**  
Sexual Harassment  
Policies and Training

**Ongoing Dialogue  
Addressing Needs**

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**What additional work, training or conversations, if any, might need to take place within your church before you could call an LGBTQIA+ pastor? (42 responses)**

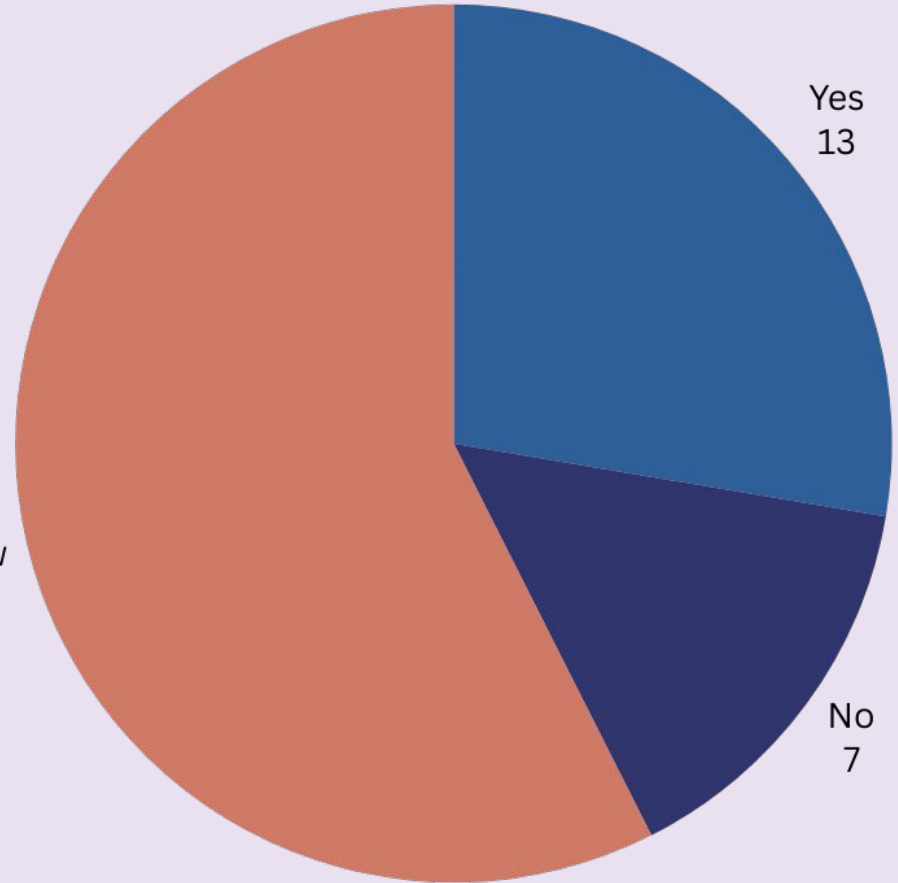
**Established Acceptance  
& Experience**  
Previous Experience

**Potential Areas for  
Improvement**  
Continued Learning and  
Growth

**Inclusivity Beyond LGB**  
Transgender and  
Non-Binary Awareness

**Has your church pledged to  
create a welcoming environment  
for a minister or family member  
with mental health challenges?  
(47 responses)**

I don't know  
27



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**Describe the steps that your congregation has taken to ensure that your church is a place where those with mental health challenges are provided a safe environment to tell their stories and share their journeys: (38 responses)**

