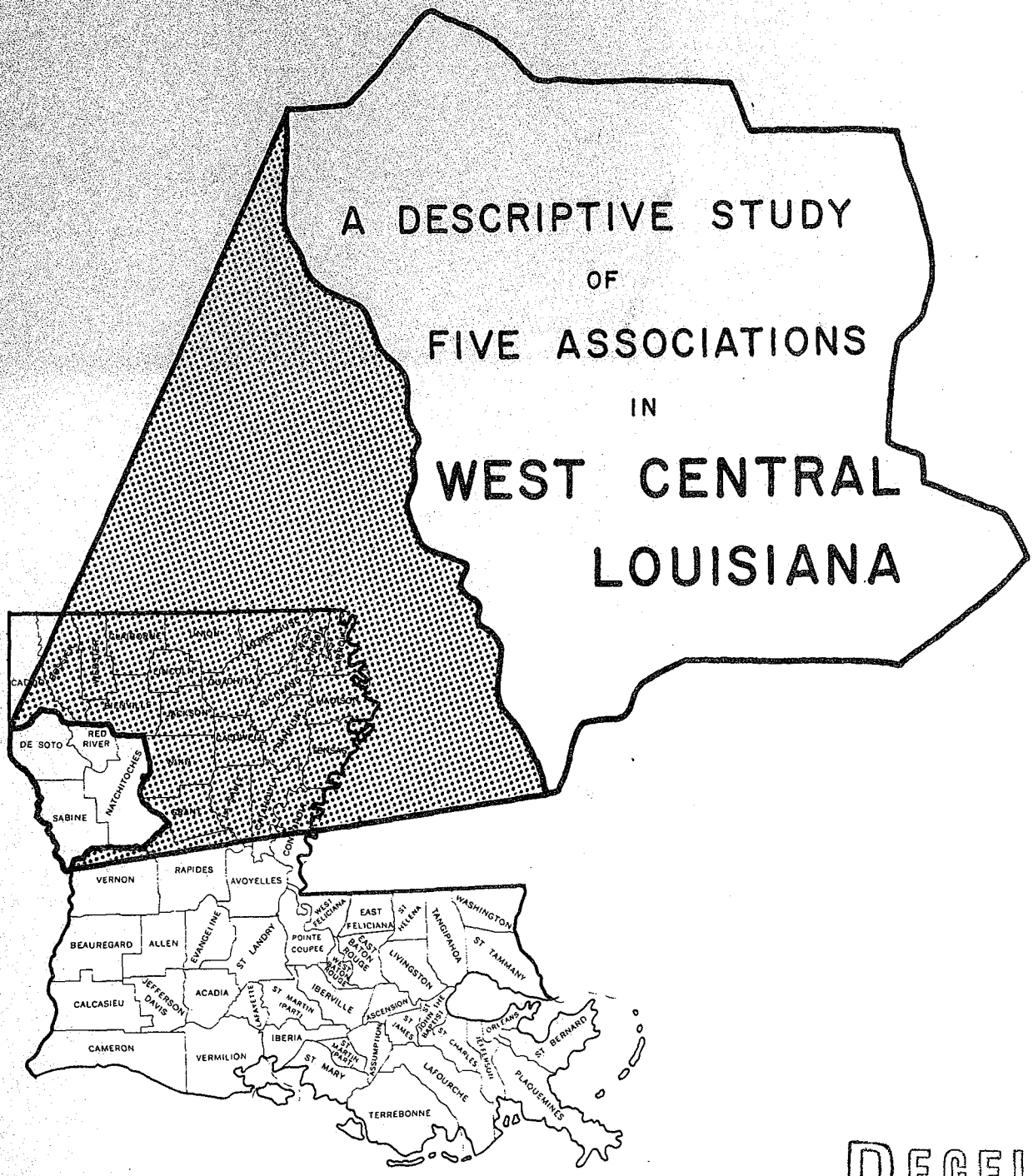
A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY OF FIVE ASSOCIATIONS IN WEST CENTRAL LOUISIANA



HOME MISSION BOARD, SBC

DEPARTMENT OF SURVEY AND SPECIAL STUDIES

A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY

OF FIVE

ASSOCIATIONS IN WEST CENTRAL LOUISIANA

February, 1969

Prepared by the

DEPARTMENT OF SURVEY AND SPECIAL STUDIES

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

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A vast amount of material was gathered during the process of the study of the West Central Louisiana Study Area. It is impossible to mention every source of material and include every important reference in a document as brief as this; however, we are compelled to single out several persons because of their outstanding contributions, individually or by the organization they represent.

The most significant field services were rendered by Rev. Arnold F. Nelson, Field Secretary, Louisiana Baptist Convention. He spent many hours in conferences, acquiring documents, writing letters, making telephone calls, and preparing detailed maps of the area.

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The department staff member who has contributed most to this report is Don F. Mabry.

Leonard G. Irwin, Secretary

Department of Survey and Special Studies

INTRODUCTION

This study has been produced at the request of the mission leadership of the area under study. The Department of Survey and Special Studies is delighted to share some of the results of its study. The study is not exhaustive, but rather seeks to examine some of the data available and reflect some findings that the analysis reveals.

The trends discussed in this study are not new to some of the readers of this report, but the volume of details has not been presented in this manner. The report seeks to discuss the trends and their implication to the churches. The author did not attempt to be specific toward any pastor, church or association in the study area, but rather sought to look at the different facets that the trends indicate for the entire study area. The reader should look at the study area in its entirety and not attempt to be too specific in applying the trends to any church or area within an association. In considering future planning, it is better to attempt to understand the study area, and then begin to observe the sub-areas.

In Chapter I there is an analysis of the data regarding the churches. The trends in such areas of church life as number of churches, members, organizations, new members and financial contributions have been assembled. Some of the facts about size and location of the churches have been gathered also.

Information regarding the pastors is in Chapter II. The study reveals the education, salary, secular employment, and residence of some of the pastors, but the information is used simply to establish the trends.

The population information on the Study Area is contained in Chapter III. The numerical population in the parishes, the percentage changes over the past seventeen years, age structures and characteristics are reflected. There have been some significant changes in the population in the past and likely other changes will occur in the future.

In Chapter IV are the data on the social and economic characteristics which reveal the facts about the people who live in the area. Such facts as age structures, family incomes and economic outlook are treated.

The final chapter deals with the techniques and procedures to be followed in using the available church data from the Annual Minutes and Uniform Church Letters. It also suggests some of the information available from the public planning agencies.

A conclusion and annotated bibliography close the report. Some of the conclusions drawn from the report are more in the form of suggestions for consideration rather than conclusive statements.

CHAPTER I

ANALYSIS OF THE CHURCH DATA

This chapter will report the examination of available data regarding the churches in West Central Louisiana which are affiliated with five associations; Sabine, North Sabine, DeSoto, Natchitoches and Red River. The trends will be observed and some comment made on their significance. It is hoped that the reader will not try to make specific applications of the data contained here, because this chapter is written with the entire study area under consideration. The best method for considering the whole is to look at the parts, which in this case are the associations.

In Figure 1 are the boundaries of the four parishes that make up the study area. This map has been included since the report will be shared with persons from outside of the study area, who will not be familiar with these political sub-divisions.

Figure 2 displays the location of the churches in the study area. Note the five churches that are beyond the boundary of the study area, but because they are members of the associations they have been included in the study. There is a good scatter of the churches over the area except for the southern part of Natchitoches Parish where Kisatchie National Forest is located and the concentrations around the towns.

The Churches

Table 1 is a compilation of the number of churches by associations for the period 1958-1968. There has been a net gain of four churches in the

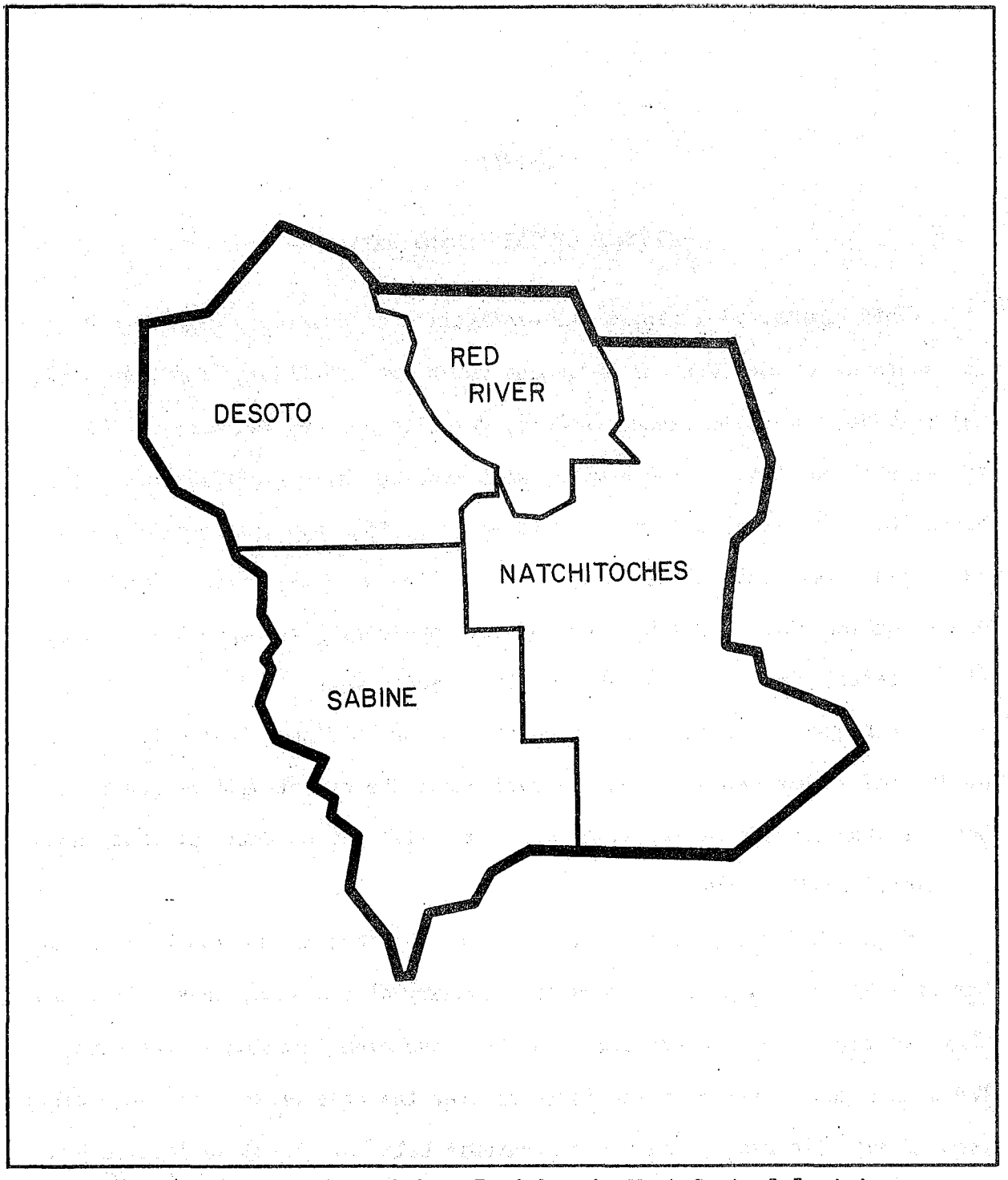
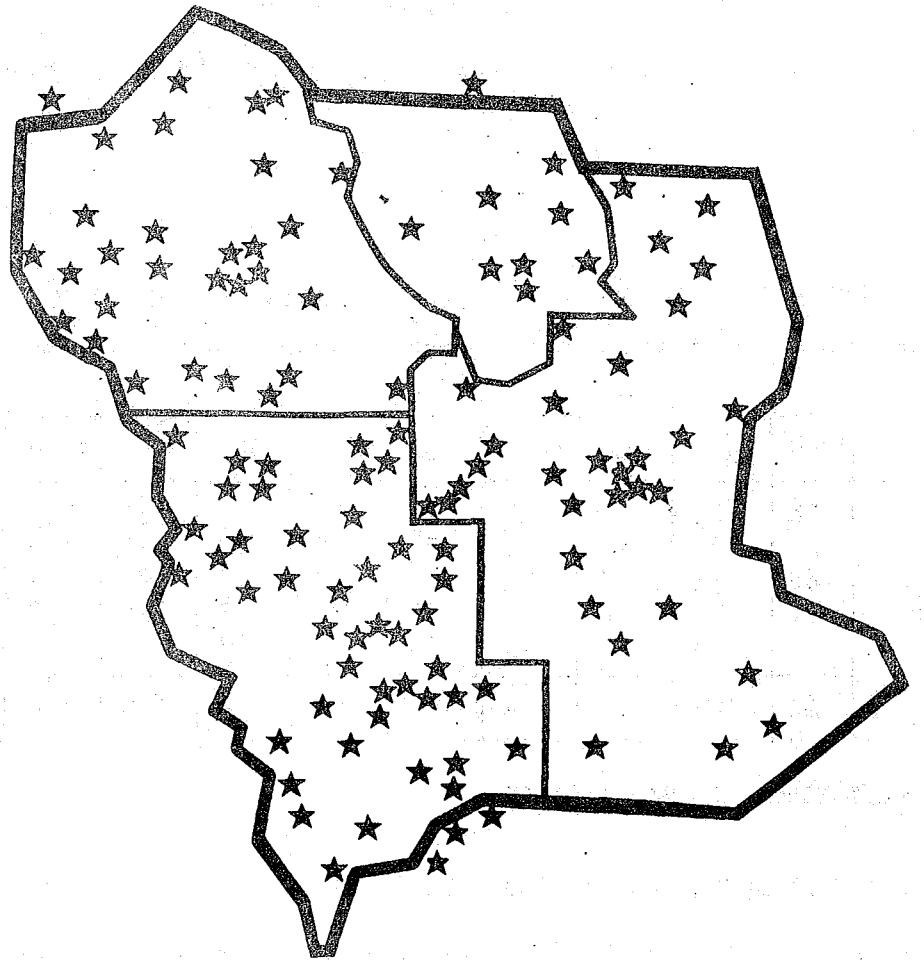


