



1001 NEW WORSHIPPING COMMUNITIES FINDINGS FROM THE WINTER/SPRING 2014 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 panelists are randomly chosen every three years. These pages summarize major findings from the ninth survey completed by the 2012-2014 Panel.

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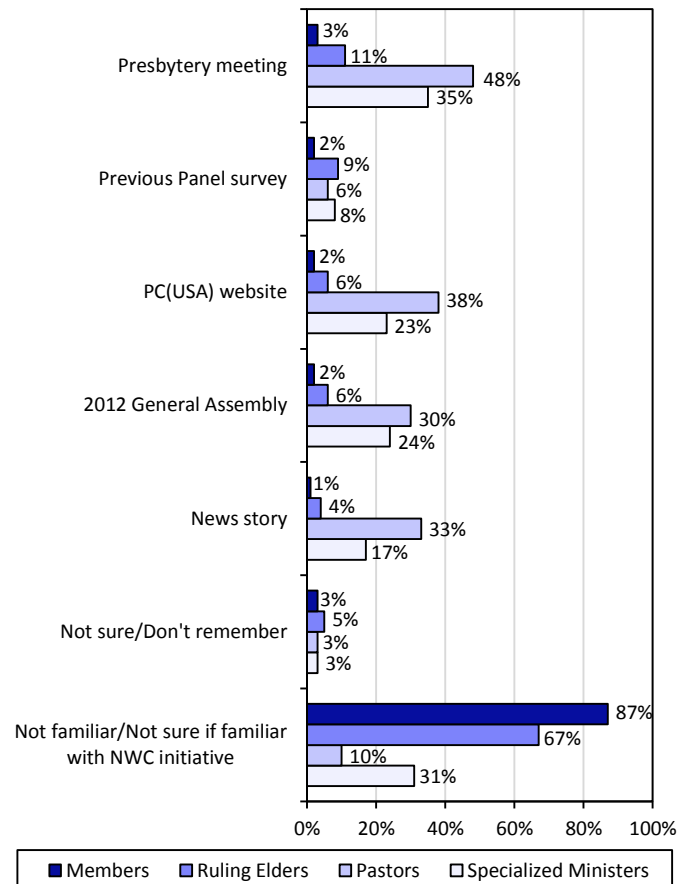
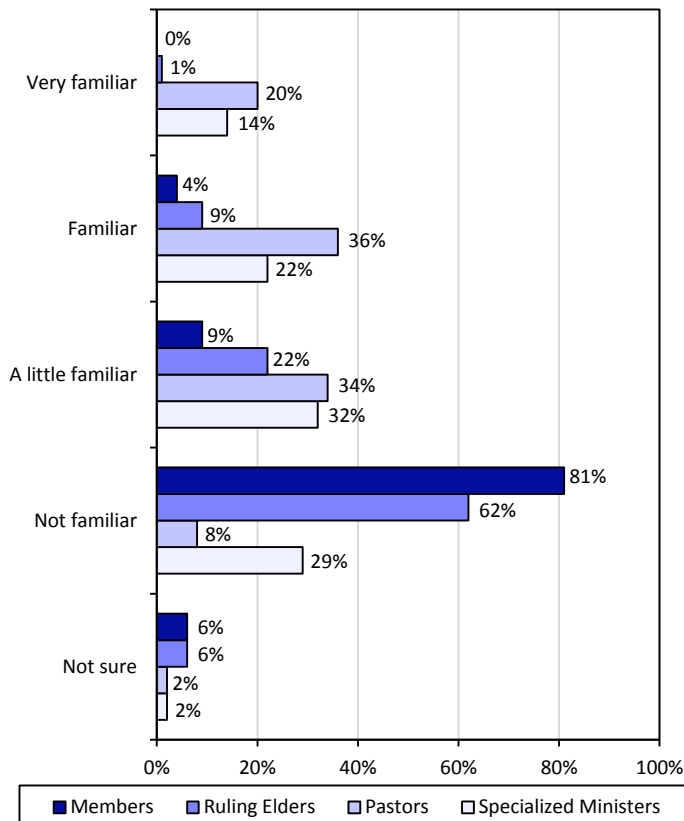
FAMILIARITY WITH THE 1001 NEW WORSHIPPING COMMUNITIES INITIATIVE

