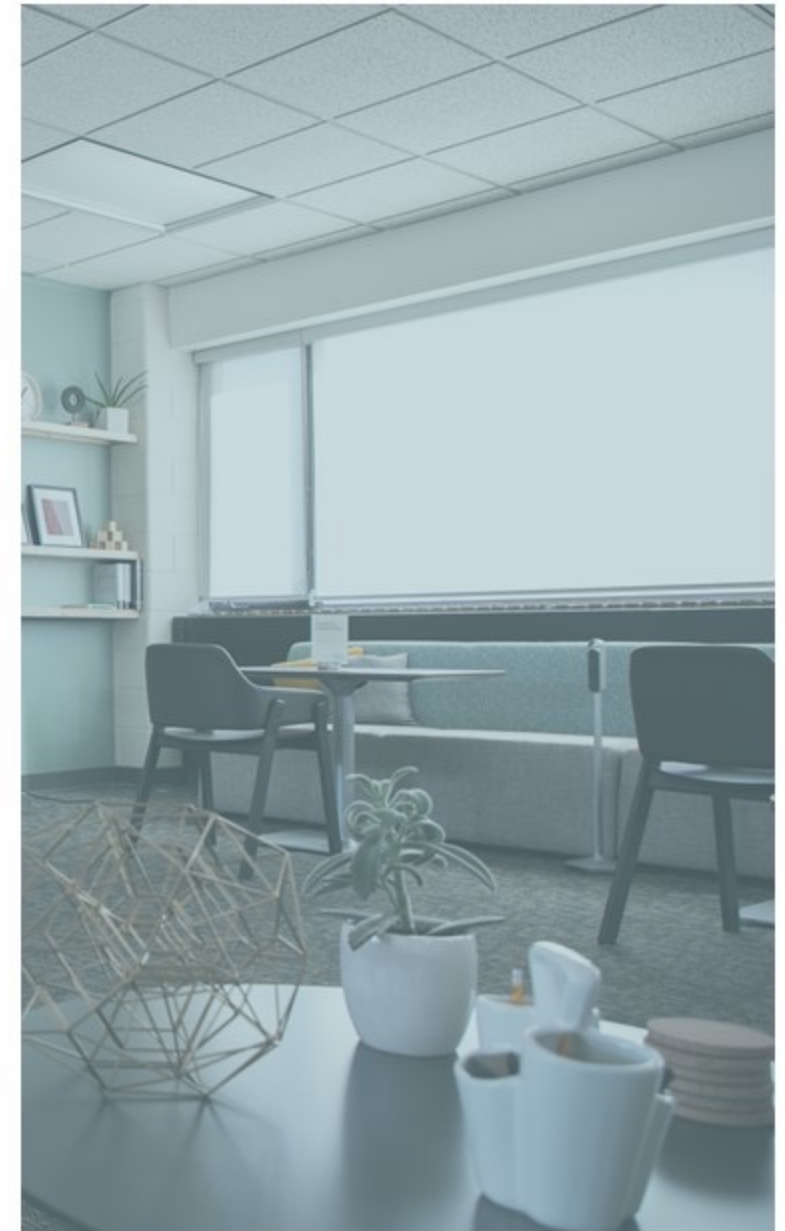


Fireside Chat
**Congregational
& Demographic
Changes in the
Community**

December 3, 2019

CENTRO DE LIDERAZGO DE
IGLESIAS URBANAS
URBAN CHURCH
LEADERSHIP CENTER



Congregational Census and Survey

Study Area: Grand Rapids, Kentwood, and Wyoming

Timeline: July—November of 2016 (census) // June—September 2017 (survey)

Goals: Analyze trends over time in the congregational ecology of our urban area and gather information on the main characteristics of religious leaders and their congregations