Fig. 1 .--Boundaries of four Parishes in West Central Louisiana



SOURCE: Arnold F. Nelson, Field Secretary, Louisiana Baptist Convention

Fig. 2.--Location of Southern Baptist Churches in four Parishes in West Central Louisiana, 1968.

study area since 1958. One of these was in Sabine, two in North Sabine, and one in DeSoto. Obviously, there have not been many new churches started in the past decade, but there are not many opportunities left in the area for new churches. In 1960 there was one church for every 405 white people in the area which is one of the deepest penetrations in the entire Southern Baptist Convention.

TABLE 1

NUMBER OF CHURCHES IN WCL BY ASSOCIATIONS, 1958-1968[a]

Association	Year										
	1958	1959	1960	1961	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968
Sabine	24	24	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25
N. Sabine . .	25	25	25	25	26	27	27	27	27	27	27
DeSoto	28	28	28	28	28	28	29	29	29	29	29
Natchitoches .	32	32	32	32	32	32	32	32	32	32	32
Red River . .	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13
Total . .	122	122	123	123	124	125	126	126	126	126	126

[a]Annual Minutes of Associations.

It was felt by the author that the location, age, size, services, and facilities of the churches should be examined. These should serve as indicators of present conditions among the churches. On Table 2 are the data regarding location of the churches. Sixty-three percent of all the churches in the study area are located in the open country. Red River with 92.3% and DeSoto with 80.8% in open country are the outstanding. The next large group of churches are located in the villages of under 500 population which contains one out of five churches. In DeSoto Association more than a third of the churches are located in villages and in Natchitoches 28.1%.

TABLE 2

LOCATION OF CHURCHES BY GEOGRAPHY[b] IN WCL BY ASSOCIATIONS, 1968[a]

Association	Geographical Areas							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Total
Sabine	21	2	1	2	. .	. .	. .	26
Percentage	80.8	7.7	3.8	7.7	. .	. .	. .	100.0
N. Sabine	18	5	2	1	. .	. .	. .	26
Percentage	69.2	19.2	7.7	3.8	. .	. .	. .	100.0
DeSoto	13	10	2	4	. .	. .	. .	29
Percentage	44.8	34.5	6.9	13.8	. .	. .	. .	100.0
Natchitoches	16	9	1	0	1	3	2	32
Percentage	50.0	28.1	3.1	. .	3.1	9.4	6.3	100.0
Red River	12	0	1	0	. .	. .	. .	13
Percentage	92.3	. .	7.7	. .	. .	. .	. .	100.0
Study Area Total	80	26	7	7	1	3	2	126
Percentage	63.5	20.6	5.6	5.6	.8	2.4	1.5	100.0

[a]1968 Uniform Church Letters

[b]Geography refers to number codes heading each column.

1 = Open Country
2 = Village (under 500 population)
3 = Town (500-2,499 population)
4 = Small City (2,500-9,999 population)
Median City 10,000-49,999
5 = Downtown Area
6 = Neighborhood Area
7 = Suburban Area

In considering the ages of the churches in the study area, Table 3 was constructed from the dates of constitution. The churches in each association were grouped together in twenty year groupings from 1820 to 1959, and those started since 1960 were grouped together. More than 40% of the churches were started in the forty years from 1880 to 1919, and another one-third of the churches have been started since 1920. There seems to be a good scatter of the churches into each time period with two apexes as previously mentioned. The two oldest churches are Zion Hill (1826) and Toro (1837) both of which are in Sabine Association.

TABLE 3

NUMBER OF CHURCHES ORGANIZED IN THE ASSOCIATIONS BY TWENTY YEAR SPANS 1820-1968[a]

Association	Years								
	1820-1839	1840-1859	1860-1879	1880-1899	1900-1919	1920-1939	1940-1959	1960-1968	Total
Sabine	2	3	4	5	2	4	3	0	23[b]
N. Sabine	0	1	5	6	5	5	3	2	27
DeSoto	0	7	2	5	7	1	6	1	32
Natchitoches	0	1	4	5	9	5	8	0	29
Red River	0	1	3	4	1	2	2	0	13
Total	2	13	18	25	24	17	22	3	124
Percentage	1.6	10.5	14.5	20.2	20.2	13.7	16.9	2.4	100.0

[a]1968, Uniform Church Letters.

[b]Fisher and Hornbeck churches do not list their dates of constitution.

Tables 4 and 5 display the churches of the study area after they have been grouped together according to size. Table 4 is the number of churches in each category and Table 5 is the percentage. It is quite significant to note that 73 or 58.0% of all the churches have less than 100 members. Natchitoches Association has the highest in this because 65.7% or 21 churches there have less than 100 members. Three other associations follow very closely with high percentages of the churches falling into this category. North Sabine has 67.9% of its churches, Sabine has 56.0%, DeSoto has 55.1% and Red River trails with 38.5% in this category. More than one-third of the churches in North Sabine have from 25 to 49 members, while in Natchitoches one out of four is this size.

Seven of the churches in the area had less than 24 members in 1968, while 27 had from 25 to 49. It is generally assumed that churches of this size do not generally function in the most effective manner, and considerable attention might be given to the matter of evaluating what minimum size church

TABLE 4

NUMBER OF CHURCHES BY SIZE IN GROUPINGS IN WCL
BY ASSOCIATIONS, 1968[a]

Associations	0-24	25-49	50-99	100-149	150-249	250-499	500	Total
Sabine.	2	3	9	6	4	1	0	25
N. Sabine	2	10	5	6	2	2	0	27
DeSoto.	1	5	10	6	3	3	1	29
Natchitoches. . .	2	8	11	2	5	3	1	32
Red River	0	1	4	3	4	0	1	13
Study Area. .	7	27	39	23	18	9	3	126

[a]1968 Uniform Church Letters.

TABLE 5

PERCENTAGE OF CHURCHES BY SIZE IN GROUPINGS IN WCL
BY ASSOCIATIONS, 1968[a]

Associations	0-24	25-49	50-99	100-149	150-249	250-499	500+	Total
Sabine.	8.0	12.0	36.0	24.0	16.0	4.0	0	100.0
N. Sabine . . .	7.4	37.0	18.5	22.2	7.4	7.4	0	100.0
DeSoto.	3.4	17.2	34.5	20.7	10.3	10.3	3.4	100.0
Natchitoches. .	6.3	25.0	34.4	6.3	15.5	9.4	3.1	100.0
Red River . . .	0	7.7	30.8	23.0	30.8	0	7.7	100.0
Study Area.	5.6	21.4	31.0	18.2	14.3	7.1	2.4	100.0

[a]Table 4.

would best serve the population of this particular study area. There are another 39 churches or 31% that have from 50-99 members, and many of these would certainly border on losing their effectiveness. More specific recommendations for this problem are contained in the conclusion.

The fact that only three churches in the study area have 500 or more members is certainly worthy of note, and only nine have 250 to 499 members. These represent only 9.3% of the total number of churches.

On Table 6 are reflected the data on the churches which have services every Sunday. In two associations, Sabine and Red River, 100% of the churches have services each Sunday. The other three are grouped between 81.5% and 88.5%. The fact that 110 out of 123 churches in the area have services each week reveals the dedication of the members to worship and the preaching of the Gospel. It also reveals that the people have not only the motivation, but the offerings, transportation and personnel with which to accomplish this. Only one out of ten of the churches do not have weekly services.