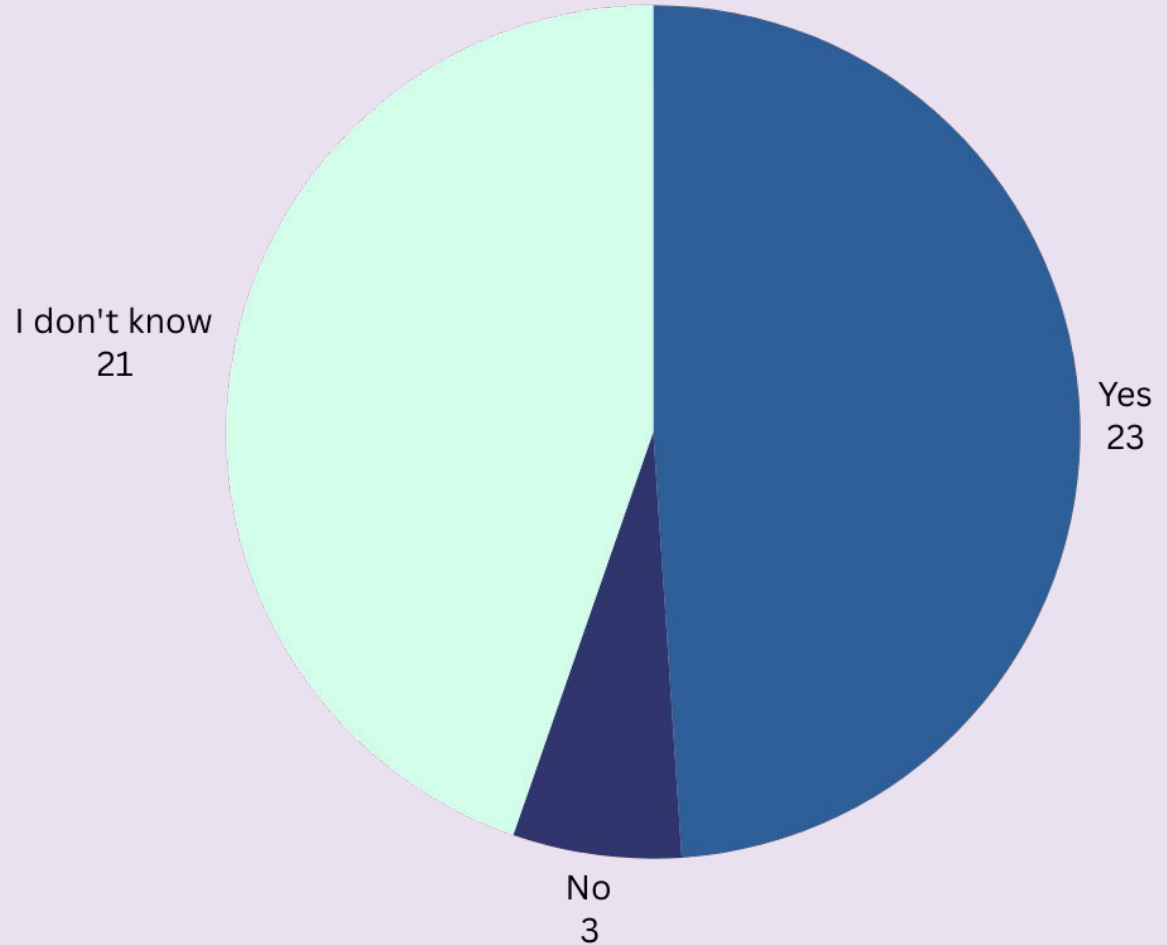
**General Inclusivity &  
Support**

Welcoming Environment  
Encouragement to Share

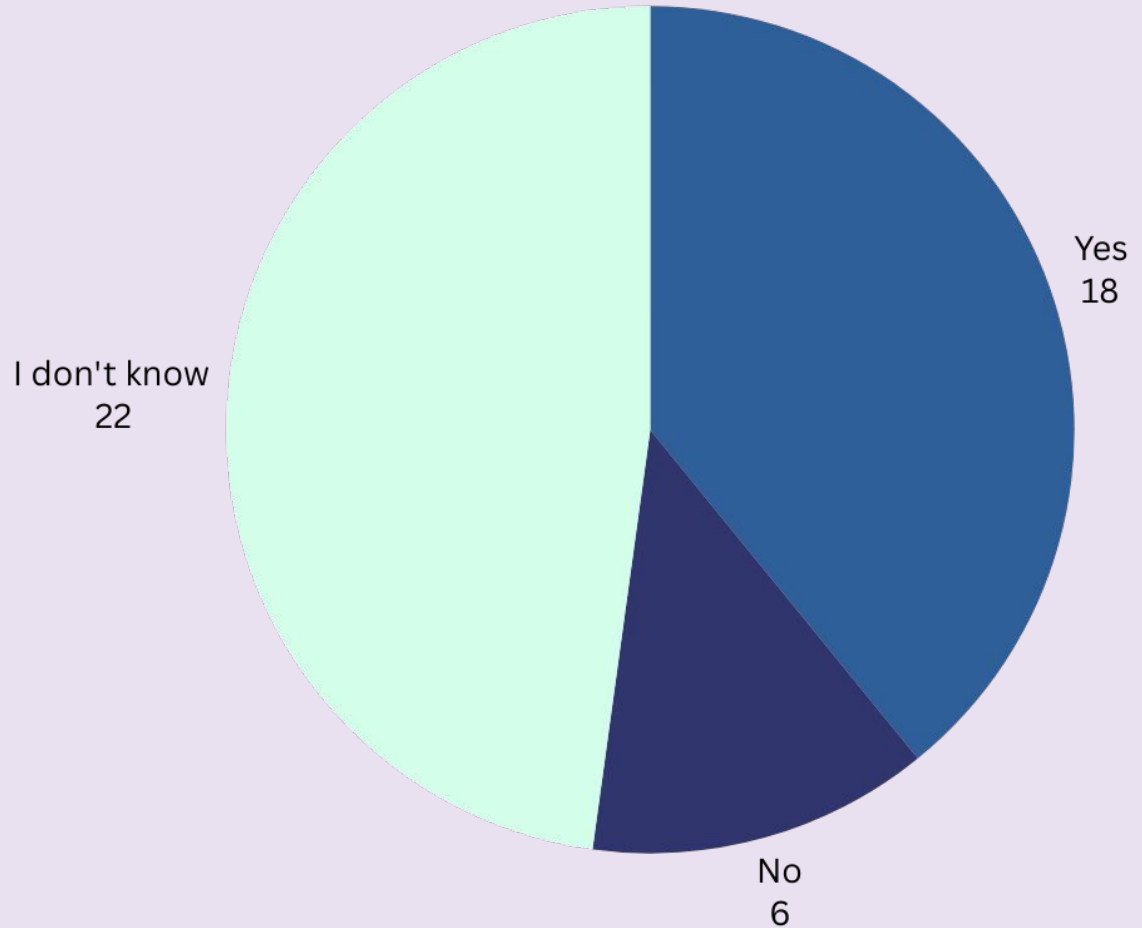
**Need for Awareness & Training**  
Addressing Mental Health Explicitly  
Information Sessions and  
Discussions  
Mixed Views on Readiness



