



CONFERENCE DATA COMPARISON 2007-2008

Once again the Research Office is presenting the latest (now 2008) United Methodist Church (USA) official church statistics. Generally this yearly report sounds much like the previous year's, and this year is no exception. Membership change has not deviated notably from the pattern of the last four decades. All major categories are down, including number of churches, which has declined by 330 (-1%). This is compared to -198 the previous year, and -305 the year before that.

All jurisdictions had a net loss of membership, yielding a combined loss of 79,535 (-1%). (2007's figure was minus 77,778.) All annual conferences in the Northeastern, North Central, and Western Jurisdictions lost members. Two conferences in the South Central and six in the Southeastern Jurisdictions gained members, matching the previous period. The Northeastern and North Central Jurisdictions accounted for over 50,000 of the membership decrease. The Western Jurisdiction had the highest percentage drop at 2.3%. Once again North Georgia Conference had the largest membership increase in numbers at 3,989, followed by Texas at 2,052. Interestingly, if North Georgia Conference and the Western Jurisdiction continue their current trending, within two years North Georgia Conference will have more members than the Western Jurisdiction.

Worship attendance continued the trend of recent years and again declined significantly. The most recent period's drop is 65,386 (-2.1%), compared to 73,323 in the previous period. If non-reporting of some churches were to be factored in, this would improve by nearly 10,000.* All jurisdictions declined in attendance in worship with six annual conferences showing an increase. None were in the Northeastern, North Central, or Western Jurisdictions.

Other categories displayed declines as well. Church school attendance, as measured, dropped by

58,081 (2.3%), an improvement over last year's nearly 4% drop. Members received by profession of faith dropped by 4,465, or -3.3%. This compares unfavorably with last period's 1% drop. However, a stunning 25 conferences showed increases, compared to last year's 8. Average members per church remained at 230 for the third straight year, as numbers of churches and members changed by the same percentage. Average worship attendance continued the trend of recent years in dropping by one to 94. Half of all United Methodist churches had 108 members or fewer, down by one as well. Half had 50 or less in attendance. When factoring out non-reporting, this is 49.

The following pages contain individual annual conference figures and have not been altered per the footnote below. All data used here has been provided by the General Council on Finance and Administration, which gets its numbers from annual conferences, who in turn get its numbers from year-end reports filled out by the churches. As one looks over the year-to-year changes, there is a lot of red ink. Hopefully, rather than causing discouragement, this will serve to instill new resolve in fulfilling God's mission through The United Methodist Church.

** Many churches fail to submit their year-end reports. In most annual conferences, this results in a 0 or 1 being reported for attendance in those churches. When those churches do report in the other year used in comparison, there is obviously a notable change in the numbers. For example, a church reporting 100 in attendance in 2007 and 0 in 2008 will appear to have decreased by 100. It is possible to alleviate this issue by replacing those zeroes with the number reported in the comparison year. When this is done for all churches, there are some conferences with notable changes, but the intent of this report is to present the official numbers reported.*