TABLE 6

NUMBER OF CHURCHES WITH SERVICES HELD EVERY SUNDAY IN WCL BY ASSOCIATIONS, 1968[a]

Association	Number Information Available on	Yes		No	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Sabine.	26	26	100.0	0	0
N. Sabine	26	23	88.5	3	11.5
DeSoto.	27	22	81.5	5	18.5
Natchitoches. . .	31	13	83.9	5	16.1
Red River	13	13	100.0	0	0
Total	123	110	89.4	13	10.6

[a]1968 Uniform Church Letters

Questionnaires were sent to the associations of the study area which were designed to get information about the churches that are not contained in the Uniform Church Letters. Only three associations returned the questionnaires and thus the data can only reflect these. Table 7 has on it these data concerning some of the facilities of the churches. Note on the table that in each column 56.9% of the churches have the facility, but the numbers change from item to item in the associations. The three items listed are pastorium, cemetery and brick building. In Sabine Association 52% of the churches have a pastorium, while 64% have a cemetery and 48% have a brick building. In Natchitoches the significant fact is that 58.1% of the churches are bricked. But in Red River it is important to note that 77% of the churches have a pastorium. The impression of the author is that the churches take a great deal of pride in the facilities that they have and that they have expended a great deal of effort and funds to provide needed facilities and services to members and the community. It is also fairly obvious that these churches are permanent in their present location unless other considerations should receive precedence in the future planning of these churches.

TABLE 7

SOME FACTORS RELATING TO FACILITIES OF LOCAL CHURCHES IN WCL IN THREE ASSOCIATIONS, 1968[a]

Association	Number With Information Available	Pastorium		Cemetery		Brick Building	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Sabine . . .	25	13	52.0	16	64.0	12	48.0
Natchitoches	27	14	51.9	13	48.1	18[b]	58.1
Red River. .	13	10	76.9	8	61.5	7	53.8
Total. .	65	37	56.9	37	56.9	37	56.9

[a]Questionnaires sent to the associations.

[b]Thirty one churches were listed in this category for Natchitoches.

The next area of study in this chapter is the membership of the churches. Table 8 is an accumulation of the resident memberships of the associations from 1958 to 1968. It is apparent at once that the membership has remained fairly stable throughout the eleven year period. There have been fluctuations, but much of this is due to the reporting of the churches. The method of assimilating this data was to record each church's membership as reported for each year and then estimate the membership for those years that were not reported. In 1958 the membership was 17,793 and in 1968 it was 15,669 or 2,124 less than ten years before. Natchitoches shows a marked loss, while the other associations are showing a slight gain.

Due to the fluctuations of the membership over the past decade it was impossible to establish any trends and to make projections for the future.

Sunday School Enrolment

Two companion tables on the Sunday School enrolment are included next. Other Sunday School data are in the appendix, and these will be helpful in observing the individual associations. On Table 9 are the number enrolled by age groups for the past eleven years, and Table 10 contains the percentages. The enrolment itself fluctuates from 12,636 in 1958 to a high of 13,021 in 1961 to a low of 10,866 in 1968. The various age groups have remained fairly stable as a part of the whole with only some slight changes as the youth get older and marry. On Table 10 for instance, it is noted that the Married Young People have increased from 1.6% of the enrolment in 1958 to 3.5% in 1968. This is significant when over much of the convention this age group has been losing ground. The Adults, age thirty-five years and up have dropped from 31.4% to 28.9% during the same time period. All other groups are fairly near the percentage they held in 1958, including the Nursery. It would have been supposed that in such an area as WCL that these age groups would have decreased.

TABLE 8

NUMBER OF RESIDENT MEMBERS IN WCL BY ASSOCIATIONS, 1958-1968[a]

Association	Year										
	1958	1959	1960	1961	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968
Sabine	2,670	2,593	2,676	2,711	2,600	2,634	2,721	2,843	2,794	2,793	2,836
N. Sabine . . .	2,519	2,497	2,570	2,599	2,460	2,468	2,507	2,569	2,567	2,588	2,605
DeSoto	3,895	4,041	4,058	4,085	4,017	4,046	4,052	3,957	4,056	4,114	4,012
Natchitoches . .	6,534	4,318	4,534	4,587	4,462	4,443	4,509	4,555	3,835	3,912	3,944
Red River . . .	2,175	2,145	2,180	2,161	2,175	2,157	2,224	2,236	2,210	2,150	2,272
Total . . .	17,793	15,594	16,018	16,143	15,714	15,748	16,013	16,160	15,462	15,557	15,669

[a]Annual Minutes of associations.

TABLE 9

NUMBER ENROLLED IN SUNDAY SCHOOL BY AGE GROUPS FOR WCL, 1958-1968[a]

Age Group	Year										
	1958	1959	1960	1961	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968
Nursery	646	582	549	607	672	700	559	592	556	518	567
Beginner.	933	903	1,031	920	858	859	868	880	787	770	690
Primary	1,224	1,171	1,184	1,211	1,186	1,183	1,193	1,086	1,172	1,067	1,080
Junior.	1,839	1,798	1,761	1,718	1,720	1,692	1,693	1,567	1,532	1,556	1,488
Intermediate.	1,647	1,604	1,581	1,660	1,688	1,688	1,658	1,601	1,445	1,433	1,452
Young People.	911	935	1,095	1,087	1,042	1,009	1,043	951	1,262	1,034	905
Young People (Married).	198	244	242	275	310	249	315	286	314	256	381
Adults (25-34).	1,265	1,366	1,291	1,457	1,297	1,261	1,586	1,469	1,363	1,288	1,163
Adults (35-Up).	3,973	4,120	4,081	4,086	3,808	3,942	3,730	3,882	3,824	3,852	3,140
Total	12,636	12,723	12,815	13,021	12,581	12,583	12,645	12,314	12,255	11,774	10,866

[a]Annual Minutes of Associations.

TABLE 10

PERCENTAGE ENROLLED IN SUNDAY SCHOOL BY AGE GROUPS FOR WCL, 1958-1968[a]

Age Group	Year										
	1958	1959	1960	1961	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968
Nursery	5.1	4.6	4.3	4.6	5.3	5.6	4.4	4.8	4.5	4.4	5.2
Beginner	7.4	7.1	8.0	7.1	6.8	6.8	6.9	7.1	6.4	6.5	6.4
Primary	9.7	9.2	9.2	9.3	9.4	9.4	9.4	8.8	9.6	9.1	9.9
Junior	14.6	14.1	13.7	13.2	13.7	13.4	13.4	12.7	12.5	13.2	13.7
Intermediate	13.0	12.6	12.3	12.8	13.4	13.4	13.1	13.0	11.8	12.2	13.4
Young People	7.2	7.3	8.5	8.3	8.3	8.0	8.2	7.7	10.3	8.8	8.3
Young People (Married)	1.6	1.9	1.9	2.1	2.5	2.0	2.5	2.3	2.6	2.2	3.5
Adults (25-34)	10.0	10.7	10.1	11.2	10.3	10.0	12.5	11.9	11.1	10.9	10.7
Adults (35-Up)	31.4	32.5	31.8	31.4	30.3	31.3	29.5	31.5	31.2	32.7	28.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

[a]Table 9.

Results of Evangelism

The next area to be covered by this study will be of interest to all readers of this report. It reveals the trends in evangelism for the past decade and may well point the way to the future. On Table 11 are the number of baptisms for the area and the associations. In 1959 the area had its highest number of baptisms (854) and after that declined until the low in 1963 (521). Since that time it has climbed steadily, except for 1966, until it reached the third highest year in 1968. There was an occilating of the number of baptisms in all of the associations and thus no specific pattern emerges.

TABLE 11

NUMBER OF BAPTISMS IN WCL BY ASSOCIATIONS, 1958-1968[a]

Association	Year										
	1985	1959	1960	1961	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968
Sabine . . .	94	149	108	120	61	81	122	105	109	124	158
N. Sabine. .	111	131	135	160	77	103	71	129	67	164	89
DeSoto . . .	193	231	176	169	147	120	134	138	158	162	232
Natchitoches	217	258	302	174	163	122	157	132	105	151	171
Red River. .	66	85	63	107	91	95	104	123	99	78	126
Total. .	681	854	784	730	539	521	588	627	539	679	776

[a]Annual Minutes of Associations.

Another area of evangelism is revealed on Table 12, which displays the other additions. Primarily this is the additions by letter, but it also includes those who join by statement. The additions to the churches of the area by this manner have been remarkably stable during the period covered by the table. The high occured in 1959 when 1,219 joined the churches, the low of 1,105 was in 1960. Again, as with the baptisms, the associations experienced considerable variance from year to year.

TABLE 12

OTHER ADDITIONS IN WCL BY ASSOCIATIONS, 1958-1968[a]

Association	Year										
	1958	1959	1960	1961	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968
Sabine . . .	130	157	172	262	142	150	200	155	157	153	186
N. Sabine. .	114	122	117	139	130	132	155	171	129	167	112
DeSoto . . .	313	323	264	255	241	272	290	236	296	253	237
Natchitoches	507	497	510	441	434	494	412	467	433	389	512
Red River. .	90	120	87	108	176	134	110	169	118	89	118
Total. .	1,154	1,219	1,150	1,105	1,123	1,182	1,167	1,198	1,133	1,051	1,165

[a]Annual Minutes of Associations.

The next four tables will perhaps reveal more about evangelism during the past eleven years than the number of baptisms and other additions. The first two of these are Tables 13 and 14 which are the rate per 100 members that additions have occured. On Table 13 the rate of baptisms started with a high of almost six persons per 100 members in 1959 and dropped to a low of 3.4 in 1966. In 1967 the rate has risen to 4.4 then in 1968 to 5.0 to reverse a low trend of several years. In 1968 three of the associations, Sabine, DeSoto and Red River, had almost six baptisms for each 100 members, but Natchitoches had 4.4 and North Sabine had 3.4. By averaging the past three years of the associations it becomes quite obvious how close together they are. Three of the associations average 4.6 per 100 members during 1966-1968, North Sabine averages 4.2 and Natchitoches averages 3.5. The Southern Baptist Convention baptism rate for the period 1965-1967 (1968 figures as yet unavailable) is 3.4, to give some basis for comparison while the area averages 4.6.

TABLE 13

BAPTISM RATE PER 100 RESIDENT MEMBERS IN WCL BY ASSOCIATIONS, 1959-1968[a]

Association	Year									
	1959	1960	1961	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968
Sabine	5.6	4.2	4.5	2.3	3.1	4.7	3.9	3.8	4.4	5.7
N. Sabine	5.1	5.4	6.3	3.0	4.1	2.9	5.3	2.8	6.4	3.4
DeSoto	7.2	5.3	5.2	4.3	3.6	3.3	3.4	4.0	4.0	5.6
Natchitoches . . .	6.1	7.0	3.8	3.6	2.7	3.5	2.9	2.3	3.9	4.4
Red River	4.5	3.2	4.9	4.2	4.4	4.8	5.5	4.4	3.6	5.9
Total	5.9	5.3	4.8	3.5	3.5	3.7	3.9	3.4	4.4	5.0

[a]Tables 8 and 11.