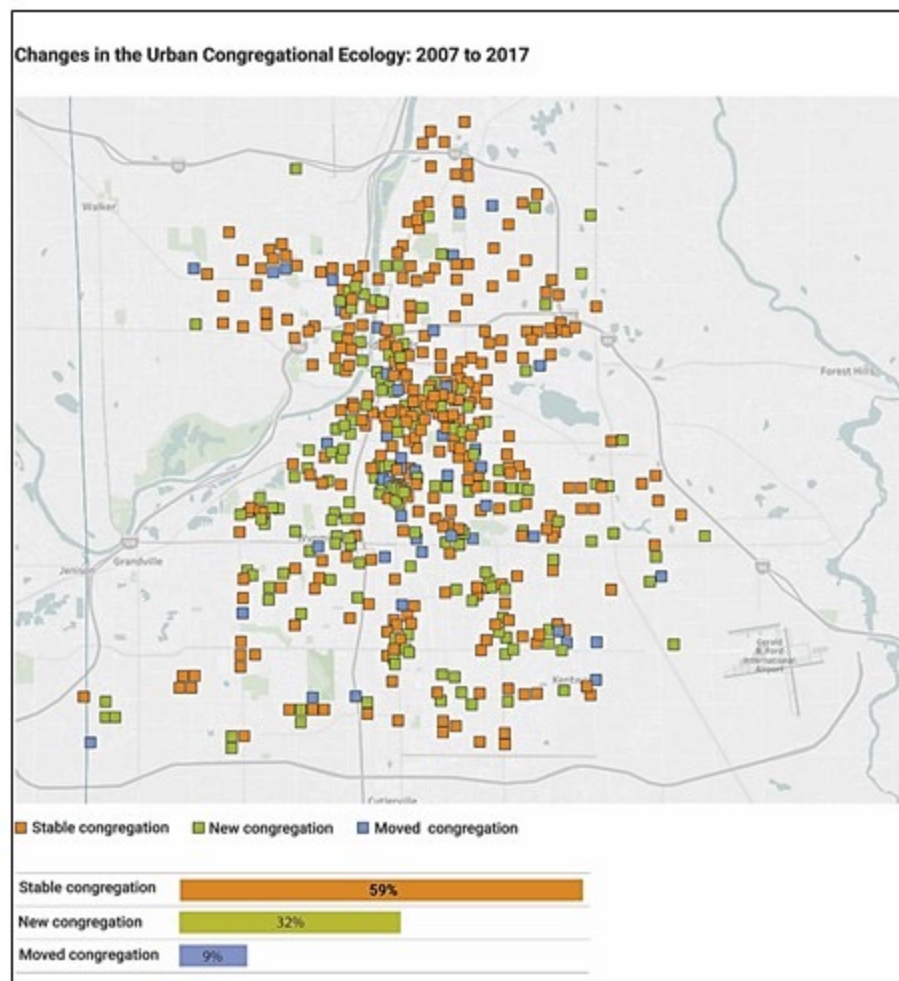
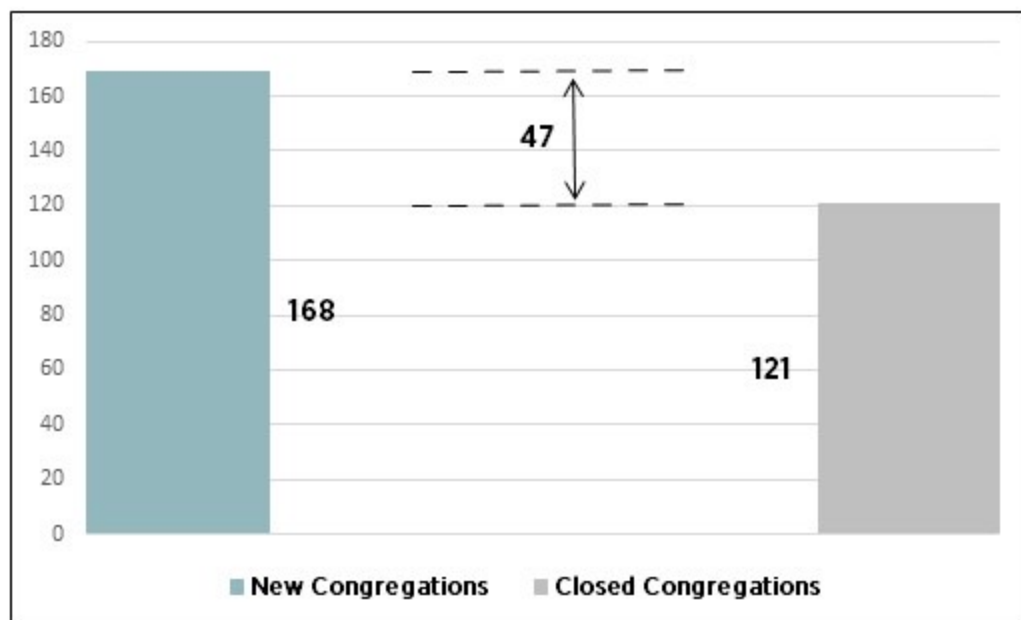
Process:

- Canvased more than 90 square miles of roads and walkable districts
- Used existing lists, maps, and online research to compile a list of all known congregations
- Surveyed 348 of the 532 congregations from the master list, or 65% of the study-eligible congregations
- Interviewed the leaders of 75% of Hispanic and 72% of Black churches
- Included 14 primarily Black and primarily Hispanic congregations that are located directly adjacent to the study area
- Used Key Informant Method, which relies on a key leader to describe an organization
- Included demographic information from the American Community Survey (ACS), an ongoing project directed by the U.S. Census Bureau

2007 vs. 2017 Comparisons

We located **518** congregations in Greater Grand Rapids in 2017, compared to **471** congregations in 2007