At the 2012 General Assembly, PC(USA) leaders encouraged Presbyterians to create 1,001 new worshipping communities (NWCs) between 2012 and 2022. The denomination has chosen to define “worshipping communities” broadly, to include traditional new church developments, immigrant fellowships, house churches, and a variety of other possibilities. Most pastors and specialized ministers, but fewer than one-third of members and ruling elders, are familiar with the 1001 NWC initiative. (See Figure 1.)

Teaching elders have learned about the 1001 NWC initiative through a wider range of information sources than have members and ruling elders. This is not surprising, as members and ruling elders are generally less connected to the activities of the PC(USA) than pastors and specialized ministers. (See Figure 2; respondents could choose multiple options from a list of 19 information sources.)

Figure 2. Top Resources that Increased Panelists' Awareness of the 1001 New Worshipping Communities Initiative

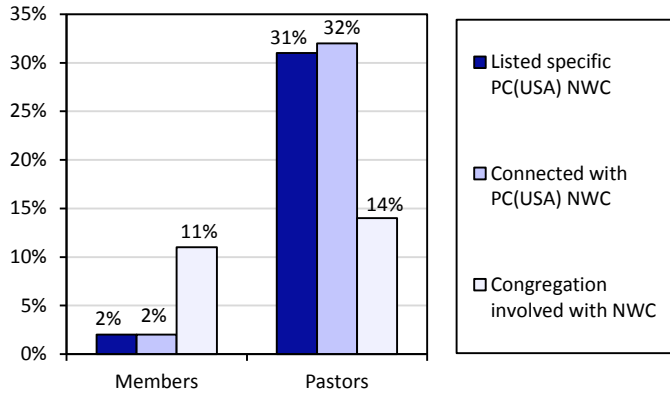
Figure 1. Panelists' Familiarity with the 1001 New Worshipping Communities Initiative



AWARENESS OF NWCs & PARTNERING WITH NWCs

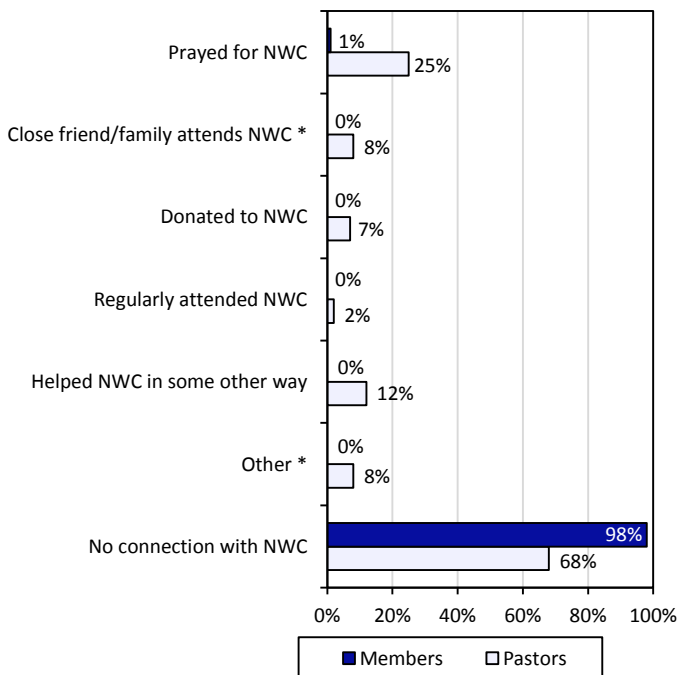
With less familiarity with the 1001 NWC initiative in general, it makes sense that very few members can list at least one specific PC(USA) NWC or have connected with a PC(USA) NWC in the past year. However, most pastors could not/did not do these things either. Similar (yet small) proportions of members and pastors are part of a congregation that is involved with a NWC. (See Figure 3; responses of ruling elders are similar to members, while responses of specialized ministers are similar to pastors.)