Looking at Table 14 in comparison with Table 13, the trend of additions by letters parallels baptisms, only larger. The high point of 8.4 additions per 100, was in 1959 but the low is in 1967 at 6.8. For all of the remaining years there is very little variance. Among the associations Natchitoches has had the highest rate for the period covered by the table, and it reached its height in 1968. This association also has the highest average for the past three years, followed by DeSoto, while the average for the other three ranges from 5.9 down to 4.9.

TABLE 14

LETTER RATE PER 100 RESIDENT MEMBERS IN WCL BY ASSOCIATIONS, 1959-1968[a]

Association	Year									
	1959	1960	1961	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968
Sabine	5.9	6.6	6.1	5.2	5.8	7.7	5.7	5.5	5.5	6.7
N. Sabine	4.8	4.7	5.5	5.0	5.3	6.3	7.0	5.4	6.5	4.3
DeSoto	10.1	8.0	7.8	7.0	8.2	7.2	5.8	7.5	6.2	5.8
Natchitoches . . .	11.7	11.8	9.7	9.5	11.1	9.3	10.4	9.5	10.1	13.1
Red River	6.3	4.4	5.0	8.1	6.2	5.1	7.6	5.3	4.0	5.5
Total	8.4	7.8	7.3	7.3	7.9	7.4	7.5	7.1	6.8	7.5

[a]Tables 8 and 12.

When considering evangelism, it is always important to review those who are being evangelized and not just the numbers and trends. There is not sufficient data available to do a thorough job, but there are some data that will prove indicative of the trend. On Tables 15 and 16 are the age groupings of the baptisms in four of the associations and the study area. Data are not provided on Natchitoches Association because the Uniform Church Letters were not available. The 1968 church letters reported the number of persons in each age group that were baptized and compiled on Table 15. Table 16 is a conversion of the data to percentages.

Note that there were 576 baptisms in the four associations in 1968, but only one of these was less than six years of age. The largest group as might be expected is 9 to 12 years of age, which is 32.2% of the total number. The next largest group is the 13 to 16 year with 22.7%. It is quite pertinent that 18.3% of the baptisms are in the 25 years old and older age group and that almost one in four fall into this group in Sabine Association. All of the associations have more than 30% of their baptisms in the 9 to 12 year age group, and three have more than 20% in the 13 to 16 year bracket. Two associations, Red River and DeSoto, have a fairly high percentage in the 6 to 8 year group and the two others have a corresponding high in the 17 to 24 year group.

The final area of church data to be examined in this chapter is the financial giving of the members. These data pertain to the receipts of the churches and then the gifts of the churches to missions, gifts to the Cooperative Program, total mission giving and to the association are examined.

TABLE 15

NUMBER OF BAPTISMS BY AGES BY ASSOCIATIONS, 1968[a]

Associations[a]	Under 6	6-8	9-12	13-16	17-24	25+	Total
Sabine	0	11	38	29	14	28	120
N. Sabine	0	6	36	24	14	18	98
DeSoto	0	36	82	54	22	38	232
Red River	1	26	47	24	7	21	126
Study Area . . .	1	79	203	131	57	105	576

[a]1968, Uniform Church Letters

[b]Natchitoches Association Uniform Church Letters were unavailable at the time of the study.

TABLE 16

PERCENTAGE OF BAPTISMS BY AGES BY ASSOCIATIONS, 1968[a]

Associations	Under 6	6-8	9-12	13-16	17-24	25+	Total
Sabine	0	9.2	31.6	24.2	11.7	23.3	100.0
N. Sabine	0	6.1	36.7	24.5	14.3	18.4	100.0
DeSoto	0	15.5	35.3	23.3	9.5	16.4	100.0
Red River	.8	20.6	37.3	19.0	5.6	16.7	100.0
Study Area	.2	13.7	35.2	22.7	9.9	18.3	100.0

[a]Table 15.

Table 17 contains the receipts of the churches from the members, and these data have been converted to per capita figures for each association. The totals for each year in each association are in the appendix as are the total gifts to missions except that given by the churches to associational missions which is in Table 20. Four of the associations in 1968 had per capita receipts in excess of $80.00 with the highest being $89.83 in Natchitoches. Only North Sabine Association was below the $80.00 level at

$67.34. The greatest increase in the eleven years covered by the table is in Sabine Association which has increased from slightly over $50.00 in 1950 to almost $90.00 in 1968. Natchitoches, however, almost parallels this growth trend and Red River is only slightly less in its increase. The study area as a whole has not increased its per capita receipts as much as some of its associations, having gone from $52.34 in 1958 to $81.72 in 1968.

Table 18 is the per capita gifts to the Cooperative Program by associations. These data reveal that the increases in gifts to the Cooperative Program have not kept pace with the increases in the receipts of the churches. In the study area the gifts of the members increased by 56.1% during the period, but the increase in gifts to the Cooperative Program was 46.1%. In The associations, however, there is a vastly different story, as two of the associations, Natchitoches and Red River, have increased their gifts to the Cooperative Program at a higher percentage than their receipts have increased. In Natchitoches the receipts increased by 75% but the Cooperative Program gifts increased by 134%. Much the same thing happened in Red River as receipts increased by 55%, but gifts increased 82%. The other three associations gave considerably less of their increase in gifts to the Cooperative Program. Sabine Association had an increase of 78% in receipts but gifts increased only 26%, while in DeSoto there was a 49% increase in receipts and 20% in gifts. North Sabine had the lowest increase in receipts at 40% and 4% to the Cooperative Program.

The data on the previous table to not reflect all of the mission giving of the members and thus the following three tables have been included to review the other areas of mission giving. The first of these, Table 19, contains the figures for the total mission gifts per capita as reported by the churches to the associations. These gifts have steadily increased from $8.71 in 1958

TABLE 17

PER CAPITA RECEIPTS OF RESIDENT MEMBERS IN WCL BY ASSOCIATIONS, 1958-1968[a]

Association	Year										
	1958	1959	1960	1961	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968
Sabine	$50.51	$57.08	$64.19	$60.19	$69.20	$70.50	$78.78	$78.53	$80.81	$82.83	$89.74
N. Sabine. . . .	44.48	43.12	45.69	46.00	55.84	56.12	61.40	65.40	54.95	69.35	112.63
DeSoto	59.48	62.61	65.44	66.34	71.38	71.64	69.33	75.09	79.06	65.17	88.43
Natchitoches . .	51.47	54.33	56.05	60.65	63.14	61.86	62.02	64.44	78.62	81.94	89.83
Red River. . . .	52.59	49.71	53.52	57.40	55.99	65.66	64.71	68.73	71.92	79.86	81.72
Total . . .	52.34	54.50	57.78	59.22	64.12	65.44	66.99	70.27	74.24	74.93	92.07

[a]Tables 8 and 36

TABLE 18

PER CAPITA GIFTS TO COOPERATIVE PROGRAM IN WCL BY ASSOCIATIONS, 1958-1968[a]

Association	Year										
	1958	1959	1960	1961	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968
Sabine	$5.91	$6.32	$6.95	$6.51	$6.72	$7.31	$7.05	$7.07	$7.50	$7.36	$7.45
N. Sabine. . . .	5.19	4.99	5.07	5.16	5.57	5.31	5.37	4.91	5.77	5.65	5.40
DeSoto	8.70	6.75	8.87	9.63	9.21	9.43	10.36	9.87	9.60	9.62	10.48
Natchitoches . .	3.62	4.57	4.58	4.24	4.67	4.97	5.42	5.81	7.13	7.68	8.46
Red River. . . .	5.32	6.18	6.23	6.45	6.15	6.58	7.05	7.47	8.75	9.69	9.66
Total . . .	5.79	5.71	6.36	6.43	6.52	6.78	7.16	7.11	7.85	8.08	8.46

[a]Tables 8 and 37

TABLE 19

PER CAPITA TOTAL MISSION GIFTS IN WCL BY ASSOCIATIONS, 1958-1968[a]

Association	Year										
	1958	1959	1960	1961	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968
Sabine	5.14	8.97	10.10	9.10	7.20	10.55	10.24	11.10	11.48	12.34	13.77
No. Sabine	8.15	8.54	9.13	9.18	10.02	9.64	9.29	9.79	10.21	10.47	10.19
DeSoto	14.76	14.77	13.93	14.66	15.61	15.62	17.09	16.61	16.52	17.70	18.15
Natchitoches	5.23	8.52	7.90	6.61	7.64	7.59	9.03	8.91	12.50	13.89	14.36
Red River	9.71	9.97	12.65	10.84	11.13	10.36	11.35	12.82	13.65	17.71	18.01
Total	8.71	10.42	10.64	10.05	10.46	10.85	11.64	11.87	13.15	14.58	15.06

[a]Tables 8 and 38

to $15.06 last year. This is a 73% increase in the area, and all of the associations show a corresponding increase. North Sabine and DeSoto have 25% and 23% respectively, while Red River has an 86% increase and Sabine and Natchitoches have 168% and 175% increases. Since DeSoto Association was already relatively high in its per capita mission giving, its increase is not as pronounced as the others.

The associational mission programs have suffered a decrease in funds during the past eleven years. The mission leaders in the study area are better able to interpret the meaning of this than this author. There was, however, a 4.7% decrease in the total funds available as revealed on Table 20, and a 6.0% decrease in the per capita gifts to the association (Table 21). This area of mission giving as might be expected is the smallest part of the missions giving. There were significant increases in Sabine and Natchitoches associations, but offsetting losses in the other three. Part of the increase in Natchitoches Association is the recent emphasis given the student work at Northwestern campus.

TABLE 20

GIFTS TO ASSOCIATION MISSIONS IN WCL BY ASSOCIATIONS, 1958-1968[a]

Associations	Year										
	1958	1959	1960	1961	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968
Sabine	$2,258	$1,758	$1,971	$2,030	$1,462	$1,503	$2,393	$2,814	$2,870	$3,247	$3,682
N. Sabine	6,394	3,863	3,799	3,066	3,504	3,389	2,445	2,971	3,294	3,937	3,351
DeSoto	5,510	5,349	4,698	4,663	4,514	5,149	4,994	5,092	5,201	5,244	5,244
Natchitoches	6,082	1,875	1,727	1,489	1,425	1,477	1,483	1,526	2,027	7,198[b]	8,143
Red River	2,979	2,072	1,087	768	761	756	855	937	650	1,111	1,711
Total	23,223	14,917	13,282	12,016	11,666	12,274	12,170	13,340	14,042	20,737	22,131

[a]Annual Minutes of Associations

[b]First Baptist, Natchitoches contributed $5,000

TABLE 21

PER CAPITA GIFTS TO ASSOCIATION MISSIONS IN WCL BY ASSOCIATIONS, 1958-1968[a]

Associations	Year										
	1958	1959	1960	1961	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968
Sabine	$ .85	$ .68	$ .74	$ .75	$ .56	$ .57	$ .88	$ .99	$1.03	$1.16	$1.30
N. Sabine	2.54	1.55	1.48	1.18	1.43	1.37	.98	1.16	1.28	1.52	1.29
DeSoto	1.41	1.32	1.16	1.14	1.12	1.27	1.23	1.29	1.28	1.27	1.31
Natchitoches	1.43	.43	.38	.32	.32	.33	.33	.34	.53	1.84	2.06
Red River	1.37	.97	.50	.36	.35	.35	.38	.42	.29	.52	.75
Total	1.50	.96	.83	.74	.74	.78	.76	.83	.91	1.33	1.41

[a]Tables 8 and 20.