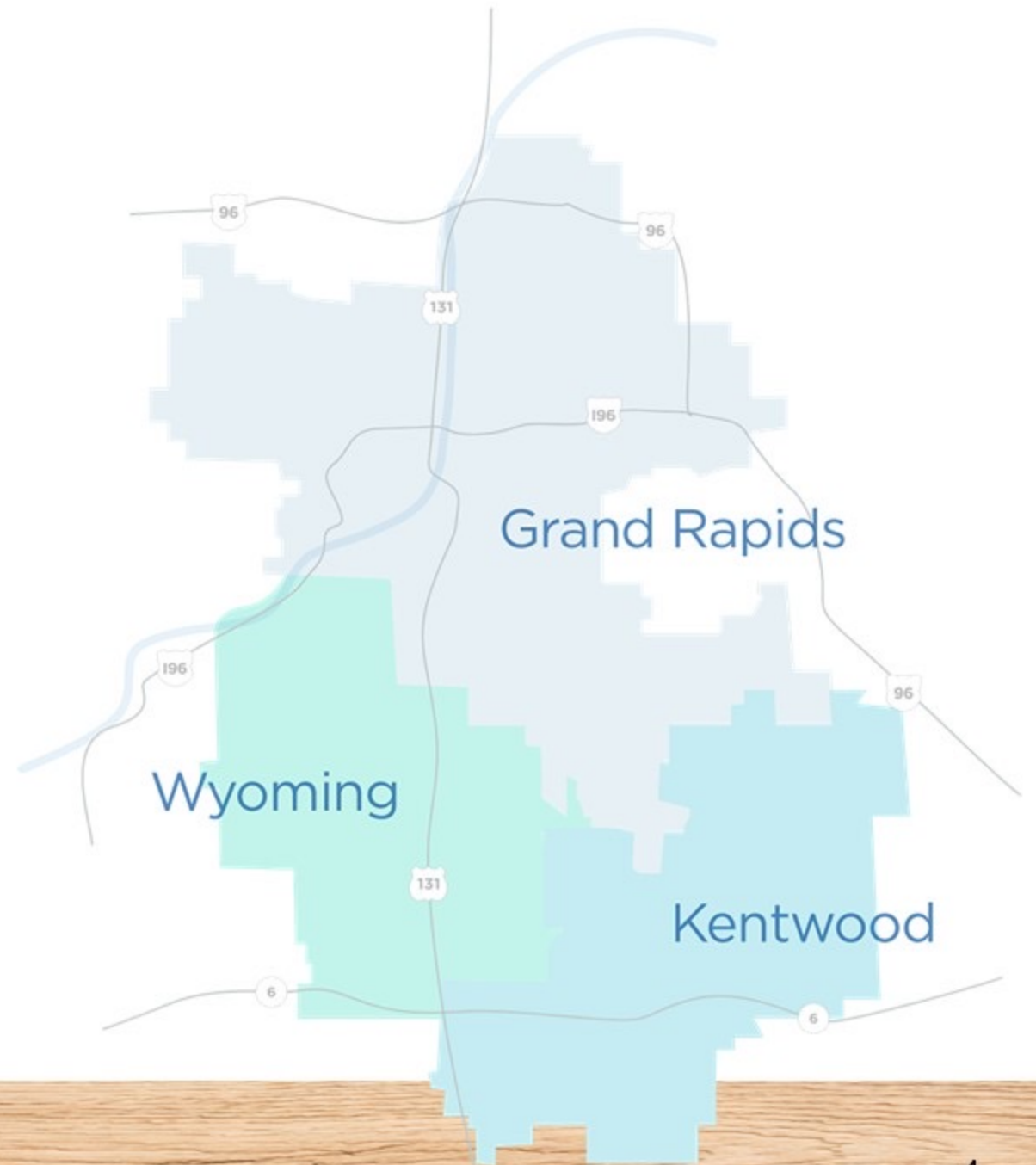
- A net growth of 47, or a 10% increase in the number of religious congregations
- A very dynamic process: 121 congregations (26%) closed; 168 opened (36%)



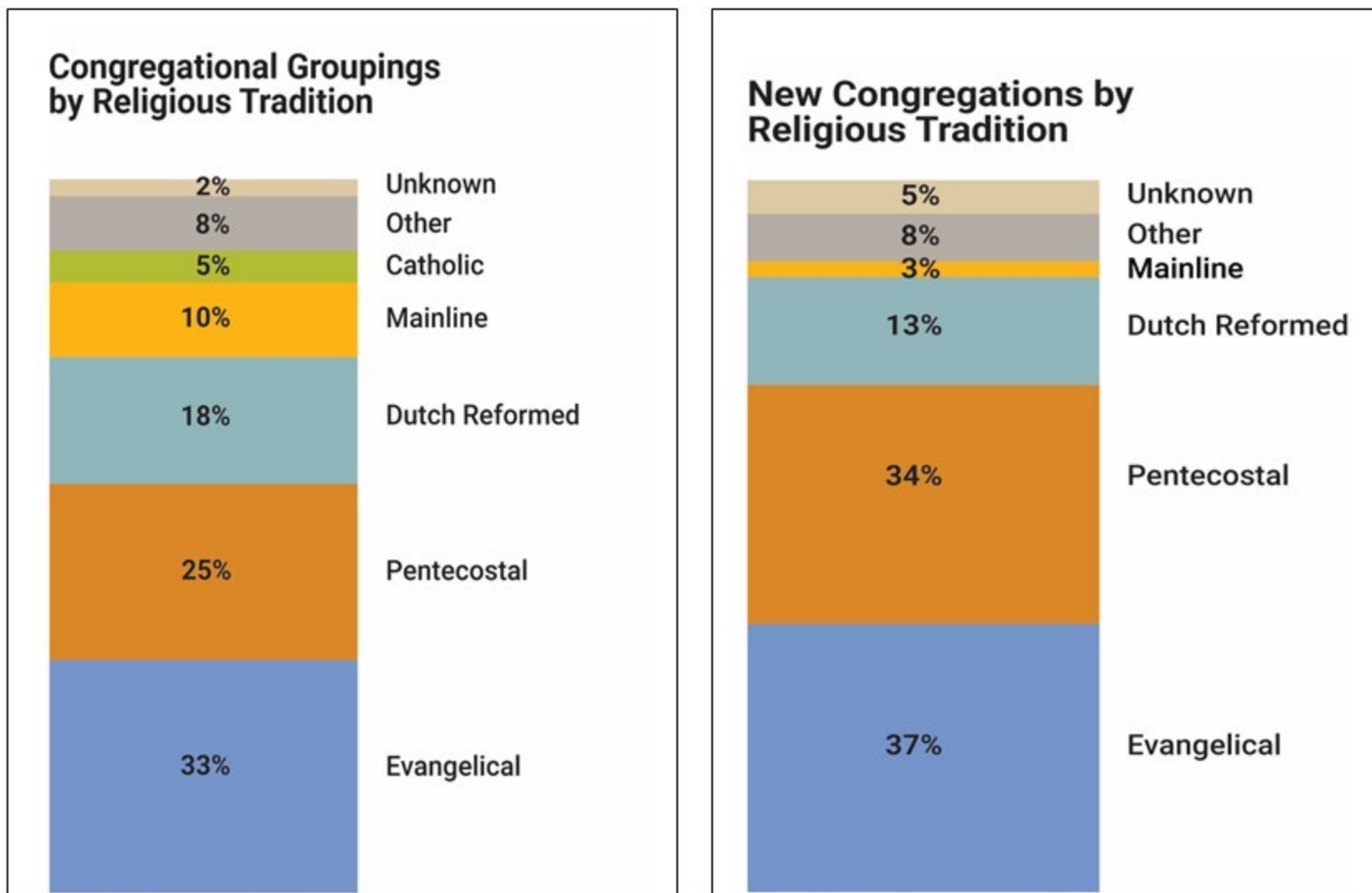
Kentwood: The most population growth since 2007 (9%); the number of congregations has grown only by 2%.