Figure 3. Specific Knowledge of and Involvement with NWCs



A minority of members and pastors have connected with a PC(USA) NWC in the past year, and most who did were pastors. The primary means of connection with NWCs was through prayer. (See Figure 4; responses of ruling elders are similar to members, and responses of specialized ministers are similar to pastors.)

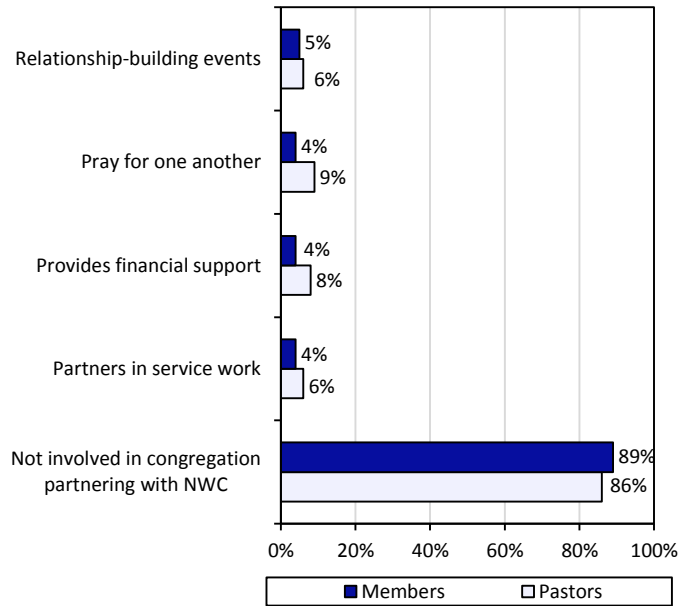
Figure 4. Panelists' Connections with a PC(USA) NWC in the Past Year



*For members, these percentages are actually 0.4%, which rounds to 0.

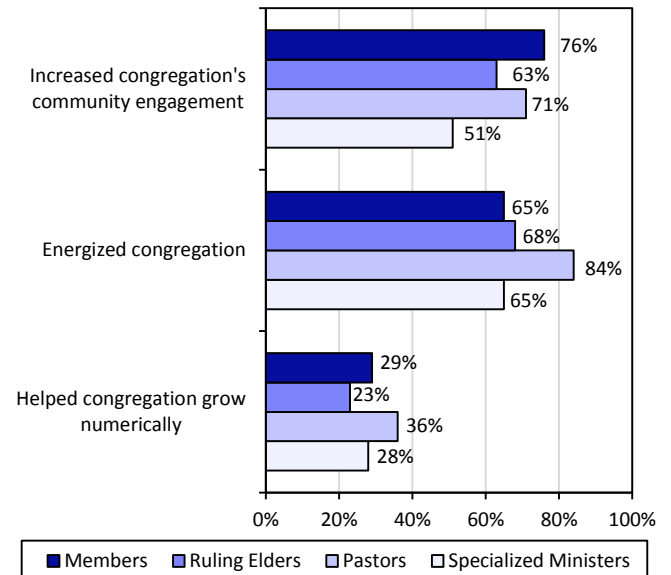
Panelists whose congregations are involved with a NWC report that their church partners with the new faith community in a number of ways. (See Figure 5, which mentions the top four types of involvement from a list of 11 types. Responses of ruling elders are similar to members, and responses of specialized ministers are similar to pastors.)

Figure 5. Most Common Types of Congregational Involvement with NWCs



Panelists in congregations that partner with a NWC can point to positive effects of this relationship. (See Figure 6.) These positive effects include an increase in their congregation's community engagement, energy, and to a lesser extent, numerical growth.