CHAPTER II

ANALYSIS OF THE PASTORAL DATA

The data in this chapter are from two primary sources, the 1968 Uniform Church Letters and a questionnaire sent to associational leaders. Three of the questionnaires were returned and information on all five associations were available through the Uniform Church Letters. The data does not attempt to be exhaustive, but simply to examine some of the facts that affect the pastorates of the area.

Education

On Table 22 are the educational attainments of some of the pastors, namely the college and seminary graduates. There are, of course, others who have attended both of these, but did not graduate. The highest percentage of college graduates is in Red River Association (61.5%), followed closely by Natchitoches Association (60.0). There is a considerable drop from these two to the next two, North Sabine and Sabine. The study area is fairly high in percentage of the pastors being college graduates (40.5%).

TABLE 22

EDUCATION OF SOME PASTORS IN FOUR ASSOCIATIONS[a] IN WCL, 1968

	Number With Information Available	Seminary		College	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Natchitoches	25	6	24.0	15	60.0
North Sabine	21	4	19.0	6	28.6
Red River	13	2	15.4	8	61.5
Sabine	25	1	4.0	5	20.0
Total	84	13	15.5	34	40.5

[a]Questionnaires sent to the associations.

Seminary graduates in the area are relatively few with one out of six pastors in this category. Natchitoches is the highest with almost one out of four followed by North Sabine, Red River and Sabine.

Residence and Employment

In seeking to understand the residence of the pastors in the area, the following table was constructed. On Table 23 are the number and percentage of pastors who actually live on the church field where they serve. In the study area, 60% of the men live on their church field, but (84.6%) do in Red River Association. In Sabine and Natchitoches it drops to slightly over 50%.

TABLE 23

PASTORS WHO ARE RESIDENT ON CHURCH FIELD IN WCL, 1968[a]

Parish	Number With Information Available	Live on Church Field	
		Number	Percentage
Red River	13	11	84.6
Sabine	25	14	56.0
Natchitoches	27	14	51.9
Study Area Total	65	39	60.0

[a]Questionnaires sent to the associations.

It is important in a study of this nature to consider the income levels of pastors in the area in order to give some considerations to their ability to give their full attention to the churches. On the next three tables are the data concerning the employment and salary of the pastors. Salary in this case refers to that paid by the churches and not necessarily the family incomes.

On Table 24 are the number and percentage of pastors who are employed apart from the church. Note that 55.8% of the men in this study area are not employed in secular work, but 44.2% are. The highest percentage of pastors employed is in DeSoto Association (52.3%). More than one-third of the pastors in the study area are employed full-time apart from their churches, while only 8.1% of them are employed part-time. The largest number and percentage of full-time secularly employed pastors is in North Sabine Association followed closely by Sabine and Natchitoches.

TABLE 24

NUMBER OF PASTORS IN EMPLOYMENT APART FROM THE CHURCH IN WCL BY ASSOCIATIONS, 1968[a]

Association	Number With Information Available	None		Part-time		Full-time	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Sabine	17	10	58.8	. .	. .	7	41.2
No. Sabine	18	9	50.0	1	5.6	8	44.4
DeSoto	21	10	47.6	4	19.0	7	33.3
Natchitoches . . .	19	12	63.2	. .	. .	7	36.8
Red River	11	7	63.6	2	18.2	2	18.2
Study Area . .	86	48	55.8	7	8.1	31	36.1

[a]1968 Uniform Church Letters.

Salaries

The next table (Table 25) reveals the salaries paid by the churches in 1968. These have been arranged into seven groupings of $1,000.00 intervals with the final interval being $6,000.00 and up. The largest number of churches in the study area are in the category $1,000 - $1,999, followed by the less than $1,000 and then $5,000 to $5,999. A companion table to this one is Table 26 which reveals the percentages in each category. The three

columns already mentioned should be noted. Of particular interest, however, is the fact that 46.9% of the churches in Natchitoches Association have annual salaries of less than $2,000. Obviously these churches do not attempt to employ a pastor on a full-time basis, however, Table 27 reflects that 81.5% of the churches in this association have pastors who are full-time with that church.

TABLE 25

NUMBER OF CHURCHES IN WCL BY PASTOR SALARY GROUPINGS AND ASSOCIATIONS, 1968[a]

Association	0-999	1,000-1,999	2,000-2,999	3,000-3,999	4,000-4,999	5,000-5,999	6,000+	Total
Sabine	4	4	5	2	6	1	4	26
No. Sabine	5	7	5	2	2	4	1	26
Natchitoches	8	7	3	4	2	6	2	32
DeSoto	4	8	2	5	4	4	2	29
Red River	. .	. .	3	2	2	5	1	13
Study Area . . .	21	26	18	15	16	20	10	126

[a]Uniform Church Letters.

The real heart of the problem lies in the fact that in three of the associations more than half of the pastors receive less than $3,000 in salary, the poverty level established by the United States Government. The associations with large percentages of pastors earning less than $3,000 are North Sabine (65.3%), Natchitoches (56.3%) and Sabine (50.0%). Only 23.8% of the pastors in the study receive more than $5,000 annually. In Sabine and North Sabine associations this drops to 19.2% or less than one out of five. Some attention will need to be given to this particular phase of Baptist life in the study area in the future if the churches hope to continue on the high level of "full-time" preaching services that have been held in

the past.

TABLE 26

PERCENTAGE OF CHURCHES IN WCL BY PASTOR SALARY GROUPINGS AND ASSOCIATIONS, 1968[a]

Associations	0-999	1,000-1,999	2,000-2,999	3,000-3,999	4,000-4,999	5,000-5,999	6,000+	Total
Sabine	15.4	15.4	19.2	7.7	23.1	3.8	15.4	100.0
No. Sabine	19.2	26.9	19.2	7.7	7.7	15.4	3.8	100.0
Natchitoches . . .	25.0	21.9	9.4	12.5	6.2	18.8	6.2	100.0
DeSoto	13.8	27.6	6.9	17.2	13.8	13.8	6.9	100.0
Red River	. .	. .	23.1	15.4	15.4	38.4	7.7	100.0
Study Area . .	16.7	20.6	14.3	11.9	12.7	15.9	7.9	100.0

[a]1968 Uniform Church Letters.

CHAPTER III

POPULATION DATA

The most obvious factor about the population of West Central Louisiana is the changes that have occurred in the past twenty years. All of the changes have not been recorded and thus they cannot be displayed in this report. The most recent census was made in 1960 and before that in 1950. Obviously, these figures are dated and somewhat inadequate, but they are the most reliable data that are available. Some recent studies of the population of the area have been made by the School of Business Administration at Louisiana Tech.

Numerical Population

Table 27 shows the numerical population of the four parishes, the study area, and the state for 1950, 1960 and 1967. Also reflected on this table is the percentage change from 1950 to 1960 and from 1960 to 1967. Notice that during the 1950's the total area lost 7.4% of its population. The heaviest losses were in Red River Parish where the net loss was 17.6%, and Sabine Parish with a 11.1% loss.

Population changes during the first two-thirds of the 1960's were drastically different because there was an increase of 5.7%. The largest percentage increase occurred in Sabine Parish, followed by Natchitoches, which made the largest numerical gain of slightly over 2,600 persons. Red River was the only parish that had a loss of population between 1960 and 1967.

The state trend in population change was an increase during both time periods. There was a 21.6% increase in the 1950's and 12.7% in the 1960's.

TABLE 27

NUMERICAL POPULATION AND PERCENTAGE CHANGE IN WCL BY PARISHES, 1950[a], 1960[a], ACTUAL AND 1967[b] ESTIMATED

Parish	1950	1960	Percentage Change	1967	Percentage Change
DeSoto	24,398	24,248	-0.6	24,621	1.5
Natchitoches	38,144	35,653	-6.5	38,274	7.4
Red River	12,113	9,978	-17.6	9,732	-2.5
Sabine	20,880	18,564	-11.1	20,824	12.2
Study Area Total	95,535	88,443	-7.4	93,451	5.7
State	2,677,370	3,257,000	21.6	3,670,000	12.7

[a]Bureau of the Census.

[b]Forrest H. Pollard, "Estimates of the Population of Louisiana Parishes July 1, 1966 and 1967," The Louisiana Economy, December, 1968, pp. 5-7.

Negro Population

On Table 28 is reflected the number and percentage of the population that are white and nonwhite. These figures are based on the 1960 census and indicate there is a considerable portion of the population in the four parishes that is nonwhite. Note that the entire study area in 1960 was 43.7% nonwhite while the state of Louisiana was 32.3% and the United States was only 11.4%. The greatest number of nonwhites is in Natchitoches Parish (15,545) and the highest percentage is in the DeSoto Parish (67.5%). The lowest number and percentage are in Sabine Parish where 23.8% of the people are nonwhite. It is interesting to note that in 1960 there were slightly less than 50,000 white persons in the study area, and as was seen in Chapter I there is an abundant number of Baptist churches in the area which

seek to minister to this group. No figures were available on the number of National Baptist churches and therefore no comparison can be made as to the number of churches that minister to the Negro population.

TABLE 28

NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF POPULATION, WHITE AND NONWHITE IN WCL BY PARISHES, 1960[a]

Parish	1960 Population	White Population		Non-white Population	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent
DeSoto	24,248	10,294	42.5	13,954	57.5
Natchitoches	35,653	20,108	56.4	15,545	43.6
Red River	9,978	5,246	52.6	4,732	47.4
Sabine	18,564	14,153	76.2	4,411	23.8
Study Area Total	88,443	49,801	56.3	38,642	43.7
State	3,226,465	2,183,286	67.7	1,043,179	32.3
U.S.	. .	. .	88.6	. .	11.4

[a]1960 Census.

Age of White Population

The following table (Table 29) reflects the white population of the parishes in West Central Louisiana by age. This table was developed in order to compare the population of the area in age groups with the enrolment in the Sunday School. The largest number of persons in the population, as would be expected, are in the older group of thirty-five years and up, with the 17-24 age group following. These age groupings are not compatible with each other but simply reflect the numerical population in each age group in 1960.