Wyoming: A 7% increase in population; the number of its congregations increased by nearly 30% (29%).

Grand Rapids: The population has remained fairly stable in the last decade, hovering at just under 200,000; the city's congregations have grown by 6%.

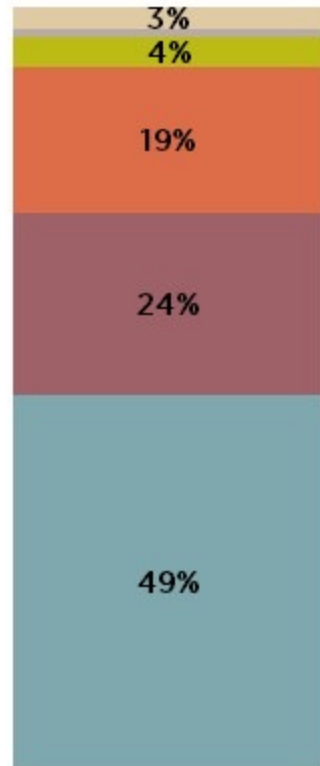


Religious Traditions



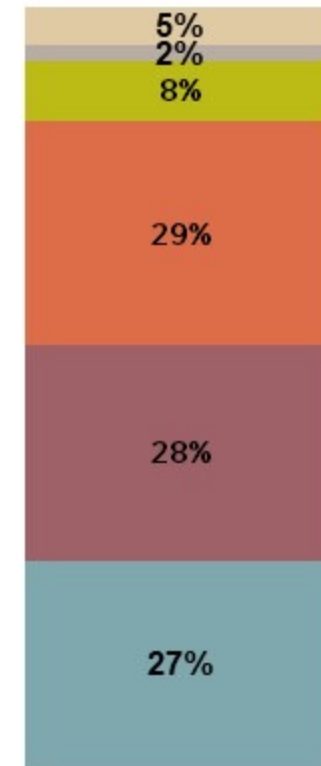
Primary Race or Ethnicity

The Primary Racial or Ethnic Makeup of Religious Congregations



Unknown Other Asian Hispanic Black White

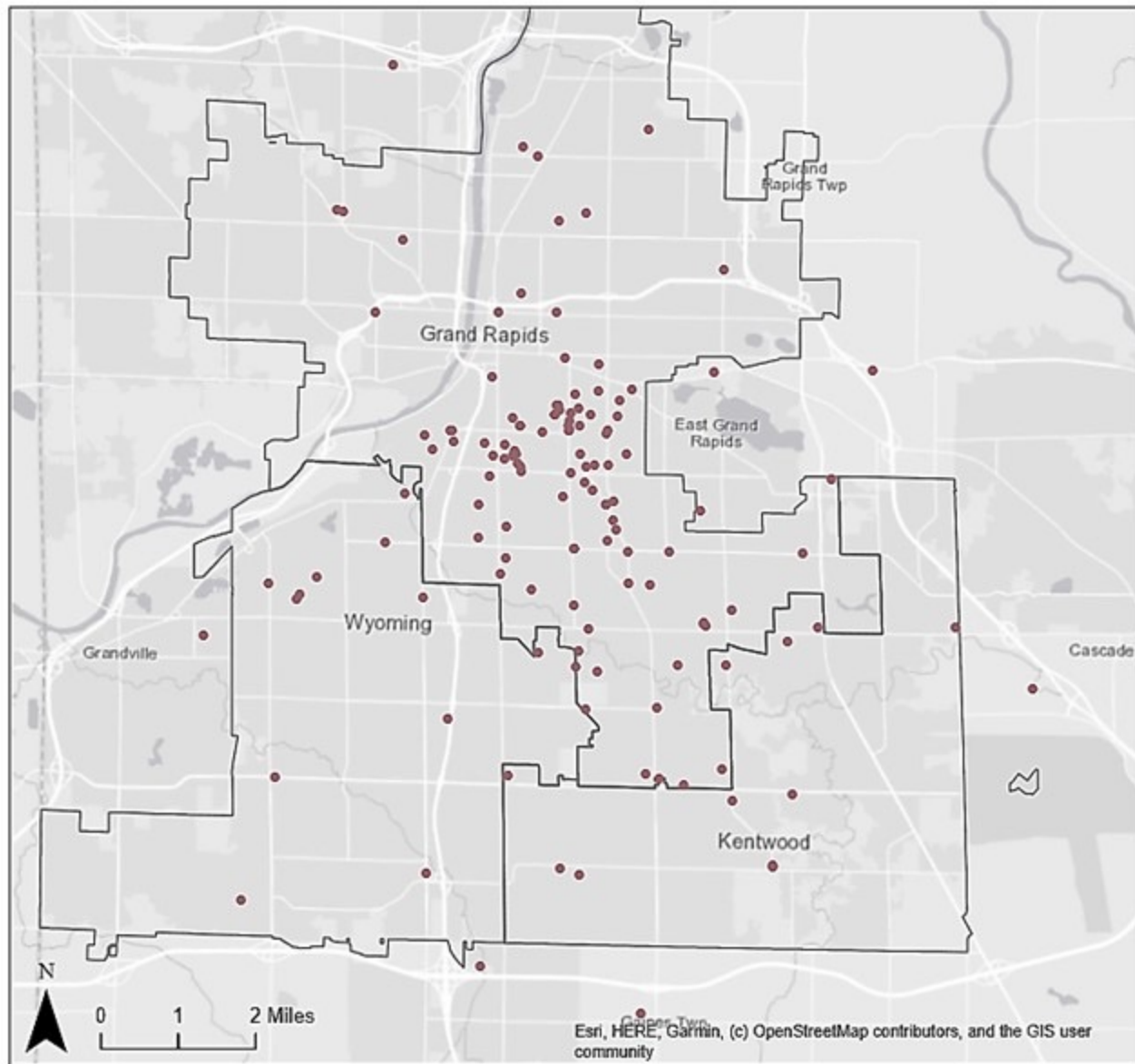
The Primary Racial or Ethnic Makeup of New Congregations