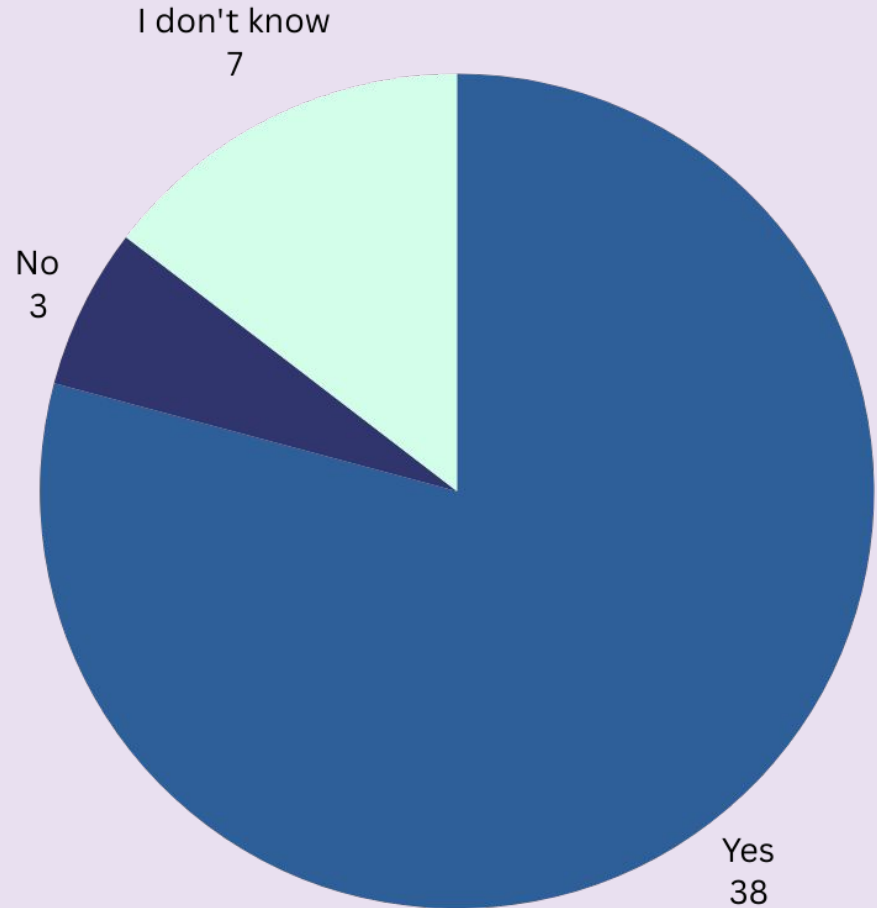
**As a church member,  
are you committed  
to recruiting,  
nominating, and  
supporting persons  
with mental health  
challenges (as  
defined in the  
Glossary) to serve in  
leadership positions  
within your  
congregation?  
(47 responses)**