TABLE 29

WHITE POPULATION IN WCL BY AGE GROUPS, 1960[a]

Parish	Ages by Years								Total
	1-3	4-5	6-8	9-12	13-16	17-24	25-34	35-Up	
Sabine	1,054	547	897	1,258	1,315	1,332	1,173	6,605	14,181
DeSoto	725	399	580	807	744	859	1,038	5,142	10,294
Natchitoches	1,440	747	1,107	1,588	1,587	3,450	1,940	8,223	20,082
Red River	362	211	285	423	417	403	474	2,657	5,232
Totals	3,581	1,904	2,869	4,076	4,063	6,044	4,625	22,627	49,789

[a]1960 Census.

Table 30 is based on Table 29 and reflects the percentage of the population in each parish for each age group. Natchitoches Parish stands out significantly in the 17-24 age group, probably due to the College, but there is also a corresponding low in the 35 and up age group. All of the other parishes seem to have about the same percentage in each age group with some small variances. Table 31 is the percentage of the Sunday School enrolment in each age group. In each age group from four years of age through sixteen and in the 25-34 year age group the percentage in the Sunday School is larger than the population, while in the others it is smaller. This suggests to us that in the age groups where the percentage in Sunday School is larger than the population that the Sunday School is slightly out of line with the population. Ideally there should be a similarity between the percentage of the population in each age group and the percentage of the enrolment in Sunday School in each age group. Note that in the age group 4-5 that almost twice as many children on a percentage basis were in the Sunday Schools as were in the population. It is of further significance to note the similarity between West Central Louisiana Sunday Schools and the Southern Baptist Convention Sunday Schools on Table 31. There is a great deal of similarity in each age group which would suggest that the district is not out of line with the Southern Baptist Convention as a whole.

TABLE 30

PERCENTAGE OF WHITE POPULATION BY AGE GROUPS IN WCL BY PARISHES, 1960[a]

Parish	Ages by Years								Total
	1-3	4-5	6-8	9-12	13-16	17-24	25-34	35-Up	
Sabine	7.4	3.9	6.3	8.9	9.3	9.4	8.3	46.6	100.0
DeSoto	7.0	3.9	5.6	7.8	7.2	8.3	10.1	50.0	100.0
Natchitoches	7.2	3.7	5.5	7.9	7.9	17.2	9.7	40.9	100.0
Red River	6.9	4.0	5.4	8.1	8.0	7.7	9.1	50.8	100.0

[a]1960 Census

TABLE 31

PERCENTAGE OF SUNDAY SCHOOL ENROLMENT BY AGE GROUPS IN WCL AND SBC, 1960, 1967, 1968[a]

	Ages by Years								Total
	1-3	4-5	6-8	9-12	13-16	17-24	25-34	35-Up	
WCL, 1960	4.3	8.0	9.2	13.7	12.3	10.4	10.1	31.8	100.0
WCL, 1968	5.2	6.4	9.9	13.7	13.4	12.8	10.7	28.9	100.0
SBC, 1967	6.5	7.0	10.6	14.8	12.7	11.5	10.8	26.1	100.0

[a]Associational Minutes and SBC Annual.

Rural and Urban Population

The next table (Table 32) reflects the urban and rural population of West Central Louisiana. In the top portion of the table is the 1950 population with the number and percentage in each parish that was urban and that which was rural. The study area as a whole in 1960 was largely rural when 85% of the population resided in the rural areas, while the state was only 45.2% rural. This changed drastically over the next ten years and by the 1960 census only 74.1% of the population was rural in the study area. The state meanwhile had dropped to 36.7%. In 1950 two of the parishes, Red River and Sabine, were 100% rural but in 1960 only Red River was 100% rural. There was a corresponding change in the amount of population that became urban in the other three parishes as well. Part of the explanation for this change in the rural-urban makeup of the population is in the definition of rural in the 1950 and 1960 censuses. It must be remembered however, that there has also been a large outmigration of the rural population since 1950.

TABLE 32

NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF POPULATION URBAN AND RURAL IN WCL BY PARISHES, 1950 AND 1960[a]

Parish	Population	Urban		Rural	
		Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
1950					
DeSoto.	24,398	4,440	18.2	19,958	81.8
Natchitoches.	38,144	9,914	26.0	28,230	74.0
Red River	12,113	. .	. .	12,113	100.0
Sabine.	20,880	. .	. .	20,880	100.0
Study Area Total. .	95,535	14,354	15.0	81,181	85.0
State	. .	. .	54.8	. .	45.2
1960					
DeSoto.	24,248	5,839	24.1	18,409	75.9
Natchitoches.	35,653	13,924	39.1	21,729	60.9
Red River	9,978	. .	. .	9,978	100.0
Sabine.	18,564	3,164	17.0	15,400	83.0
Study Area Total. .	88,443	22,927	25.9	65,516	74.1
State	. .	. .	63.3	. .	36.7

[a]1950 and 1960 Census.

CHAPTER IV

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

It will be apparent in this chapter that there are not many data available on the study area regarding the social and economic characteristics. There are some factors available and some generalizations can be made about the area that will serve to review current conditions. The information on the nonwhite population was included in Chapter III with other population data. This chapter will deal with family incomes, working women, age, education, opportunities in new ministries, and general observations about the economy of the area.

Family Incomes

On Table 33 are the data regarding family incomes in the study area and the parishes. These data are somewhat dated because they are based on the 1960 Census. It is likely that the situation has not changed drastically, but perhaps some changes have occurred due to increases in the economy and inflation.

Note that the median family incomes in all four parishes are less than the poverty level, $3,000. The highest being the $2,816 income in in Sabine Parish, and the lowest $2,034 in Red River. The state and national median family incomes are considerably more than those of the parishes in the study area. The significance of the median is that this is the mid-point of all family incomes. This is not the average, but the exact mid-point at which half of the families receive more than this figure and half

less. The second part of the table reflects the two extremes in family incomes. These data reveal the percentage of families who earn less than $3,000 and those who receive more than $10,000 annually. These factors can give some indication of the general condition of the economy which will greatly affect the churches.

TABLE 33

FAMILY INCOMES IN WCL BY PARISHES, 1960[a]

Parish	Median Family Income	Percentage	
		Under $3,000	$10,000 and Over
DeSoto	2,680	54.6	4.1
Natchitoches	2,382	60.1	5.0
Red River	2,034	65.0	2.3
Sabine	2,816	53.1	5.3
State	4,272	35.6	9.9
U.S.	5,660	21.4	15.1

[a]1960 Census

Women in Employment

One of the increasing problems which the churches of the nation face is the employment of women which takes them out of the home, and in many cases out of the organizations and life of the local churches. Table 34 gives the percentage of the women in each parish fourteen years and older who were in the labor force in 1960. The highest is in Natchitoches and DeSoto, but both of these are less than the state figure and considerably less than the U.S. figure. Doubtless this has increased in the past eight years and now a larger percentage of the women are employed.

The other portion of Table 34 reflects the percentage of the women whose husband is present in the home but she still works. In two of the

parishes, Natchitoches and DeSoto, more than one out of four married women work outside the home. This Approximates the state and national average, but the other two parishes are lower with approximately one out of five married women employed. Obviously, this presents a challenge to the churches in programming activities and in attempting to minister to these families. There are many children in these families to whom the churches can relate and minister in manifold ways, but it will take considerable initiative to accomplish this.

TABLE 34

PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN IN LABOR FORCE IN WCL BY PARISHES, 1960[a]

Parish	Female 14 Years and Over in Labor Force	Married With Husband Present In Labor Force
DeSoto.	25.4	27.8
Natchitoches.	26.0	27.4
Red River	21.6	21.4
Sabine.	20.9	20.7
Study Area:		
State	29.8	27.3
U.S.	34.5	30.7

[a]1960 Census

Age and Education

On Table 35 are some factors regarding age and education in the parishes of the study area. The median age in three of the parishes is higher than the state, but all of them are lower than the national median. This indicates a fairly young population, and this would be contrary to what normally happens in an area that is fairly stable in its population. The normal pattern would be for the population to grow older and then as deaths

began to outnumber births the population would decrease. Apparently the influence of Northwestern Louisiana College is markedly pronounced in keeping the median age fairly low.

TABLE 35

SOME FACTORS REGARDING AGE AND EDUCATION IN WCL BY PARISHES, 1960[a]

Parish	Median age	Percent 65 years and over	Median school years completed 25 years and older
DeSoto.	26.4	12.3	7.5
Natchitoches. . .	23.3	10.1	7.4
Red River	26.8	11.5	7.0
Sabine.	28.2	11.8	8.0
State	25.3	7.4	8.8
U.S.	29.5	9.0	10.6

[a]1960 Census

The study area does have a high percentage of its population that is 65 years and older. All of the parishes are higher than the national average of 9.0% and the state average of 7.4%. The highest percentage is in DeSoto, followed closely by Sabine and Red River. When these two data are compared it would seem to indicate that there is a grouping of the population at the two extremes, the older citizens and the relatively young.

The median school years completed by those 25 years of age and older is well below the national average of 10.6 years and slightly below the state average. Three of the parishes are grouped together at 7.0 to 7.5, and Sabine stands out at 8.0. The area, like so many others, seems unable to retain a very large percentage of those who attend or graduate from Northwestern.

Economy

The economy of the study area is characterized by many things, but

perhaps the most descriptive words are stable and sound. The land plays a most significant role in that so much of the economy is "out-of-doors." There was neither space nor time to develop a thorough profile of the economy and employment of the area in this report, but some generalities will prove helpful.

In general, agriculture, livestock, and woodlands are the big three, but industry, education and merchandizing follow closely. Since specific figures are not available here, the report does not seek to point out the number of people involved, the amount of money invested, or the returns that these various segments of the economy make.

In the area of agriculture cotton is the big cash crop, with grains, pecans, soybeans, and truck crops following though not necessarily in that order. Hay is expected to become more of a cash crop in the area as the livestock industry increases. It is apparent, however, that the whole spectrum of agriculture is undergoing change. Mechanization, methods, and corporation farms are causing more people to cease farming as a livelihood. On the other hand, livestock is increasing as a part of economy. Perhaps there are many reasons for this, but the availability of land and the relatively small capital improvement needed are significant contributions to this.

Woodlands and wood products in the area have made a tremendous change in the past decade. The area has long been noted for its sawmills and lumber production, but now many other wood products have entered the area. This is particularly true of the plywood plants and pulpwood receiving stations that have been developed. The trend of the past decade will likely continue in the immediate future. There are, of course, many phases of this industry, from planting, to maintenance of the forests, to

harvesting, to the ultimate output of a product. Thus it becomes a many faceted part of the economy and makes a far larger contribution than many persons are aware.

The contributions of education and merchandizing are readily recognizable in each community, but more especially education's place in the economy is noted in Northwestern State in Natchitoches. Industry on the other hand is not so prevalent as to be instantly a recognizable part of the economy. There are several large industries in the study area, but they are somewhat unique and there is no particular product that is associated with the area other than wood.

