



# The State of Women in Baptist Life 2021 Survey Results

## Introduction

1. Are you a woman in ministry? (i.e. currently serving in, formerly serving in, preparing for, or feeling a call toward any form of congregational and/or non-congregational ministry?)
  - Yes: 82%
  - No: 18%

## The State of Women's Experiences in Ministry

2. *To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement? "I am supported as a woman in ministry by my congregation/context."*
  - o Strongly disagree: 6%
  - o Somewhat disagree: 12%
  - o Neither agree nor disagree: 3%
  - o Somewhat agree: 33%
  - o Strongly agree: 47%
3. *To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement? "My congregation's/context's support of me as a woman in ministry has direct impact on my ability to thrive."*
  - o Strongly disagree: 5%
  - o Somewhat disagree: 1%
  - o Neither agree nor disagree: 7%
  - o Somewhat agree: 27%
  - o Strongly agree: 59%

4. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement? "I have experienced obstacles to my ministry because of my gender."
- o Strongly disagree: 7%
  - o Somewhat disagree: 4%
  - o Neither agree nor disagree: 3%
  - o Somewhat agree: 33%
  - o Strongly agree: 53%
5. Which of the following, if any, have you experienced in your current or previous ministry setting? (Check all that apply)
- o I have not been paid equally to my male counterpart(s): 49%
  - o I have had a different ministerial title from my male counterpart(s): 30%
  - o My job has not provided adequate funds for or access to childcare: 18%
  - o I have experienced discriminating practices in regard to maternity leave: 9%
  - o I have experienced inappropriate questions about my dating life: 28%
  - o I have been asked inappropriate questions about family planning in a job interview and/or other professional setting: 21%
  - o I have not been allowed to perform certain ministerial tasks because of my gender: 42%
  - o None of the above: 22%
6. How often do you experience the following in your ministry setting?
- o My leadership is misunderstood as bossy, angry, controlling, or unlikable
    - o Never: 20%
    - o Rarely: 32%
    - o Sometimes: 33%
    - o Frequently: 11%
    - o Very Frequently: 4%
  - o People make comments about my emotional state
    - o Never: 29%
    - o Rarely: 33%
    - o Sometimes: 31%
    - o Frequently: 6%
    - o Very Frequently: 2%
  - o My peers or parishioners are patronizing to me
    - o Never: 23%
    - o Rarely: 32%
    - o Sometimes: 35%

- o Frequently: 8%
  - o Very Frequently: 2%
- o *Men interrupt or talk over me in meetings*
  - o Never: 14%
  - o Rarely: 19%
  - o Sometimes: 40%
  - o Frequently: 19%
  - o Very Frequently: 7%
- o *Men get credit for my ideas*
  - o Never: 19%
  - o Rarely: 24%
  - o Sometimes: 34%
  - o Frequently: 16%
  - o Very Frequently: 7%
- o *I am addressed by others in unprofessional ways*
  - o Never: 18%
  - o Rarely: 29%
  - o Sometimes: 37%
  - o Frequently: 12%
  - o Very Frequently: 4%
- o *I get mistaken for someone at a lower professional level than me*
  - o Never: 17%
  - o Rarely: 18%
  - o Sometimes: 36%
  - o Frequently: 21%
  - o Very Frequently: 9%
- o *I have to provide more evidence of my competence than my male counterparts do*
  - o Never: 12%
  - o Rarely: 16%
  - o Sometimes: 28%
  - o Frequently: 26%
  - o Very Frequently: 18%
- o *I have to fight for a seat at the table*
  - o Never: 16%
  - o Rarely: 21%
  - o Sometimes: 31%
  - o Frequently: 21%
  - o Very Frequently: 11%
- o *I am overlooked or silenced*
  - o Never: 15%
  - o Rarely: 26%
  - o Sometimes: 38%

- o Frequently: 14%
- o Very Frequently: 6%
- o *My judgment is questioned in my area of expertise*
  - o Never: 17%
  - o Rarely: 26%
  - o Sometimes: 35%
  - o Frequently: 14%
  - o Very Frequently: 9%
- o *My work contributions are ignored*
  - o Never: 17%
  - o Rarely: 36%
  - o Sometimes: 34%
  - o Frequently: 8%
  - o Very Frequently: 5%
- o *I hear/overhear demeaning remarks about me or people like me*
  - o Never: 32%
  - o Rarely: 32%
  - o Sometimes: 27%
  - o Frequently: 5%
  - o Very Frequently: 3%

7. *Have you personally experienced sexual harassment, misconduct, or assault in your ministry setting?*

- o Yes: 25%
- o No: 69%
- o I'm not sure: 6%

## COVID-19 Impact

8. *During the COVID-19 pandemic, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?*

- o *I have experienced burnout*
  - o Strongly disagree: 5%
  - o Somewhat disagree: 8%
  - o Neither agree nor disagree: 7%
  - o Somewhat agree: 35%
  - o Strongly agree: 36%
  - o N/A: 8%
- o *I have not had access to adequate mental health care resources*
  - o Strongly disagree: 30%