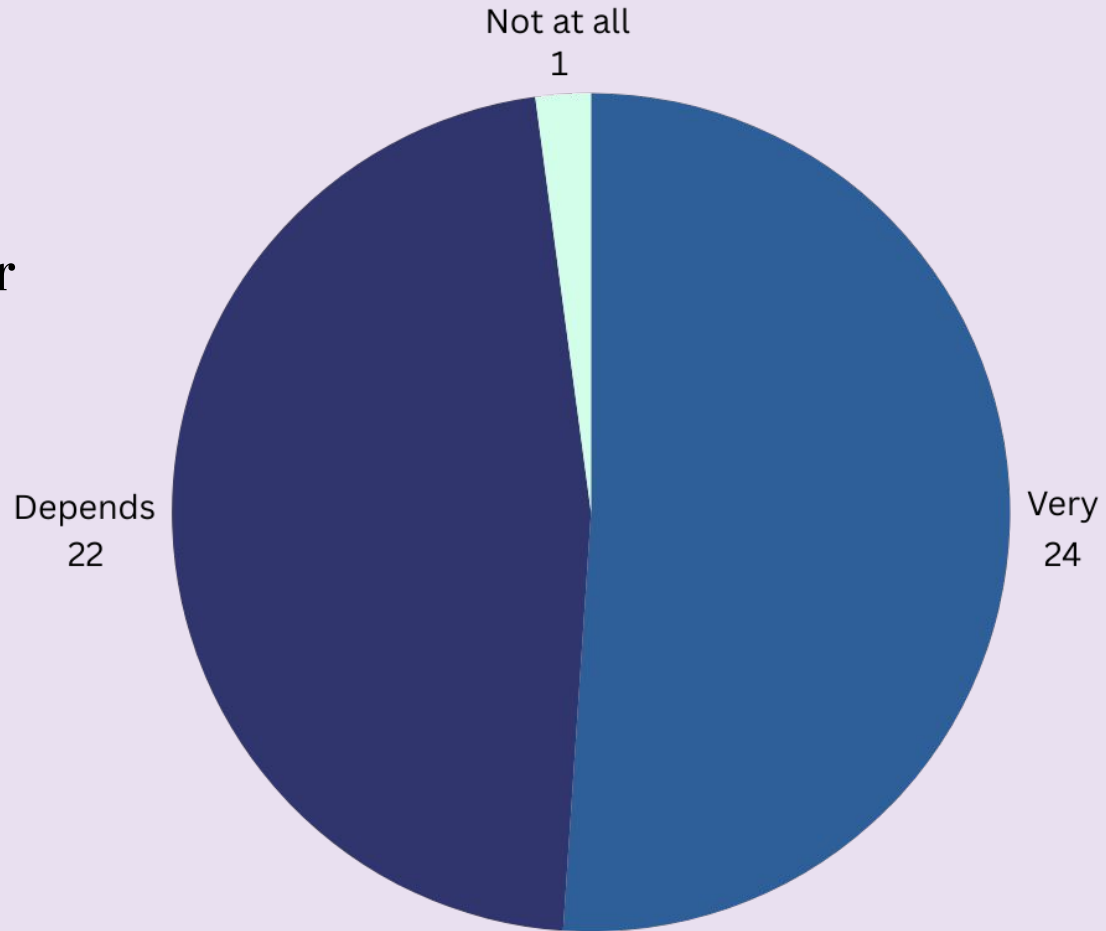
**Are you personally  
open to  
intentionally  
calling a pastor or  
other staff person  
with mental health  
challenges?  
(46 responses)**



