

2011 SURVEY of NORTH AMERICA'S LARGEST CHURCHES

Mission and Identity

1. Do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements? ✓ *ONE ON EACH LINE*

Our congregation:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral/ Unsure	Agree	Strongly Agree
Is spiritually vital and alive	0.3%	1%	1%	43%	56%
Has a clear mission and purpose	1	2	3	30	65
Is a "moral beacon" in our community.....	0.3	1	12	46	41
Is willing to change to meet new challenges	1	1	6	39	54
Holds strong beliefs and values	0.3	0.2	2	28	70
Is not that different from other churches in our community	27	51	9	11	3
Is like a close-knit family	1	11	27	47	14
Wants to be racially and culturally diverse.....	1	5	14	39	41
Is working for social justice.....	1	16	21	43	19

Worship

2. Please describe the worship services your congregation holds on a **typical weekend**:

For each day or time on a typical weekend:

	Friday	Saturday	AM	Sunday	PM	Other
Write in the number of worship services held: Number of churches holding service	21 – 6%	160 – 48%	328 – 98%	137 – 41%	88 – 26%	
Write in the average attendance total for all services at each time block:	411	917	3075	676	*	

Total average attendance - 3924

Total median attendance - 2750

3. Is your church part of a **Network, Fellowship, Association of Churches or Denomination**? 70% Yes 30% No

4. If **Nondenominational or Independent**, (181 – 54%) was it founded that way? 67% Yes 33% No

5. **During the past 5 years**, has your congregation changed the style of any of its weekend worship services or added a new service with a different style of worship?

32% No change in style 19% Changed style a little 17% Changed style somewhat
10% Changed style a lot 22% Added a new service with a different style of worship

6. Do you hold services at **satellite (off campus) locations**? 46% Yes 34% No 20% Not yet, but thinking about it.

IF YES, a) How many satellite campuses do you have? Average 2.6 satellite locations

Your Location, Building and Affiliation

7. In what year was your congregation officially founded? Median year - 1972

8. In what **region** is your "main campus" physically located? NE – 5% S – 47% NC – 27% W – 21%

9. What is the approximate seating capacity where **your largest adult worship service** is held? Ave – 1778
Median - 1500

10. How adequate are the following for the **current needs** of your congregation? ✓ *ONE ON EACH LINE*

	Much less than we need	Slightly less than we need	Just about right	Slightly more than we need	Much more than we need
Space for worship	20%	26%	34%	15%	5%
Space for parking	26%	27%	30%	15%	3%
Space for nursery, children, youth.....	21%	41%	31%	6%	1%
Space for adult classes and groups....	30%	32%	31%	5%	2%
Space for informal fellowship	26%	26%	42%	5%	0.3%
Space for the arts, lessons, rehearsals.	20%	23%	52%	5%	1%

Participants

11. How many people are associated **in any way** with the religious life of your congregation? Average - 7,764 median – 5,000 (counting adults and children, counting regular and irregular participants, counting official members and participating nonmembers)

12. How many persons (including children) **regularly participate** in worship or other religious activities in your congregation? Average - 4,765 median – 3,222

13. looking back on 2010 and for the past 5 years, estimate the **average attendance at your regular weekend worship services**. If you have more than one weekend worship service, estimate the attendance for all weekend services combined. Do not include special services such as weddings or funerals.

3597	2010 Ave. Attendance	2915	2007 Ave. Attendance
3360	2009 Ave. Attendance	2763	2006 Ave. Attendance
3155	2008 Ave. Attendance	2604	2005 Ave. Attendance

14. Of these participants, what is **the majority** racial or ethnic group? (✓ **ONE**)

0.4% American Indian/Alaska Native	10% Black/African American	4% No Majority, Multiracial
2% Asian	1% Hispanic or Latino/a	0% Other
0% Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	82% White	

15. Which label comes closest to describing the **theological outlook** of the majority of your regularly participating adults? (✓ **ONE**)

1% Fundamentalist	8% Pentecostal	4% Moderate	0% New Age	4% Missional
71% Evangelical	5% Charismatic	0% Liberal	5% Seeker	1% Other

16. Of all your regular participants, estimate the **percent** who are:

11%	Senior adults, age 65 or older
19%	Adults, age 50-64
28%	Adults, age 35-49
20%	Younger adults, age 18-34
22%	Children and youth, age 0-17

17. Of your total regular participants **age 18 and older**, estimate the **percent** who are:

55%	Female
52%	College graduates
40%	New to this congregation in the past 5 years
19%	Life-long members of your church
60%	Living within 15 minutes of the church
46%	Membership involved in small groups