- o Somewhat disagree: 19%
- o Neither agree nor disagree: 15%
- o Somewhat agree: 16%
- o Strongly agree: 10%
- o N/A: 10%
- o *I have felt pressure to spend more time than usual working in my ministry setting*
  - o Strongly agree: 11%
  - o Somewhat agree: 13%
  - o Neither agree nor disagree: 16%
  - o Somewhat agree: 28%
  - o Strongly agree: 23%
  - o N/A: 10%
- o *My responsibilities for family caregiving (to children and/or others) have increased*
  - o Strongly disagree: 10%
  - o Somewhat disagree: 7%
  - o Neither agree nor disagree: 13%
  - o Somewhat agree: 19%
  - o Strongly agree: 29%
  - o N/A: 23%
- o *I have considered downshifting my ministry career or taking a leave of absence*
  - o Strongly disagree: 24%
  - o Somewhat disagree: 13%
  - o Neither agree nor disagree: 10%
  - o Somewhat agree: 19%
  - o Strongly agree: 23%
  - o N/A: 12%
- o *I have left my ministry position for reasons related to the pandemic (If you did NOT leave your ministry position within the last 19 months, please answer N/A)*
  - o Strongly disagree: 16%
  - o Somewhat disagree: 2%
  - o Neither agree nor disagree: 3%
  - o Somewhat agree: 5%
  - o Strongly agree: 6%
  - o N/A: 69%

## The State of Congregations with regard to Women in Ministry

### 9. Which of the following best describes your congregation?

- o My congregation is supportive of women in ministry and takes significant action to eliminate barriers for women serving in all areas of ministry and leadership: 41%
- o My congregation is supportive of women in ministry and takes some action to implement that support: 36%
- o My congregation expresses support of women in ministry but takes little action to implement that support: 17%
- o My congregation is discerning the level to which it is supportive of women in ministry: 4%
- o My congregation is not supportive of women in ministry: 2%

### 10. How often do the following actions happen in your congregation?

- o Women serve as ushers/greeters:
  - o Never: 5%
  - o Rarely: 5%
  - o Sometimes: 8%
  - o Frequently: 18%
  - o Very Frequently: 63%
- o Women teach all age-levels of co-ed Sunday School (children, youth, adult)
  - o Never: 2%
  - o Rarely: 3%
  - o Sometimes: 9%
  - o Frequently: 18%
  - o Very Frequently: 68%
- o Women serve as deacons/elders
  - o Never: 16%
  - o Rarely: 3%
  - o Sometimes: 4%
  - o Frequently: 12%
  - o Very Frequently: 65%
- o Women are ordained as ministers/pastors
  - o Never: 15%
  - o Rarely: 6%
  - o Sometimes: 17%
  - o Frequently: 18%
  - o Very Frequently: 44%

- o *Women perform baptisms, preside over the Lord's Supper/Communion, and officiate weddings and funeral services*
  - o *Never: 14%*
  - o *Rarely: 11%*
  - o *Sometimes: 18%*
  - o *Frequently: 16%*
  - o *Very Frequently: 41%*
- o *Women preach in Sunday morning worship services*
  - o *Never: 12%*
  - o *Rarely: 14%*
  - o *Sometimes: 23%*
  - o *Frequently: 17%*
  - o *Very Frequently: 35%*
- o *The Bible is used as a source of authority on the equality of women*
  - o *Never: 8%*
  - o *Rarely: 12%*
  - o *Sometimes: 24%*
  - o *Frequently: 23%*
  - o *Very Frequently: 34%*
- o *Gender inclusive language is used when referring to people*
  - o *Never: 8%*
  - o *Rarely: 18%*
  - o *Sometimes: 24%*
  - o *Frequently: 25%*
  - o *Very Frequently: 24%*
- o *Gender inclusive language is used when referring to God*
  - o *Never: 25%*
  - o *Rarely: 21%*
  - o *Sometimes: 24%*
  - o *Frequently: 17%*
  - o *Very Frequently: 13%*
- o *The empowerment and equality of women is discussed in sermons, bible studies, etc.*
  - o *Never: 11%*
  - o *Rarely: 18%*
  - o *Sometimes: 31%*
  - o *Frequently: 19%*
  - o *Very Frequently: 20%*
- o *Sexual harassment and assault are discussed and addressed*
  - o *Never: 21%*
  - o *Rarely: 30%*
  - o *Sometimes: 30%*

- o Frequently: 10%
- o Very Frequently: 9%
- o **The leadership of girls and young women is encouraged**
  - o Never: 4%
  - o Rarely: 11%
  - o Sometimes: 18%
  - o Frequently: 26%
  - o Very Frequently: 41%

## Demographics

### 11. What is your gender?

- o Male: 12%
- o Female: 87%
- o Prefer to self-describe: 0.2%

### 12. What is your age?

- o 18-24: 1%
- o 25-34: 16%
- o 35-44: 26%
- o 45-54: 21%
- o 55-64: 18%
- o 65+: 18%

### 13. Which best describes you? (Check all that apply)

- o American Indian or Alaska Native: 0.2%
- o Asian: 1%
- o Black or African American: 7%
- o Hispanic or Latinx: 4%
- o Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander: 0.5%
- o White: 84%
- o Prefer not to say: 1%
- o Prefer to self-describe: 1%

### 14. Do you identify among the LGBTQ+ community?

- o Yes: 2%
- o No: 96%
- o Prefer not to say: 2%

### 15. Which denominational group does your congregation identify, affiliate, or partner with? (Check all that apply)

- o Alliance of Baptists: 10%



- o American Baptist Churches USA: 8%
- o Cooperative Baptist Fellowship: 47%
- o Lott Carey Baptist Foreign Mission Convention: 1%
- o National Baptist Convention of America: 2%
- o National Baptist Convention, USA: 2%
- o National Missionary Baptist Convention of America: 0.1%
- o Progressive National Baptist Convention: 0.6%
- o Southern Baptist Convention: 19%
- o Other: 11%

*\*Each percentage is rounded to the nearest percentage point. If the percentage was below 1%, then the percentage was rounded to the nearest tenth of a percentage point.*



**State of Women**  
IN BAPTIST LIFE  
REPORT 2021