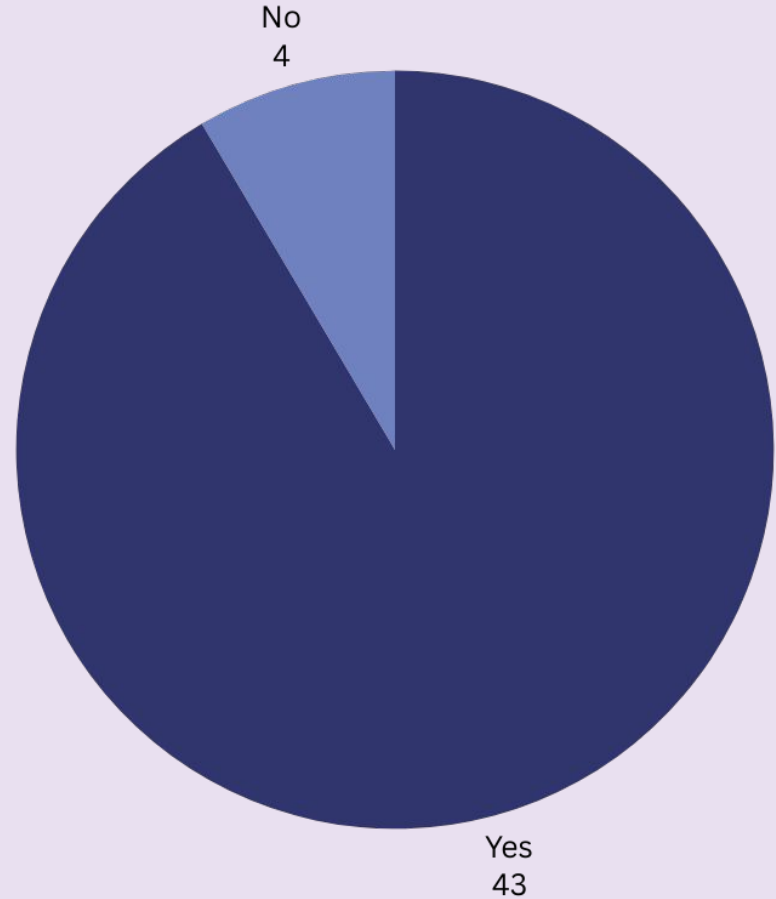
**Are you personally open to intentionally calling a pastor or other staff person with physical/mobility challenges?  
(48 responses)**



**How willing is your church  
to make adjustments to your  
facility/building in order to  
accommodate a pastor or  
their family member with  
physical/mobility  
disabilities?  
(47 responses)**



**Would you personally be open to attending sensitivity training related to engaging with persons with disabilities?  
(47 responses)**



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**What additional work, training, or conversations might need to take place within your church to prepare you in calling a pastor or a member of their family with physical disabilities? (36 responses)**

**Accessibility Needs**

Assessment/Modifications  
Case-by-Case Basis  
Gap in Knowledge

**Training & Education**

Call for Training  
Open Conversations and Active  
Listening  
Involving the Community

**Financial Considerations**

Funding and Grants  
Budget Constraints

**Inclusive Attitude**

Willingness to Adapt

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**What additional work, training, or conversations might need to take place within your church to prepare you in calling a pastor or a member of their family with mental health challenges? (38 responses)**

**Awareness & Education**

Mental Health Training  
Clarity on Pastor's Needs  
Open Conversations

**Mixed Reactions &  
Concerns**

Varied Levels of Support  
Concerns about Capability

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**Is there anything else that you would like to share about the welcoming environment of your congregation? (36 responses)**

**Commitment to Welcoming  
& Openness**

Welcoming Atmosphere  
Diversity and Inclusion  
Pioneering Inclusivity  
Ongoing Educational Opportunities

**Internal Challenges**

Interim Leadership  
Different Perspectives

**Welcoming Leadership**

Expectations for Leadership  
Desire for Liberal Thinking

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# Thank you!

Special thank you to Rev. Gary Ferner &  
Rev. Barbara Toll for their guidance.

For the expanded summary of the  
comments, please go to:

<https://tinyurl.com/SayvilleWDIresults24>

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# Q&A

For any additional questions, please reach out to the search committee:

Bill Houghtalen

Mike Jayne

Connie Kauffman, co-chair

Karen Maust

Jean Newcombe

Barbara Salva

Dr. Mariana Torres, co-chair

# Next steps

- Trainings available by UCC include:
  - WISE Program
  - ONA Program
  - Let's talk race
  - A2A
- Building Church Profile to Post
- Receiving community demographics, financial data, etc. from Rev. Toll