One of the industries that looks particularly bright for the future is recreation. This is not new to this area because there have been lakes, national forests, game refuges, and tourist attractions in the form of Hodges Gardens and Mansfield Battle Park for a long time. The future of this industry in the area, however, is even more pronounced than in the past. Toledo Bend Reservoir is well known, but some of the implications that it has for the churches of the area may not be so recognizable. This 182,000 acre reservoir will offer many things to the public not the least of which is a chance to "get away from it all." It will be a playground, tourist attraction, sportsman's paradise, and industry generator. All of these will mean something to the churches, but perhaps the one most significant will be the opportunity, challenge and responsibility of ministering to people who are at leisure. In the context of being at leisure, many of the people will be more responsive to spiritual things and will be more open, and have more time to listen to "the voice of God."

It is not known at this time how many people will be involved in the activities centered around the lake, but due to its location with reference to several large population centers it should be significantly large. A

similar reservoir in Georgia has as many as 50,000 to 80,000 persons on it during the average summer week-end. These, for the most part, are people who are not ordinarily engaged in church activities at any time.

In Figure 3 is a map of the reservoir after it is filled to capacity. This map gives the reader an impression of how large a project this is and which parts of the study area it will affect. It is felt that most of the towns listed on this map will feel some effect economically, socially and religiously in the months ahead.

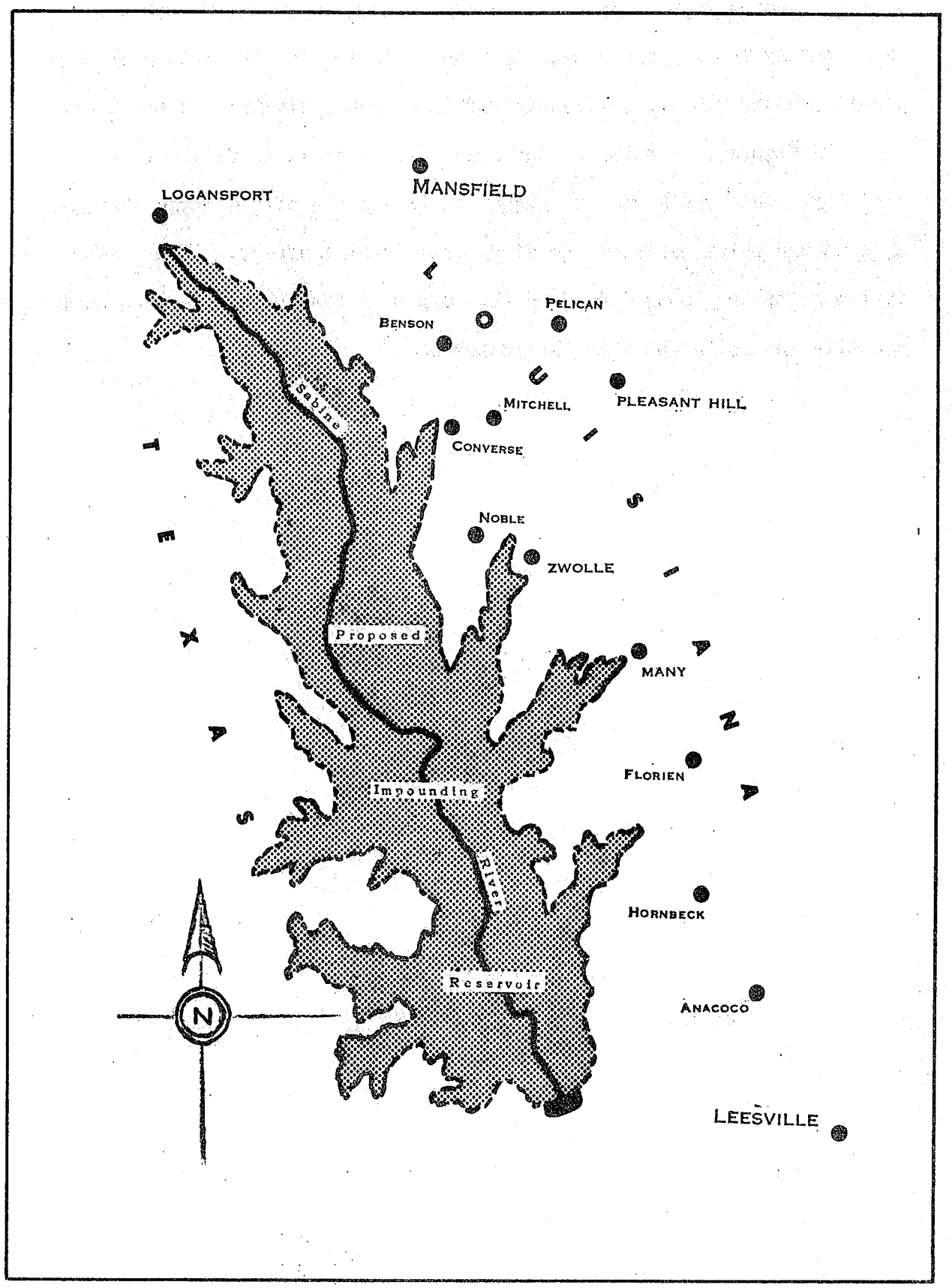


Fig. 3.--Map of Toledo Bend Reservoir in West Central Louisiana

CHAPTER V

USING AVAILABLE CHURCH AND PUBLIC DATA

It is not the purpose of this report to gather, analyze and publish all of the data that are available within the study area. The report primarily utilized that data which applied to the whole but numerous other data are available which focus on small areas that, though not applicable to the whole, can be of inestimable value for local church and association planning. Therefore, it was felt by the author that some techniques and procedures for doing further research should be included. These are not designed to be exhaustive, but rather to be a broad outline within which the churches could work.

Types of General Data you Need in Towns and Cities

Population Figures

How many people are there in your area of ministry? Is the population increasing or declining? Is the population expected to inrease in the future? Use the 1960 Population Documents either available at the local planners, County Agents, Chamber of Commerce or county (city) library.

Economic Data

How many persons receive some type of public assistance checks? How serious is the unemployment in the area? Do the "hard-core" poverty families live in any particular area (across the tracks) or are they

scattered? What is being done to retrain workers? Are such programs being used by the local people who need it? Is there some way church leaders can help by encouraging participation in these programs?

Social Data

Are there persons in my area who cannot read? How many? Where do they live? Are there local programs to train them? Can the church help? Are there deaf or otherwise handicapped persons in our area who need special ministries? Are services provided for them, if so, what? How are the economically destitute being clothed, transported, and attended to medically? Are there courses offered in personal hygiene, child care, prenatal care, and so on? What local efforts are being made to prevent health hazards like open sewerage, exposed trash, garbage heaps and water pollution? How severe is the high school drop-out rate? Are there services the church can render to encourage youth to complete school? What programs are available to care for infants of working mothers? Are there kindergartens available for pre-school children?

Physical Data

Are certain lands designated for industrial development? Are the residential areas zoned to protect the areas from industrial noise and pollution and from commercial intervention? Are there laws which govern industrial waste disposal? Are there areas where the soil will not absorb septic (sewerage) run-off? Are there areas where flooding endangers homes? Are there other physical factors such as company owned or Federal lands which will not be subdivided for further residential expansion? Are there plans for widening, surfacing or constructing new thoroughfares which will affect travel patterns? Are the churches included in community planning?

Are there specific plans for the Recreational Areas? Can the churches adequately minister to the people who will be at leisure under these plans?

Community Data

Are there plans for renovating sections of the central business district? Are there plans for additional shopping areas? Are there plans for a new school or improving existing facilities? Are there adequate park facilities available, not crowded and located where children have safe access to them?

Types of General Data you Need in Rural Areas

Population Figures

How many people are there in your area of ministry? Is the population increasing or decreasing? Will there be growth in the future, if so, where?

Economic Data

How many persons receive some type of public assistance checks? How serious is the unemployment in the area? Do the "hard-core" poverty families live in any particular area (across the tracks)? What is being done to re-train workers? Are such programs being used by the local people who need it? Is there some way church leaders can help by encouraging participation in these programs?

Social Data

Are there persons in my area who cannot read? How many? Where do they live? Are there local programs to train them? Can the church help? Are there deaf or otherwise handicapped persons in our area who need special ministries? Are services provided for them, if so, what? How are the economically destitute being clothed, transported, and attended to medically?

Are there courses offered in personal hygiene, child care, pre-natal care, and so on? What local efforts are being made to prevent health hazards like open sewerage, exposed trash, garbage heaps and water polution conditions? How severe a high school drop-out rate exists? Are there services the church can render to encourage youth to complete school? What programs are available to rehabilitate school drop-outs? Are programs available to care for infants of working mothers?

Physical Data

Are there laws which govern industrial waste disposal? Are there developments being planned such as reservoirs or recreation areas which will affect travel patterns of the community? How will the churches fit into these plans?

Community Data

Does the community have any clubs or associations which foster community improvement? Are there plans for a new school or improvement of existing facilities? Are there church groups in neighboring villages and towns with whom this church should cooperate in area projects?

The Use of Association Minutes in Study of Local Field(s)

Membership Data

The most important figures are the resident members. Use total figures to observe the change in number of non-resident members and plot these figures for the last ten years on graph paper. Observe the direction of gain or loss. Are the ups-and-downs related to change of pastors, change in jobs (lay-offs or new jobs) or internal church attitudes?

"Evangelism" Data

The results of evangelistic activities can be observed by the number

of persons received by baptism and letter. Plot these data and observe the changes in the trends as outlined above.

Organization Data

The enrolment figures of the various organizations are valuable but the average attendance reported through the church letters to the association are more useful. Examination of the age grouping is also significant and the number enrolled in each age group can be plotted to observe the changing age structure of the organizations.

Financial Data

Numerous categories of these data are available for profitable study; total receipts, total mission gifts, cooperative program gifts, etc. A very useful technique is to convert the totals into per capita figures. This is done by dividing the amounts by the number of resident members (or average Sunday School attendance). These data show what the "average" number (or attender) gives. Another method of analysis is to observe what portion of the receipts are used for particular causes. For example, ten years ago the pastor's salary might have required 40.0% of the total church income whereas it now represents only 25.0%. These data are calculated by dividing the pastor's salary by the total church receipts. The plotting of these data on graph paper, whether total figures, per capita ratios, or percentages, is valuable in diagnosing the trends visually.

CONCLUSION

The study area that this report is written about is an area that has had Baptist influence since 1826. The depth of penetration by the Baptists into the population, lives, culture, and society of this area is obvious from this report. The future offers to be as challenging and rewarding as the past if proper plans are made and techniques are implemented. The data in this report reveal that there are now and will continue to be many opportunities to share the Gospel, minister to needs and provide services in the towns, villages and countryside of West Central Louisiana.