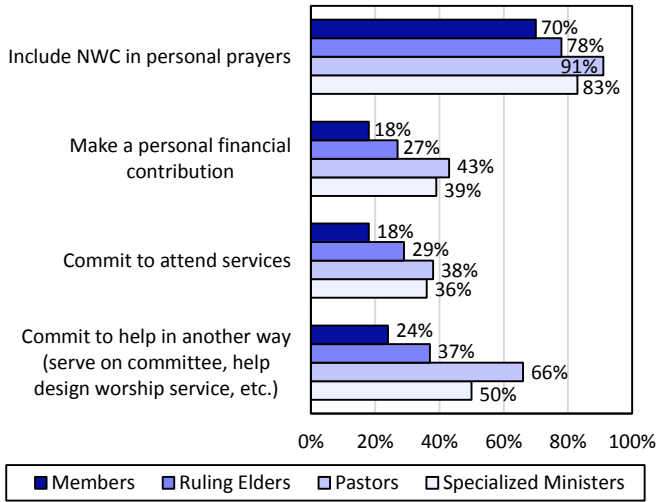
Figure 6. Panelists' Perceptions of the Effects of Their Congregation's Relationship with NWC



SUPPORT FOR NWCs

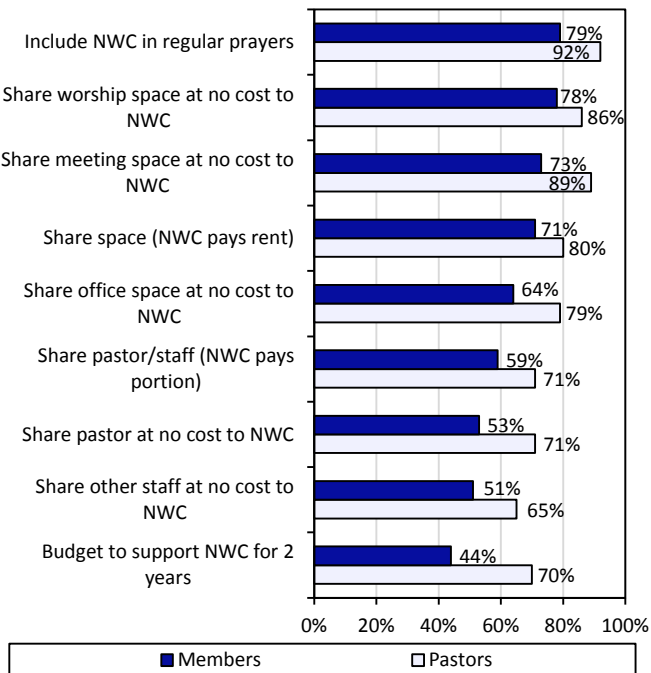
If their congregation were to partner with a NWC, most panelists think they would personally pray for the NWC. Many (especially pastors) also think they would give money or time. (See Figure 7.)

Figure 7. Among Panelists Attending a Congregation, Those Who Are Willing to Support a Proposed NWC in Four Specific Ways



Panelists are generally supportive of the idea of their congregation partnering with a NWC in each of the nine ways shown in Figure 8 (the responses of specialized ministers are similar to those of pastors, while the responses of ruling elders are more similar to those of members). Pastors are more supportive of this idea than are members, especially when it comes to providing financial support for a NWC.