BACKGROUND DATA FOR MISSION

Conference Data Comparison 2007-2008

| Annual Conference | # of Churches | Change | Received by Prof. | Change | Members | Change | Worship Attendance | Change | Church School | Change |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|-------------|-------------------|----------------|------------------|-----------------|--------------------|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|
| NORTHERN ILLINOIS | 380 | 1 | 2,228 | (84) | 101,783 | (1,507) | 43,486 | (76) | 25,478 | (1,535) |
| DAKOTAS | 269 | (2) | 725 | (152) | 39,379 | (889) | 20,471 | (634) | 12,364 | (863) |
| ILLINOIS GREAT RIVERS | 892 | (15) | 2,303 | 35 | 142,812 | (2,166) | 68,210 | (1,809) | 44,874 | 529 |
| NORTH INDIANA | 547 | (3) | 1,918 | (699) | 95,212 | (1,108) | 62,312 | (1,367) | 41,766 | (3,219) |
| SOUTH INDIANA | 658 | (10) | 2,184 | (190) | 109,298 | (827) | 59,351 | (1,028) | 43,391 | (1,704) |
| IOWA | 823 | (6) | 3,027 | 225 | 186,786 | (3,023) | 60,366 | (3,655) | 39,613 | (1,454) |
| DETROIT | 451 | (4) | 2,261 | (362) | 96,851 | (2,117) | 44,767 | (809) | 26,394 | (1,545) |
| WEST MICHIGAN | 413 | (3) | 1,509 | (211) | 66,067 | (1,421) | 38,850 | (1,577) | 22,427 | (2,101) |
| MINNESOTA | 376 | (10) | 2,130 | 176 | 76,199 | (1,748) | 36,562 | (1,239) | 22,145 | (2,046) |
| EAST OHIO | 793 | (7) | 2,838 | (89) | 170,793 | (3,353) | 65,657 | (1,553) | 44,073 | (2,204) |
| WEST OHIO | 1,144 | (13) | 4,554 | (230) | 212,114 | (7,381) | 117,163 | (1,529) | 70,803 | (3,995) |
| WISCONSIN | 476 | (9) | 2,230 | 243 | 84,174 | (2,635) | 38,761 | (1,536) | 25,331 | (1,206) |
| North Central Jurisdiction | 7,222 | (81) | 27,907 | (1,338) | 1,381,468 | (28,175) | 655,956 | (16,812) | 418,659 | (21,343) |
| NEW ENGLAND | 525 | (5) | 1,575 | 39 | 88,596 | (797) | 31,229 | (371) | 16,653 | (1,240) |
| CENTRAL PENNSYLVANIA | 788 | (7) | 2,262 | (319) | 136,614 | (4,416) | 62,972 | (1,731) | 44,772 | (2,839) |
| GREATER NEW JERSEY | 585 | (5) | 2,697 | (455) | 94,806 | (2,121) | 51,483 | (1,675) | 30,087 | (2,055) |
| NEW YORK | 472 | (2) | 2,092 | (1) | 118,367 | (2,037) | 36,730 | (715) | 21,092 | (1,226) |
| TROY | 296 | (1) | 551 | 80 | 47,454 | (61) | 13,526 | (1,587) | 7,090 | 104 |
| EASTERN PENNSYLVANIA | 456 | 2 | 2,513 | 113 | 121,448 | (1,725) | 48,319 | (1,365) | 31,970 | 1,246 |
| WYOMING | 294 | 0 | 714 | 68 | 60,340 | (1,195) | 14,870 | (959) | 8,095 | (49) |
| WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA | 865 | (4) | 2,512 | (412) | 185,591 | (2,044) | 63,693 | (935) | 39,673 | (1,693) |
| NORTH CNTRL NEW YORK | 390 | (6) | 844 | 13 | 71,817 | (2,719) | 21,200 | (1,030) | 10,179 | (762) |
| WESTERN NEW YORK | 255 | 0 | 1,022 | 171 | 55,032 | (624) | 19,670 | (592) | 12,338 | (940) |
| BALTIMORE-WASHINGTON | 674 | (10) | 4,124 | (261) | 188,466 | (3,951) | 70,311 | (1,207) | 44,028 | (2,181) |
| PENINSULA-DELAWARE | 448 | (1) | 1,870 | (100) | 88,902 | (899) | 35,732 | (176) | 17,206 | (1,007) |
| WEST VIRGINIA | 1,180 | (17) | 1,796 | (111) | 102,544 | (1,441) | 48,365 | (3,066) | 36,076 | (3,350) |
| Northeastern Jurisdiction | 7,228 | (56) | 24,572 | (1,175) | 1,359,977 | (24,030) | 518,100 | (15,409) | 319,259 | (15,992) |
| ARKANSAS | 695 | (4) | 2,027 | (79) | 138,113 | (687) | 54,630 | (1,437) | 51,855 | (556) |
| CENTRAL TEXAS | 305 | (4) | 2,230 | 261 | 163,390 | 1,274 | 46,578 | 126 | 58,166 | (2,395) |
| NORTH TEXAS | 317 | (2) | 3,226 | (27) | 158,610 | (102) | 60,301 | (1,256) | 69,974 | 22 |
| RIO GRANDE | 92 | 0 | 176 | (10) | 13,988 | (38) | 4,636 | (63) | 2,994 | (27) |
| TEXAS | 695 | (7) | 5,414 | (233) | 288,779 | 2,052 | 105,016 | (1,597) | 111,809 | 4,373 |
| KANSAS WEST | 370 | (4) | 1,421 | (45) | 82,773 | (951) | 33,773 | (520) | 26,891 | (588) |
| KANSAS EAST | 323 | (2) | 1,718 | 214 | 71,305 | (800) | 31,903 | 158 | 20,065 | 340 |
| LOUISIANA | 508 | (17) | 1,442 | (127) | 122,362 | (944) | 42,615 | (1,247) | 35,781 | (1,151) |
| MISSOURI | 878 | (11) | 3,656 | 6 | 168,728 | (661) | 82,209 | 288 | 59,202 | (303) |
| NEBRASKA | 392 | (6) | 1,696 | (112) | 79,299 | (1,056) | 31,900 | (488) | 19,464 | (1,416) |
| NEW MEXICO | 148 | (2) | 633 | 46 | 37,646 | (801) | 15,755 | (770) | 10,711 | (444) |
| OKLAHOMA | 533 | (5) | 2,314 | (127) | 241,333 | (2,472) | 58,374 | (634) | 60,938 | (338) |
| OKLAHOMA INDIAN MSSN | 82 | (5) | 88 | 0 | 6,196 | (62) | 2,043 | (20) | 1,392 | (14) |
| NORTHWEST TEXAS | 215 | 0 | 746 | (167) | 64,227 | (308) | 21,250 | (508) | 24,474 | (890) |
| SOUTHWEST TEXAS | 345 | 1 | 2,241 | (135) | 119,032 | (409) | 48,529 | (616) | 45,580 | (1,839) |
| South Central Jurisdiction | 5,898 | (68) | 29,028 | (535) | 1,755,781 | (5,965) | 639,512 | (8,584) | 599,296 | (5,226) |