There needs to be some thought and planning given to the fact that there are churches in the study area that are too small to function in the most effective manner. They can continue to operate as they have in the past for several more years, but not at the level which they formerly functioned. Such considerations as population, distance to the nearest Baptist church, family ties, present facilities, and social connections will need to be observed. In terms of distance it will be important to remember that miles are not the major consideration, but rather travel time will be an infinitely better measure of church and community influence. It is only 81 miles across the study area north-south (Stonewall to Hornbeck) and 72 miles east-west (Clarence to Logansport). It was pointed out in the study that 60% of the churches in the area have a pastorium, cemetery and brick building. This means that there are some heavy investments and strong cultural ties in these churches and it will

not be easy to re-evaluate the effectiveness of some of the churches that are thusly involved. For the future, however, some reappraisal will mean more effective ministries to all of the people, more funds available for mission expenditures, both in the area and outside, and more effective organizational life in the churches themselves.

There should be some reappraisal of pastor's salaries in the study area. This is true from the smallest to the largest churches. Pastoral leadership can hardly be effective when so many of the churches have low salaries to offer and it becomes necessary to supplement family incomes with a secular job. This is not fair to the pastors, their calling, or the churches.

Careful observation should be made of the economy of the area around each church. This affects, in so many ways, the lives of members and their attitudes toward many things including the churches. The new Toledo Bend Reservoir will affect the area immeasureably in the next few years with its recreational facilities and its ability to draw some industries. The immediate opportunity will be in the ministering to the people who will come to use the reservoir's recreational facilities.

Chapter V offers the churches of the area a technique to make some self-analysis that will produce some facts for future planning. This study, in itself, is only the initial step in planning and now the responsibility for advancing the procedure will rest with the churches, associations, the study area, and any Baptist agency that these feel can offer assistance.

APPENDIX

TABLE 36

TOTAL RECEIPTS IN WCL BY ASSOCIATIONS, 1958-1968 [a]

Association	Year					
	1958	1959	1960	1961	1962	1963
Sabine	134,851	148,009	171,783	163,176	179,929	185,700
N. Sabine.	112,050	107,671	117,433	119,564	137,367	138,515
DeSoto	231,664	252,987	265,562	271,015	286,745	289,870
Natchitoches	218,830	234,617	254,136	278,216	281,740	274,850
Red River.	114,375	106,627	116,663	124,042	121,777	141,636
Total	811,770	849,911	925,577	956,013	1,007,558	1,030,571

Association	Year					
	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968	
Sabine	214,364	223,273	225,771	231,347	254,499	
N. Sabine.	153,919	168,010	141,061	176,887	162,400	
DeSoto	280,941	297,121	320,651	268,090	354,774	
Natchitoches	279,647	293,510	301,509	317,630	354,278	
Red River.	143,913	153,672	158,949	171,695	185,659	
Total	1,072,784	1,135,586	1,147,941	1,165,649	1,311,610	

[a] Annual Minutes of Associations.

TABLE 37

GIFTS TO COOPERATIVE PROGRAM IN WCL BY ASSOCIATIONS, 1958-1968[a]

Association	Year					
	1958	1959	1960	1961	1962	1963
Sabine.	15,787	16,386	18,602	17,636	17,484	19,267
N. Sabine	13,066	12,456	13,026	13,412	13,714	13,105
DeSoto.	33,896	27,276	35,976	39,340	36,998	38,139
Natchitoches.	15,412	19,751	20,744	19,461	20,836	22,061
Red River	11,581	13,246	13,576	13,939	13,386	14,189
Total	89,742	89,115	101,924	103,788	102,418	106,761

Association	Year					
	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968	
Sabine.	19,174	20,103	20,956	20,556	21,126	
N. Sabine	13,454	12,612	14,806	14,635	14,070	
DeSoto.	41,975	39,036	38,920	39,570	42,046	
Natchitoches	24,445	26,446	27,358	30,058	33,363	
Red River	15,675	16,709	19,335	20,839	21,948	
Total	114,723	114,906	121,375	125,658	132,553	

[a]Annual Minutes of Associations.

TABLE 38

TOTAL MISSION GIFTS IN WCL BY ASSOCIATIONS, 1958-1968[a]

Association	Year					
	1958	1959	1960	1961	1962	1963
Sabine	$ 13,735	$ 23,259	$ 27,018	$ 24,671	$ 18,719	$ 27,790
No. Sabine	20,529	21,336	23,455	23,852	24,637	23,782
DeSoto	57,492	59,672	56,543	59,896	62,713	63,187
Natchitoches	22,247	36,782	35,798	30,333	34,077	33,736
Red River	21,115	21,383	27,579	23,428	24,212	22,342
Total	135,118	162,432	170,393	162,180	164,358	170,837

Association	Year					
	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968	
Sabine	$ 27,859	$ 31,568	$ 32,069	$ 34,459	$ 39,046	
No. Sabine	23,298	25,161	26,200	27,101	26,540	
DeSoto	69,239	65,760	67,008	72,802	72,802	
Natchitoches	40,706	40,600	47,922	54,341	56,646	
Red River	25,249	28,661	30,163	38,083	40,930	
Total	186,351	191,750	203,362	226,786	235,964	

[a]Annual Minutes of Associations.

TABLE 39

LOSSES IN MEMBERSHIP IN WCL BY ASSOCIATIONS, 1959-1968[a]

Association	Year									
	1959	1960	1961	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968
Sabine	383	197	247	314	197	235	138	315	278	301
N. Sabine	275	179	270	346	227	187	238	198	310	184
DeSoto	408	423	397	456	363	418	469	355	357	571
Natchitoches	689	596	562	722	635	503	553	1,258	463	651
Red River	235	115	234	253	247	147	280	243	227	122
Total	1,990	1,510	1,710	2,091	1,669	1,490	1,678	2,369	1,635	1,829

[a]Table 8.

TABLE 40

LOSS RATE IN MEMBERSHIP IN WCL BY ASSOCIATIONS, 1959-1968[a]

Association	Year									
	1959	1960	1961	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968
Sabine	14.3	7.6	9.2	11.6	7.6	8.9	5.1	11.1	9.9	10.8
N. Sabine	10.9	7.2	10.5	13.3	9.2	7.6	9.5	7.7	12.1	7.1
DeSoto	10.5	10.5	9.8	11.2	9.0	10.3	11.6	9.0	8.8	13.9
Natchitoches	16.2	13.8	12.4	15.8	14.2	11.3	12.3	27.6	12.1	16.6
Red River	10.8	5.4	10.7	11.7	11.4	6.8	12.6	10.9	10.3	5.7
Total	12.8	9.7	10.7	13.0	10.6	9.5	10.5	14.7	10.6	11.8

[a]Tables 8 and 39.

TABLE 41

TOTAL ADDITIONS IN WCL BY ASSOCIATIONS, 1958-1968[a]

Association	Year										
	1958	1959	1960	1961	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968
Sabine	224	306	280	282	203	231	322	260	266	277	344
N. Sabine.	225	253	252	299	207	235	226	300	196	331	201
DeSoto	506	554	440	424	388	392	424	374	454	415	469
Natchitoches	724	755	812	615	597	616	569	599	538	540	683
Red River.	156	205	150	215	267	229	214	292	217	167	244
Total.	1,835	2,073	1,934	1,835	1,662	1,703	1,755	1,825	1,671	1,730	1,941

[a]Annual Minutes of Associations.

TABLE 42

AVERAGE SIZE CHURCH IN WCL BY ASSOCIATIONS, 1958-1968[a]

Association	Year										
	1958	1959	1960	1961	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968
Sabine	103	100	103	104	100	101	105	109	107	107	109
N. Sabine.	101	100	103	100	91	91	93	95	95	100	100
DeSoto	139	144	145	146	143	140	140	136	140	142	138
Natchitoches	133	135	142	143	139	139	141	142	120	122	123
Red River.	167	165	168	166	167	166	171	172	170	165	175
Total	125	126	129	129	125	124	126	127	122	123	124

[a]Tables 1 and 8.

TABLE 43

SUNDAY SCHOOL ENROLMENT IN WCL BY ASSOCIATIONS, 1958-1968[a]

Association	Year										
	1958	1959	1960	1961	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968
Sabine.	2,219	2,204	2,228	2,327	2,258	2,234	2,083	2,272	2,285	2,224	2,237
N. Sabine	2,312	2,362	2,313	2,238	2,248	2,218	2,297	2,149	2,151	2,105	1,992
DeSoto.	3,646	3,706	3,760	3,908	3,902	3,793	3,733	3,779	3,626	3,531	3,389
Natchitoches.	3,624	3,686	3,735	3,772	3,607	3,583	3,376	3,330	3,219	3,045	3,196
Red River	1,782	1,743	1,692	1,749	1,839	1,858	1,775	1,791	1,673	1,653	1,569
Total	13,583	13,701	13,728	13,994	13,854	13,686	13,264	13,321	12,954	12,558	12,383

[a]Annual Minutes of Associations.

TABLE 44

TRAINING UNION ENROLMENT IN WCL BY ASSOCIATIONS, 1958-1968[a]

Association	Year										
	1958	1959	1960	1961	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968
Sabine.	1,341	1,256	1,245	1,455	1,229	1,075	1,058	1,040	1,036	1,001	1,113
N. Sabine	1,311	1,290	1,208	1,165	1,176	1,218	1,165	993	954	923	782
DeSoto.	1,478	1,610	1,430	1,718	1,671	1,572	1,657	1,477	1,472	1,508	1,474
Natchitoches.	1,922	1,897	2,036	2,159	1,912	1,917	1,818	1,625	1,489	1,401	1,343
Red River	904	911	811	918	872	936	923	862	823	859	930
Total	6,956	6,964	6,730	7,415	6,860	5,782	6,621	5,997	5,774	5,692	5,642

[a]Annual Minutes of Associations.

TABLE 45

W.M.U. ENROLMENT (INCLUDING ORGANIZATIONS) IN WCL BY ASSOCIATIONS, 1958-1968[a]

Association	Year										
	1958	1959	1960	1961	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968
Sabine	442	457	467	506	296	346	370	392	325	311	286
N. Sabine. . . .	452	439	476	384	318	275	172	235	261	228	284
DeSoto	834	891	801	794	848	727	700	670	667	601	525
Natchitoches . .	663	745	782	786	730	669	693	709	692	668	614
Red River. . . .	334	416	410	376	471	431	445	444	409	361	387
Total . . .	2,725	2,948	2,936	2,846	2,663	2,448	2,380	2,450	2,354	2,169	2,096

[a]Annual Minutes of Associations.

TABLE 46

BROTHERHOOD ENROLMENT IN WCL BY ASSOCIATIONS, 1958-1968

Association	Year										
	1958	1959	1960	1961	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968
Sabine	211	141	147	140	80	80	69	79	55	81	28
N. Sabine. . . .	144	319	165	157	139	31	57	58	60	188	148
DeSoto	399	298	223	280	314	298	311	260	247	219	185
Natchitoches . .	303	257	354	341	299	250	220	199	145	123	177
Red River. . . .	218	185	157	138	170	170	158	88	113	99	80
Total . . .	1,275	1,200	1,046	1,056	1,002	829	815	684	620	710	648

[a]Annual Minutes of Associations.

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