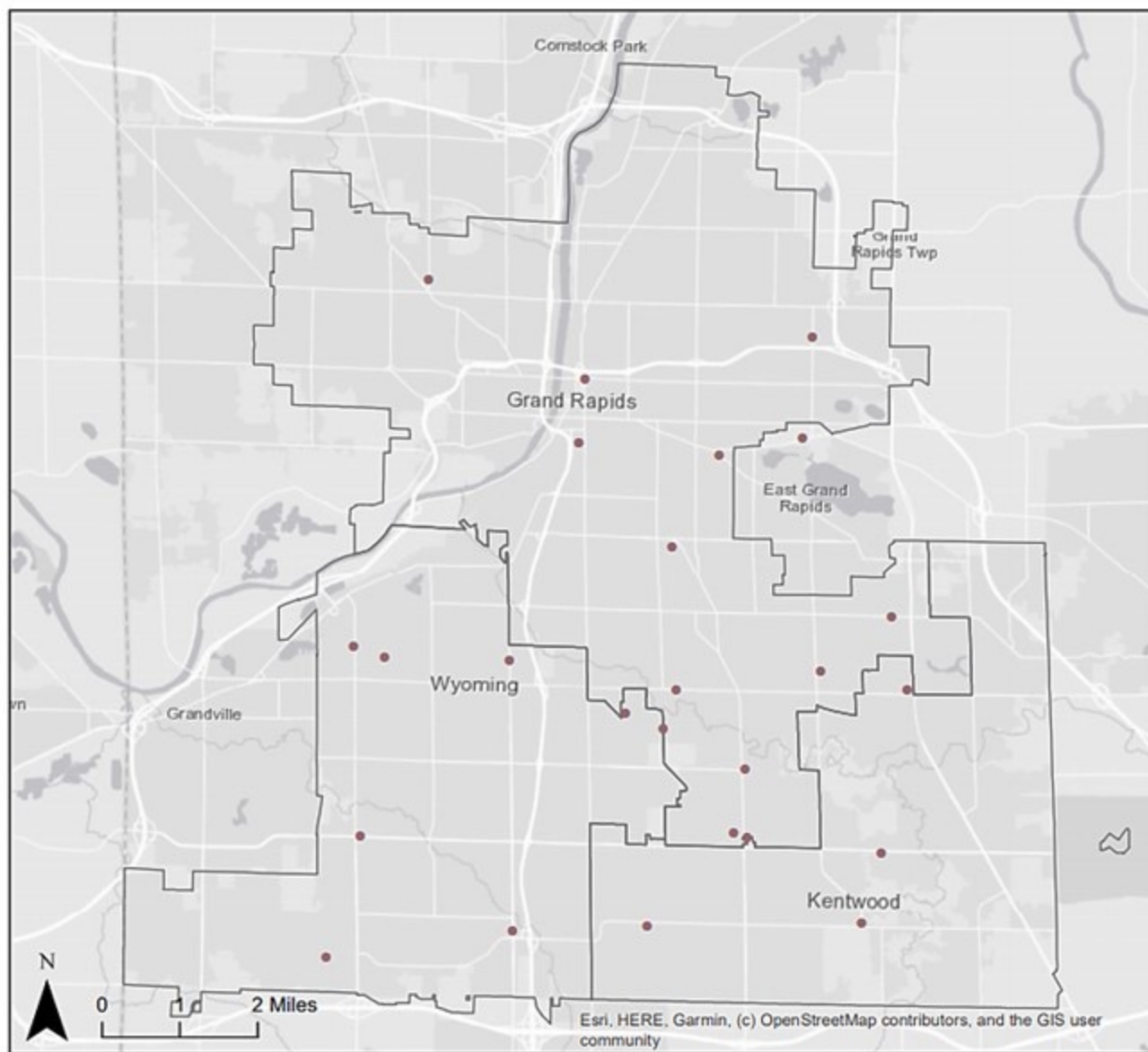


Unknown Other Asian Hispanic Black White

Black Congregations

- Black residents make up about 16% of the study area's population and 24% (126) of the congregations.
- The concentration of primarily Black congregations is highest in the city of Grand Rapids (29% of all congregations).
- The Black population of Kentwood has increased by almost 80% (5,044 in 2007 [11% of total population] and 9,049 in 2017 [18% of total population]).
- With a net gain of 3 congregations, we identified 7 primarily Black congregations in the city (15% of all congregations in Kentwood).