BACKGROUND DATA FOR MISSION

Conference Data Comparison 2007-2008

| Annual Conference | # of Churches | Change | Received by Prof. | Change | Members | Change | Worship Attendance | Change | Church School | Change |
|----------------------------------|---------------|--------------|-------------------|----------------|------------------|-----------------|--------------------|-----------------|------------------|-----------------|
| NORTH GEORGIA | 910 | (3) | 6,670 | 186 | 354,098 | 3,989 | 129,067 | (3,136) | 118,447 | 3,778 |
| SOUTH GEORGIA | 642 | (3) | 1,872 | (233) | 134,924 | (970) | 52,642 | (295) | 56,489 | (861) |
| ALABAMA-W. FLORIDA | 645 | (6) | 2,937 | 176 | 149,874 | (57) | 69,175 | 842 | 61,233 | 542 |
| NORTH ALABAMA | 792 | (16) | 2,945 | 378 | 149,509 | (1,146) | 72,106 | (5) | 74,776 | (1,260) |
| WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA | 1,124 | (8) | 4,359 | (313) | 293,213 | (345) | 125,585 | (816) | 114,770 | (4,030) |
| SOUTH CAROLINA | 1,022 | (2) | 3,083 | 91 | 239,271 | (641) | 96,594 | (1,176) | 82,194 | (1,255) |
| FLORIDA | 665 | (48) | 6,371 | (515) | 298,053 | (12,928) | 144,149 | (7,175) | 79,022 | (2,771) |
| MISSISSIPPI | 1,131 | (12) | 1,712 | (264) | 183,661 | (788) | 72,995 | (1,140) | 68,569 | (906) |
| KENTUCKY | 814 | (10) | 2,019 | 41 | 152,498 | 484 | 58,392 | (418) | 48,046 | 680 |
| RED BIRD MISSN | 26 | 1 | 37 | (2) | 1,488 | 53 | 676 | 77 | 563 | (18) |
| HOLSTON | 911 | 2 | 2,272 | 67 | 166,805 | (343) | 71,677 | (80) | 70,601 | (477) |
| MEMPHIS | 443 | (2) | 1,001 | (57) | 85,202 | (2,008) | 32,711 | (1,093) | 28,621 | (2,443) |
| TENNESSEE | 611 | (7) | 1,995 | (38) | 118,995 | 389 | 49,880 | 1,347 | 51,234 | 1,245 |
| NORTH CAROLINA | 813 | (3) | 2,919 | (461) | 237,491 | 332 | 82,681 | (1,515) | 78,393 | (1,174) |
| VIRGINIA | 1,203 | 0 | 5,099 | (510) | 338,671 | 1,089 | 117,086 | (2,583) | 95,582 | (2,645) |
| Southeastern Jurisdiction | 11,752 | (117) | 45,291 | (1,454) | 2,903,753 | (12,890) | 1,175,416 | (17,166) | 1,028,540 | (11,595) |
| YELLOWSTONE | 126 | (1) | 276 | 33 | 14,279 | (559) | 7,076 | (636) | 3,770 | 191 |
| ROCKY MOUNTAIN | 258 | (15) | 1,717 | (43) | 66,317 | (1,122) | 30,319 | (203) | 22,668 | (1,679) |
| CALIFORNIA-PACIFIC | 366 | (1) | 2,321 | 3 | 82,667 | (2,149) | 48,881 | (2,275) | 23,990 | (602) |
| DESERT SOUTHWEST | 139 | 10 | 1,096 | (93) | 39,998 | (698) | 26,629 | (230) | 11,977 | (1,131) |
| ALASKA | 28 | 0 | 122 | 1 | 3,856 | (72) | 2,300 | (115) | 2,094 | (61) |
| OREGON-IDAHO | 211 | (1) | 761 | 64 | 31,086 | (962) | 15,460 | (522) | 9,530 | (319) |
| CALIFORNIA-NEVADA | 354 | (1) | 1,770 | 186 | 81,856 | (1,174) | 37,908 | (1,288) | 19,519 | 485 |
| PACIFIC NORTHWEST | 268 | 1 | 893 | (114) | 53,382 | (1,739) | 20,689 | (2,146) | 12,757 | (809) |
| Western Jurisdiction | 1,750 | (8) | 8,956 | 37 | 373,441 | (8,475) | 189,262 | (7,415) | 106,305 | (3,925) |
| Total USA | 33,850 | (330) | 135,754 | (4,465) | 7,774,420 | (79,535) | 3,178,246 | (65,386) | 2,472,059 | (58,081) |

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