18. How often are the following a part of your congregation's **regular weekend worship services**?

✓ ONE ON EACH LINE	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
Choir.....(other than worship team).....	19%	23%	16%	16%	27%
Organ.....	58%	11%	4%	8%	20%
Drums or other percussion instruments.....	0.3%	0.5%	2%	7%	91%
Electric guitar or bass.....	1%	1%	3%	8%	88%
Visual projection equipment.....	2%	1%	0.4%	1%	96%
Lord's Supper, Communion or Eucharist	1%	6%	42%	36%	15%
Reading or performing by children or youth	8%	49%	34%	6%	4%

19. How well do the following describe your congregation's **largest regular weekend worship service**?

√ ONE ON EACH LINE	Not at all	Slightly	Somewhat	Quite Well	Very Well
Reverent.....	3%	18%	33%	29%	17%
Filled with a sense of God's presence.....	0%	1%	6%	49%	44%
Joyful	0%	1%	5%	43%	51%
Innovative	1%	4%	26%	36%	33%
Inspirational	0%	2%	7%	44%	48%
Thought-provoking	0%	1%	9%	43%	47%

Programs

20. Overall, to what extent are your congregation's active participants involved in recruiting new people?

0% Not at all 9% A little 29% Some 42% Quite a bit 19% A lot

21. Which of the following **technologies** does your church/pastoral leadership use on a regular basis?

100% E-mail 100% A website 56% Blogs 88% Facebook/other social media 74% Podcasts
Other forms: twitter, streaming, etc. - 35%

22. Does your congregation have any of the following programs or activities? **If yes**, how much emphasis is given to the activity?

√ ONE ON EACH LINE	No	Yes		
		Some Emphasis	A lot of Emphasis	Specialty of the Church
Sunday School or church school	26%	20%	30%	25%
Prayer or meditation groups	3%	57%	35%	6%
Scripture studies (other than Sunday school).....	3%	25%	53%	19%
Fellowships, trips, or other social activities	8%	51%	33%	8%
Music program.....	12%	29%	38%	21%
Adult religious formation classes.....	11%	37%	42%	10%
Spiritual retreats	22%	62%	14%	3%
Support groups (bereavement, job loss, 12-step)	3%	38%	44%	16%
Community service activities	2%	25%	49%	25%
Parenting or marriage enrichment activities	1%	42%	47%	9%
Young adult activities or programs	2%	37%	49%	12%
Youth activities or programs.....	1%	9%	56%	35%
Team sports, fitness activities, exercise classes	30%	42%	21%	6%

23. **During the past 12 months**, did your congregation provide any of the following services for your own members or for people in the community? **If yes**, did you provide these services directly or together with another congregation or group?

√ ALL THAT APPLY	NO	YES	
		Provided directly	Together with another group
Food pantry or soup kitchen.....	20%	48%	32%
Cash assistance for individuals or families.....	2%	93%	5%
Day care, pre-school, before or after-school programs	40%	55%	4%
Tutoring or literacy programs.....	46%	36%	18%
Health education, clinics, parish nurse	56%	24%	19%
Community organizing, organized social issue advocacy	48%	24%	28%
Job placement, job training, employment counseling.....	41%	42%	17%
Financial counseling or education	6%	85%	8%
Elderly or home-bound programs.....	45%	45%	10%
Voter education or registration	64%	28%	8%
Programs for migrants or immigrants.....	76%	16%	8%

24. Many churches make **use of small groups** for fellowship, spiritual nurture, etc. (in addition to church school or mission groups, etc.). Which statement best describes the situation in your congregation?

- 1% Such groups do not exist within our church
- 17% A few such groups meet, but are not central to our church's program
- 82% We have many such groups; it's central to our strategy of Christian nurture and spiritual formation

25. How much does your congregation emphasize the following **personal and family religious practices**?

√ **ONE ON EACH LINE**

	Not at all	A little	Some	Quite a bit	A lot
Personal prayer, devotions or other spiritual practices	0%	2%	11%	38%	49%
Personal scripture or Bible study.....	0%	1%	9%	41%	49%
Fasting.....	12%	33%	38%	8%	8%
Observing special practices on the Sabbath.....	38%	31%	17%	6%	7%
Observing dietary restrictions	78%	14%	5%	2%	2%
Abstaining from premarital sex	3%	5%	17%	32%	43%
Family devotions.....	1%	8%	28%	28%	34%
Parents talking with their children about faith	0%	2%	15%	42%	41%

Leadership

Please describe the **principal leader** of your church (if there are co-leaders, please answer for the most widely recognized leader).