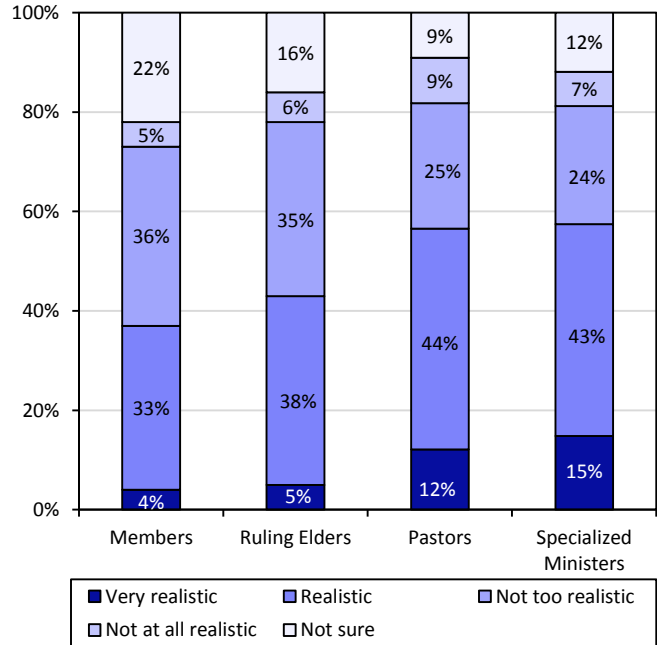
Figure 8. Support for Nine Types of Congregational Partnership with a NWC, Among Panelists Involved in a Congregation



OPINIONS ABOUT THE 1001 NWC INITIATIVE

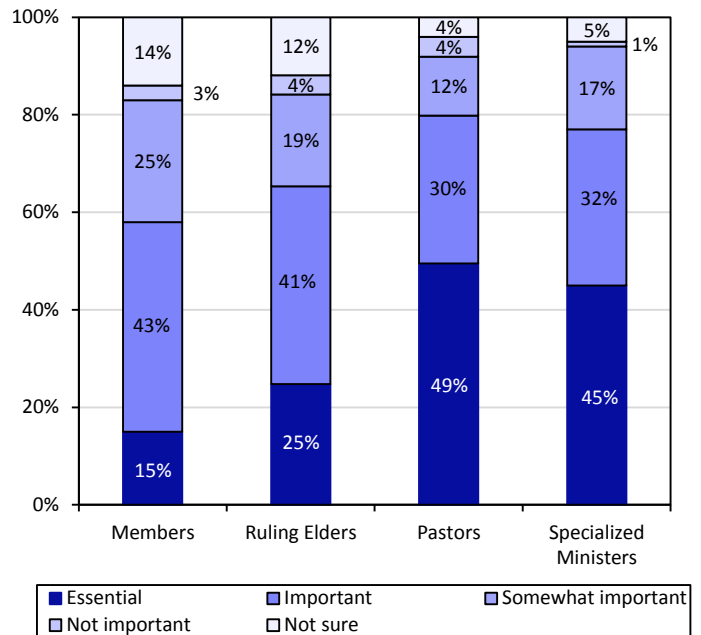
Panelists were told that the 1001 NWC initiative is on track to meet its goal of creating 1,001 new worshiping communities by 2022. Most pastors and specialized ministers believe that it's realistic for the initiative to reach its goal, while members and ruling elders are more divided in their opinions about this issue. (See Figure 9.)

Figure 9. How Realistic is the Goal of Creating 1,001 NWCs Between 2012 and 2022?



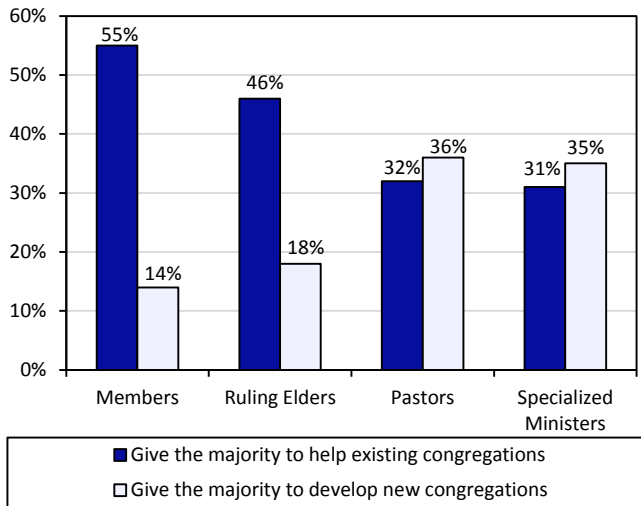
Whether or not they think the 1001 NWC goal is achievable, most panelists do see the value of starting NWCs as a way to reach the next generation of Presbyterians. (See Figure 10.)