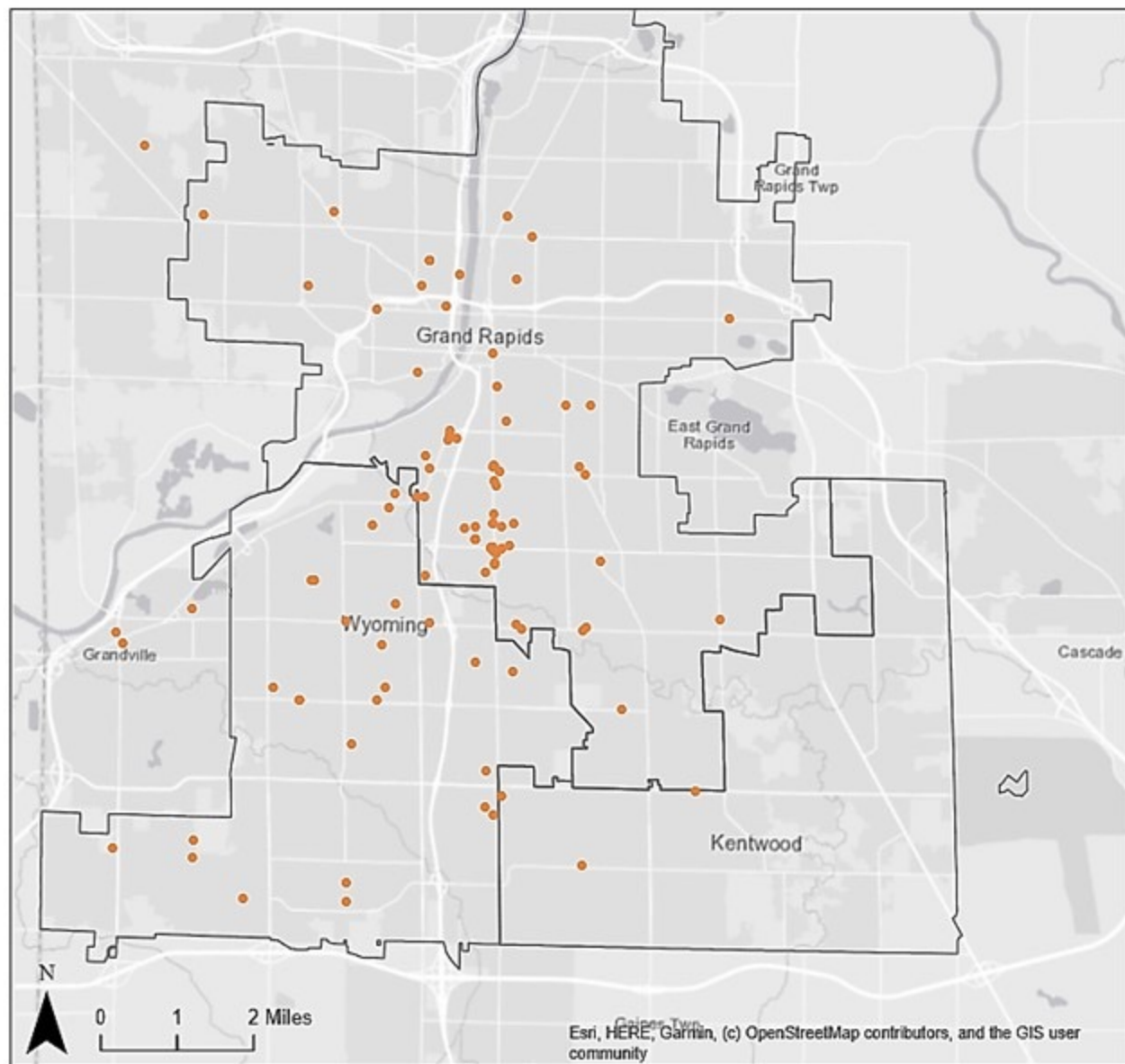


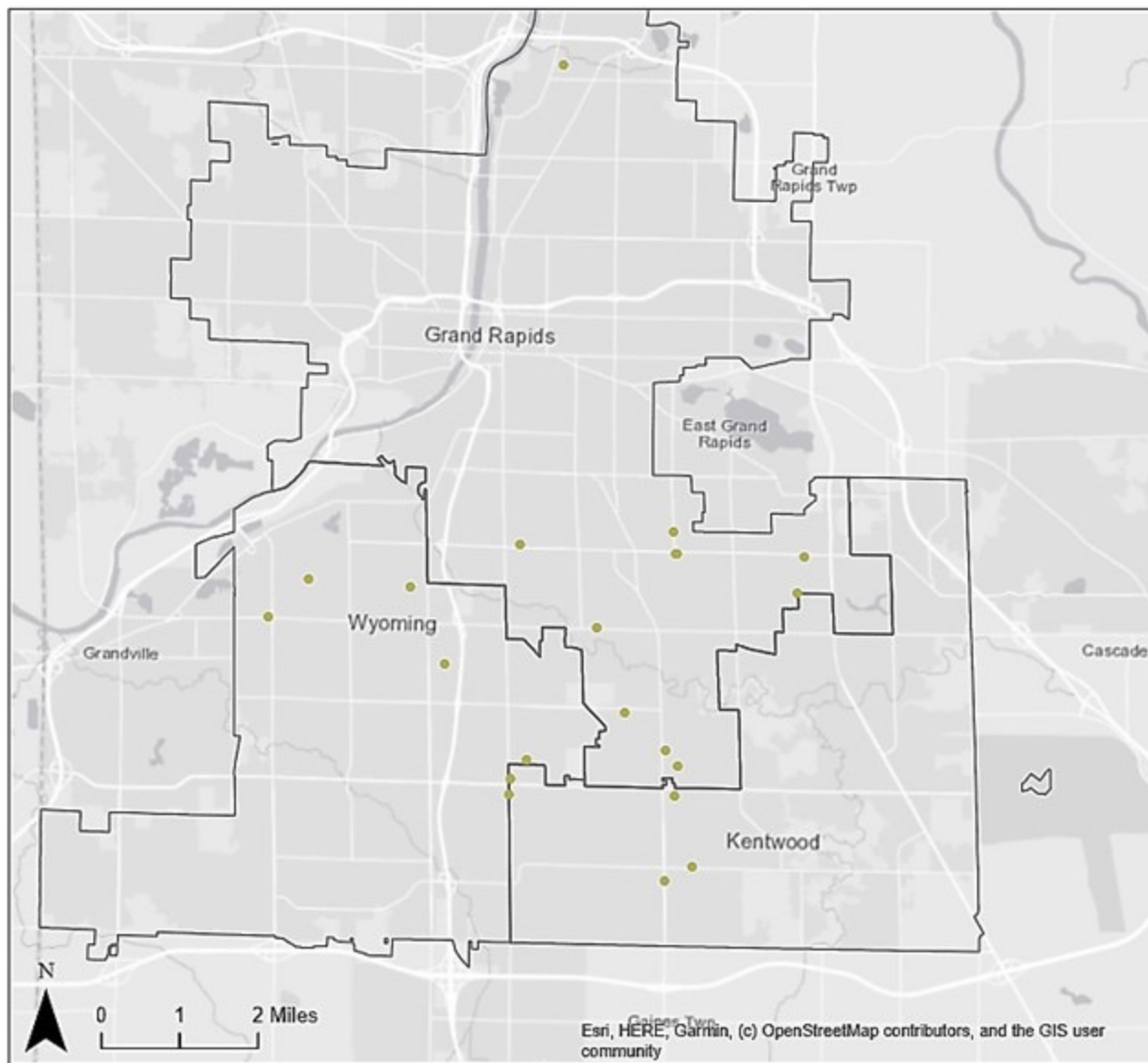
Black Immigrant Congregations

- About 25 (20%) of the 126 Black churches in our study area are immigrant congregations.
- Most are African, however, there is at least one Caribbean (Haitian) congregation in Greater Grand Rapids.
- Most common religious traditions among Black Immigrant Congregations:
 - 32% (8) Evangelical
 - 28% (7) Pentecostal
 - 16% (4) Reformed
 - 12% (3) Mainline