26. Age Average - 51 years old

27. 99.8% Male 0.2% Female

28. Race/ethnicity 75% White, 13% African American, 9% Asian 2% Hispanic/Latino 2% other

29. Highest level of education

0% Less than a high school diploma

19% College bachelor's degree

2% High school diploma

36% Master's degree (including M Div)

4% Some college or technical school; associate's degree

39% Doctoral degree (PhD, D Min)

30. This person became the principal leader in what year? Average year - 1996

31. Was this person previously on staff at your church? 28% Yes, 72% No, 0.4% Don't know

32. Did the church's most dramatic growth occur during the tenure of this pastor? 79% Yes 21% No

33. What was the approximate worship attendance (not membership), when your senior/lead pastor became that position in your church? Average size - 1083 median - 300

If your current senior/lead pastor has been in that position 10 or more years, (175 responses)

34. Which era of their pastoral tenure has seen the most growth in:

A. Attendance?

2% first year 9% years 2-5 19% years 6-10 31% years 11 or more 37% consistent 3% don't know

B. Conversions?

0.3% first year 5% years 2-5 13% years 6-10 28% years 11 or more 43% consistent 10% don't know

C. Member Discipleship?

0% first year 5% years 2-5 15% years 6-10 29% years 11 or more 39% consistent 12% don't know

D. Community service?

1% first year 5% years 2-5 14% years 6-10 42% years 11 or more 28% consistent 11% don't know

35. Does the senior pastor have extended family members who currently **attend** the church? (siblings, parents, married children, etc.) 70% yes 30% no 0% don't know

36. Does the senior pastor have extended family members who currently **work at** the church? (siblings, parents, married children, etc.) 41% yes 59% no 0% don't know

37. Was the previous senior pastor a relative of the current senior pastor? 5% yes 92% no 2% don't know

38. How many people are employed by your congregation *including your pastor*? **Average #**

<i>WRITE IN NUMBER OF:</i>	Full-time paid employees	Part-time paid employees
Ordained professionals (pastor & other ordained ministers)	11	4
Lay administrative professionals	9	6
Lay program professionals (include musicians and lay pastors)	11	9
Clerical or secretarial employees	10	7
Custodial or maintenance employees	5	5
Other employees of the congregation	11	18

39. Do the same people tend to serve in volunteer leadership roles year after year, or does your congregation rotate volunteer service among a larger number of people?

- 13% The same people tend to serve
- 59% Although there is some rotation, it tends to be among a limited number of people
- 28% We have a lot of rotation among persons in volunteer leadership roles

40. **During the past 12 months**, has your church been involved in any of the following ecumenical or interfaith activities? **ALL THAT APPLY ON EACH LINE**

	No	Yes	
		With other Christian Groups	With other faith traditions
Worship services.....	57%	38%	5%
Joint celebrations, fairs, meals or cultural events	57%	36%	7%
Educational or fellowship activities	47%	46%	7%
Community service activities.....	25%	61%	15%

Finances

41. How would you describe your congregation's financial health today and 5 years ago?

2010		2005	
1%	In serious difficulty	1%	In serious difficulty
5%	In some difficulty	6%	In some difficulty
29%	Tight, but we manage	17%	Tight, but we manage
35%	Good	41%	Good
30%	Excellent	35%	Excellent

42. What was the approximate dollar amount of your total budget for **2009**? \$5,577,548//\$4,200,000

43. Approximately what percent of your church's total expenditures were spent on the following in **2009**?

All staff salaries and benefits	48%
Buildings and operations (utilities, mortgage, insurance, equipment, maintenance, etc.)	22%
Program support and materials (for Sunday school, evangelism, education, etc.)	13%
Mission and benevolence (including denominational assessments)	13%
All other expenditures	8%
Total	100%

44. How would you assess the **impact of the 2008-2009 economic crisis** on your congregation's income?

10%	Our income declined a lot	20%	Our income declined at first, but has since rebounded
26%	Our income declined a little	22%	No significant change in income
		23%	Our income has grown

45. How would you assess the impact of the 2008-2009 economic crisis on your church in the following areas?

√ ONE ON EACH LINE

	No impact	Minor impact	Moderate impact	Major impact
Impact on Congregational Staff and Operations				
Staff layoffs or furloughs	61%	20%	14%	6%
Staff salary reductions or salary freeze	27%	28%	30%	15%
Delays in filling staff positions	23%	32%	31%	14%
Funds available from investments or savings account	44%	30%	14%	12%
Funds available for mission and benevolence	50%	27%	18%	6%
Capital campaign or building program	36%	24%	25%	16%
Impact on Individuals				
Requests for pastoral counseling	8%	30%	47%	15%
Requests for cash assistance	4%	18%	52%	26%
Requests for emergency housing	20%	39%	32%	10%
Unemployment among your members	1%	24%	52%	23%

The survey was part of the Faith Communities Today initiative, where various faith groups each survey their constituency then collectively create a larger national sample of religious congregations. The megachurch portion of Faith Communities Today, represented by this survey, was administered jointly by the Hartford Institute for Religion Research, where Scott Thumma is a primary researcher, and Leadership Network, where Warren Bird is research director. The survey was fielded by mail and email during February to April 2011, asking a key informant to complete the questionnaire. Of 1,611 churches contacted, 336 responded or 21%. The responses were weighted by denomination and geography against the known universe of North American megachurches.