Figure 10. Importance of NWCs for Reaching Next Generation



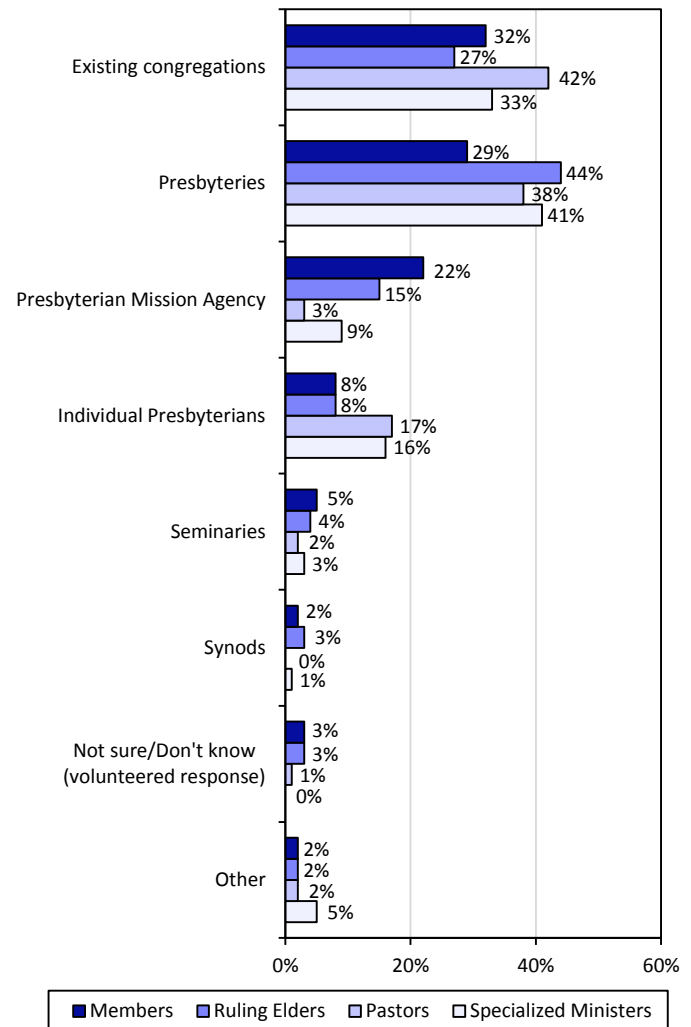
Panelists were asked to imagine that they had \$100 to donate to help existing congregations, start new worshiping communities, or both. In this scenario, members and elders reveal that they would rather support existing congregations, while teaching elders are more divided between supporting existing congregations and creating new worshiping communities. (See Figure 11.)

Figure 11. Panelists Who Would Give the Majority of a \$100 Donation to One of Two Possible Causes



Although there are a number of entities in the PC(USA) that could be charged with starting new worshiping communities, most panelists think that existing congregations or presbyteries are best equipped for this task. (See Figure 12, next column; respondents were asked to choose only one response, but multiple responses were accepted when given.)

Figure 12. Entity in PC(USA) Best Equipped to Start NWCs



	Members	Ruling Elders	Teaching Elders
Number of surveys sent	480	859	1,045
Number of ineligible respondents	0	0	0
Number of surveys completed	253	447	591‡
Response rate	52%	52%	56%

‡Of the 591 returned surveys, 416 came from pastors and 175 from specialized ministers.

The survey was distributed on April 21, 2014, with returns accepted through July 1, 2014. 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. It will include tables with percentage responses to each survey question.

For more information about the entity that sponsored this survey, visit the 1001 New Worshiping Communities website: www.onethousandone.org.

LISTENING TO PRESBYTERIANS SINCE 1973

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