Hispanic Congregations

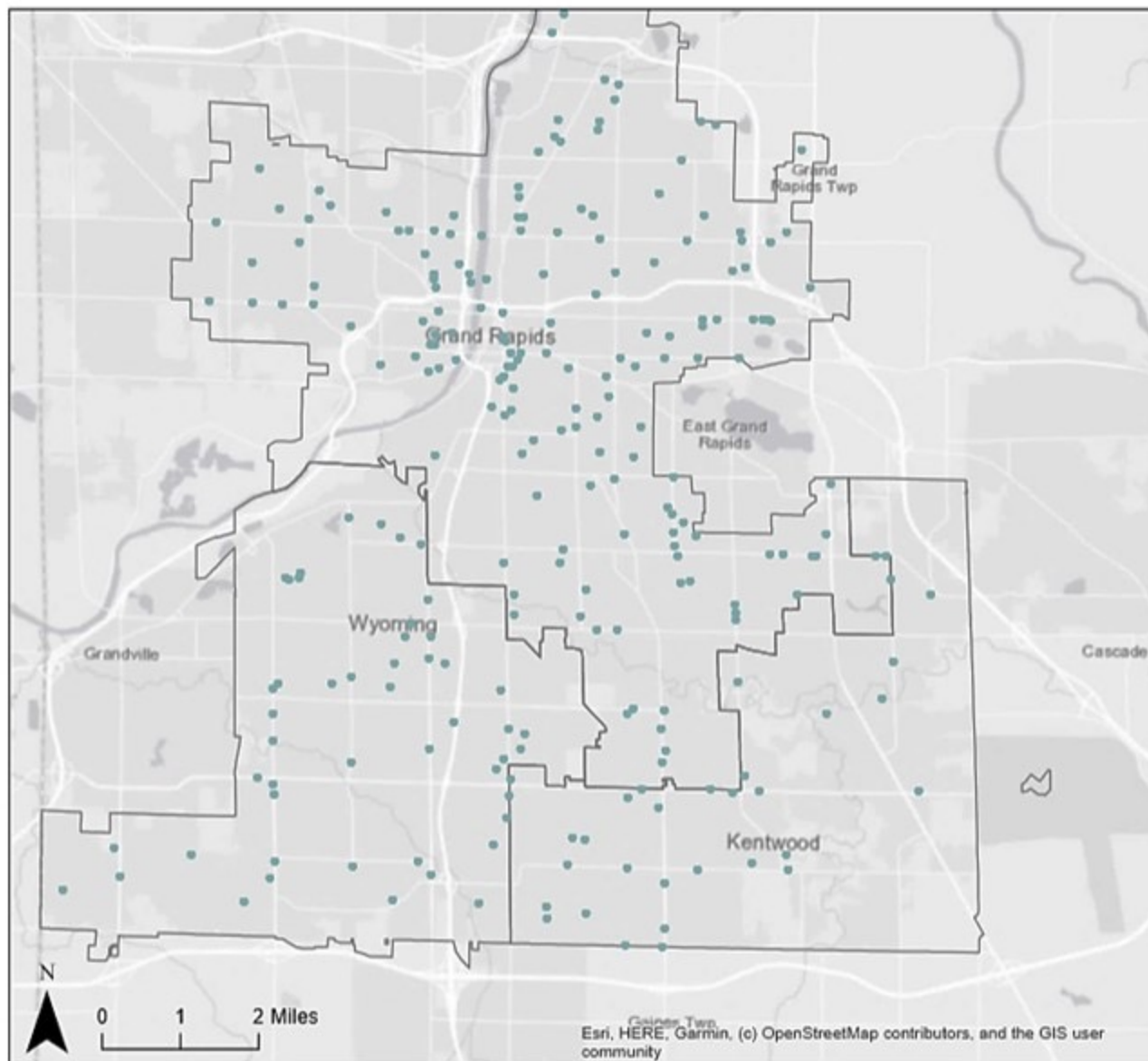
- Hispanic residents make up 16% of the study area's population and 19% (96) of the congregations.
- The Hispanic population of Wyoming has increased by over 40% (11,549 in 2007 [16% of total population]; 16,571 in 2017 [22% of total population]).
- With a net gain of 14 congregations, we identified 29 primarily Hispanic congregations in the city (27% of all congregations in Wyoming).





Asian Congregations

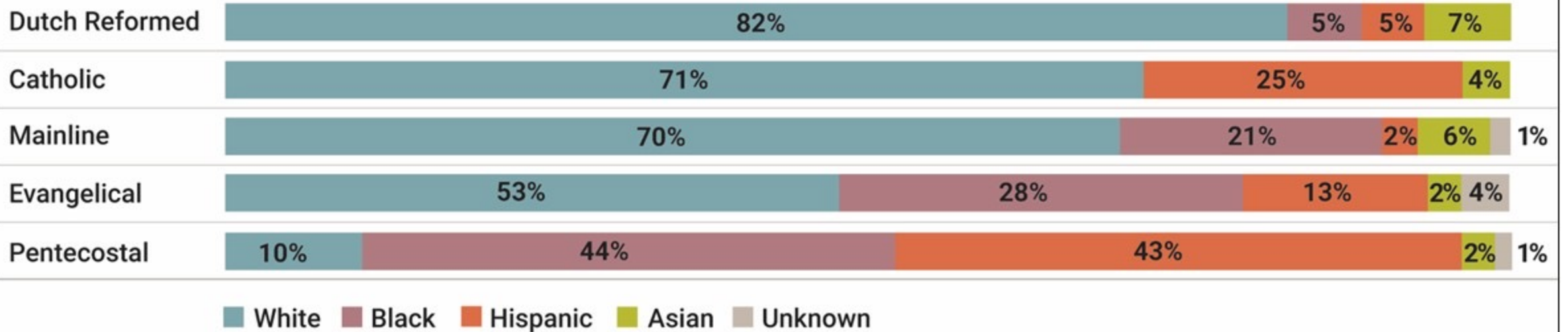
- Asian residents make up about 3% of the study area's population and 4% (21) of the congregations.
- Since 2007, the Asian population in Greater Grand Rapids has grown by about 30% (8,315 in 2007; 10,817 in 2017).
- The number of Asian congregations has more than doubled (9 in 2007; 21 in 2017).



White Congregations

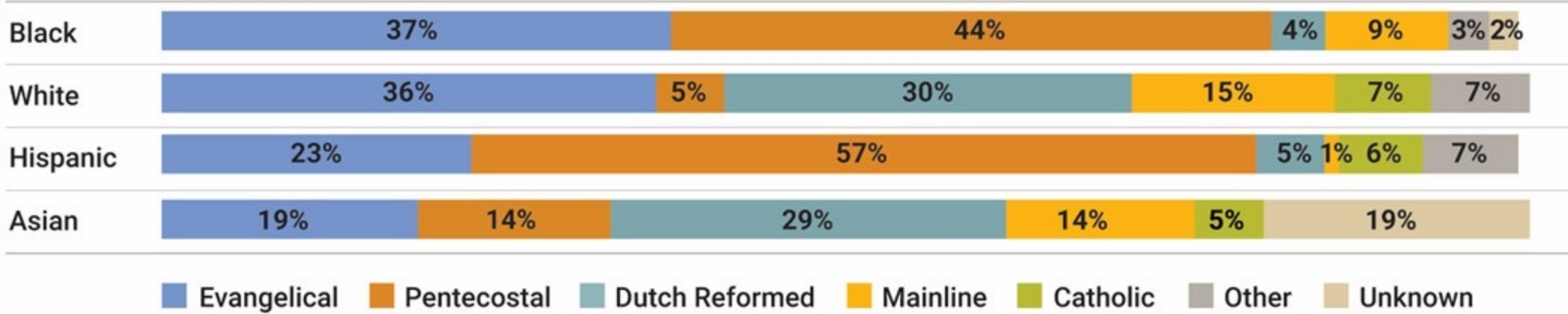
- White residents make up about 61% of the population of Greater Grand Rapids, and 49% (253) the area's congregations.
- Although since 2007 the White population in Greater Grand Rapids has decreased by about 3% (200,399 in 2007 to 194,687 in 2017), 27% of the new congregations are White.
- The White population in the city of Grand Rapids has remained stable, however both Kentwood and Wyoming have seen a decrease in their White populations (by 9% and 7%, respectively).

Primary Race or Ethnicity of Religious Traditions



Note: Figures may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Religious Traditions of Asian, Black, Hispanic, and White Congregations



Note: Figures may not add to 100% due to rounding.

How have the demographic changes
in Greater Grand Rapids
affected your ministry?

How could these trends continue
to impact your ministry?

How will you adapt and stay relevant
as a church in the ever-changing
Greater Grand Rapids community?

